

Note cards from the Tourism Management Forum  
Charleston County School District Boardroom  
April 7, 2014

1.  
Restriction of size and number of tour buses south of Broad  
City trolleys are too wide.  
No golf carts!  
Inadequate parking  
Ordinance enforcement with adequate police to enforce  
Limit number of special walks / parades which require closure of streets  
Bus tours, i.e. Charleston Tours – vehicles are too wide and drivers do NOT pull over like horse carriages.
2.  
The thoroughfares in Charleston are not adequate to deal with the influx of traffic associated with visitors. We need to plan to create external parking spaces and bus visitors into the city. This may also help city parking problems.  
We need to do a better job of controlling noise from bar patrons on East Bay at night.
3.  
Consider allowing cars (vehicles) below Broad only by residents of the area  
Banning motorcycles (if vehicular restriction is not done) or at the very least ticketing those who race downtown (East Battery, South Battery, Murray Blvd.) in the middle of the night  
Have better enforcement of ordinances  
Manage cruise industry by requiring shore power, moving terminal from Historic District
4.  
I strongly suggest the committee and city adopt a congestion zone charge like in London. This provides revenue for the city and importantly reduces traffic congestion. This program can be modified for Charleston.
5.  
As someone who lives on the carriage track I hear lies/falsified stories all the time. When I asked the carriage offices/tour guides about this, they said that tour guides are allowed to “make up stats and info” to keep the attention of the tourists. While this may keep attention, it is concerning to think that the tourists are hearing lies. What are the regulations on carriage tour lectures? Does it differ for carriage companies?
6.  
Parking is a huge problem – please address  
I see horse carriages on streets they should not be on – example – Magazine – no way to pass if an emergency – too many on streets  
Bike riders do not follow law – please address  
The smell is awful from carriages – please address

7.

How does a coach coming from out of town get the required transporting permit in order to get to the VIC and permit office? Seems to be a Catch-22

8.

There needs to be better marketing of the King Street/Meeting Street free shuttle. How are tourists and residents being informed about alternate modes of transportation?

Too many festivals happening at the same time - Is it possible to spread out or have an overall plan?

9.

Is there any way to limit tourist parking in residential areas?

Is there a way to limit the number of cars and indeed people who come? There are times when driving and even walking are so frustrating for residents.

10.

We badly need restricted parking for residents only on East Bay St. and South Battery St. (Residents Only)

Restrictions on tourist autos south of Broad (one hour max parking 24/7)

Major problem with local employees (starting at 7 am) parking down East Bay St. & Murray Blvd. and staying until 5 pm or later

11.

Pedicabs: re: residential Q of Life

No air pollution, no chemical clean-up = zero carbon footprint = excellent practice!

However, noise pollution is a problem affecting Q of Life ... passengers screaming at the top of their lungs after 11 pm. What regulations, consequences, enforcement to encourage such environmentally friendly transportation while minimize impact to residents?

12.

Improve pedestrian and bicycle capacity – sidewalks and bike paths

Return one-way streets to two-way

Increase public access to waterfront

Reduce parking lots

Reduce parking garage downtown

No buses in Hampton Park!

13.

Can you determine the economic impact of motor coach tourists? What would we lose by banning them South of Calhoun?

If they cannot be banned, can they be discouraged from stopping or idling?

Can pedestrian crossings at busy intersections (e.g. Broad/Meeting and Calhoun/King) be changed in such a way that all pedestrians cross at the same time?

Has any consideration been given to the possibility of mobile restrooms?

14.

Can motorcycles without mufflers be banned from the city?

Is it possible to open Concord St. when the Carnival ship is loading/unloading?

15.

What is the feasibility of moving the cruise terminal to Columbus Street?

What agreement does the City have with the SPA to ensure proper development of Union Pier?

Is there a master plan for Union Pier?

What is the plan on Expo use at Gaillard Center?

16.

Downtown Charleston is a very scary place for pedestrians. Could we have more rigorous enforcing of cars stopping for pedestrians?

And enforcement of a noise ordinance for roaring mufflers and motorcycles?

Limit number and size of cruise ships & regulate emissions!

17.

Has the City / Advisory Panel ever considered "Resident Only Park" as exists in Beacon Hill – Boston, Amsterdam, London, etc. Charleston residents have spent millions to provide parking for tourists (16 parking garages) but the tourists prefer to park in front of our homes.

18.

Is there a limit on the number of carriages and pedal cabs? What are they, and why don't they have to observe stop signs?

19.

What about fixing the sidewalks? Making the city more accessible to persons with challenges, all disabilities

"Helpers" or ambassadors on the streets to aid visitors, answer questions, give directions, etc., like in DC.

20.

After a large event, such as SEWE and the Bridge Run, the residential streets are riddled with trash. Will the City step up cleaning in the residential area?

21.

What can the City do to enforce the noise ordinance? The ordinance states there should be no loud noise between the hours of 11 pm and 7 am. Noise includes, but is not limited to, bars, motorcycles, trash trucks, street sweepers and tourists.

22.

It is a joke to say that the Tourism Commission represents the residents.

The ordinances are not enforced!

Why is there no one representing the residents among the speakers tonight? Only tourism is represented.

23.

Why isn't there a West Ashley rep on Tourism Commission?

24.

Study number of hotels in specific neighborhoods plus overall

Study cruise effect

Study effect of 4-plus story buildings on "authenticity"

% hotels up (approved) in past 2 years

Impact of large hotels between Meeting/King

Measurement of appropriateness apply to cruise ships?

Is there more concern re: autos/buses than overbuilding on sites and their impact?

25.

The Historic Area is Charleston's Golden Goose. Without it, Charleston is just a nice port city. The Historic Area is great both because of its heritage and because homeowners have invested personally in restoring and maintaining their historic houses. So it follows that the City should ensure the Historic Area becomes livable. For example:

- eliminate the bikes (anyone who thinks they are not acting as tour guides is crazy)
- spread the walking tours (like carriages) so not all are on Meeting!

26.

I would like to make a suggestion for diversifying tourist attractions – for placing attractions off the peninsula. Why not use McLeod Plantation (already owned and restored by Charleston County Parks and Rec.) as the location of the planned African American Museum? Why not have the museum at an authentic site – an actual plantation – and one with a very rich history. Why spend 75 million for a new building – when ½ of that amount would be enough to have an incredible museum on an authentic site? The City could partner with the County and James Island could benefit from visitors.

27.

Please study the issue of dog poop – in parks, on streets, especially South Battery, East Bay, Murray Blvd. Need policing, fines and trash cans!

28.

Cruise ships must be regulated!

Limit number of ships per year.

Shoreline power required

No idling in port

Noise ordinances enforced

Limit number of ships in port daily

Limit size of ships

Ongoing costs to City analysis

Tax rebates to historic home owners

Limit frequency of carriages to avoid “bunching” – maintain a 1 block distance

29.

If tourism is only 16% of revenue for the city, it seems prudent to begin to cap the numbers of visitors. Charleston does not have the infrastructure to accommodate more and more visitors! We have reached the tipping point between livability for Charleston’s taxpaying citizens and visitors to Charleston.

30.

Given the overbalance of panelists who profit from tourism that impacts the OLD and HISTORIC DISTRICT the hardest – how can we expect that this panel will defend the historic district from increasingly overwhelming tourism, traffic, noise, congestion, carriages and horses, buses, pedicabs, bicycles, golf carts, motorcycles and tourists who disrespect our houses with trespassing, trash and worse?

31.

The 1998 report stated that the City should devote six policemen/agents to manage tourism related activities. At present, there is one agent. Despite his best efforts, the resources are inadequate and repeated infractions are not addressed. What is the City’s plan to provide adequate resources to implement/execute the past or current plan?

32.

Do we have statistics that place dollar numbers on taxes, fees, licensing, permits, etc. that attribute directly to specific areas of tourism and how in turn cost of management of each?

33.

What is the vision to keep Charleston from becoming Key West, Venice, Italy, etc. Overrun by buses, horse and carriage, pedicab, cruise ship traffic and pollution from the above. It is already very badly affecting quality of life south of Broad.

34.

How can we take any tourism plan seriously when promises in last plan are ignored i.e. promises 4 tourism officers. There is one – which means there is no enforcement.

Why doesn’t our City Council care about our health – exhaust

Is the city aware that it is risking historic – heritage tourism by not managing it?

How is performance of CVB evaluated?

35.

Plans are important, but they are meaningless without enforcement. What is the intention for this process relative to funding for and prioritization of enforcement?

36.

Tourism ordinances/management regulations also require at least one full time tourism enforcement officer to be in the residential area. I see carriages out of their zone, without medallions ... tour guides with more than 20 people in their walking tours, large buses on streets they should not be on ... but no enforcement officer downtown to call and “catch” these infractions.

How do we legitimately enforce the regulations with someone who is downtown?  
Livability court is great, but we have no enforcement. Why not?

37.

Why is Tourism Management office combined with Clerk of Council? It should be a separate office with higher focus on enforcement!

38.

What about the younger generation that does not live south of Broad? Were friends of those that go to C of C taken into consideration as tourists? They may not be a huge impact on tours per se, but must make an impact economically.

Lowering rent for the students must happen as well. They are a huge economic impact. Safety of these areas should be increased as well!

39.

Suggestions to the Committee:

With this committee, credibility is key

Issues that must be addressed, all of which tie to delicate balance between livability and tax base:

- number of events: total number must be curbed
- need for Charleston to move toward mass transit lines
- overall ceiling on tourism factor (this would be approached through moratoriums on numbers of hotels, cruise ships, etc.

40.

Cruise ship control is essential – numbers, size, air and water pollution, visual pollution. New terminal should not be built within the National Historic Landmark district. Rather consider Columbus Street docks or Navy yard

Motorcycles (without mufflers) should not be allowed south of Crosstown and hours should be restricted

41.

What are the plans to regulate permits and collect accommodations/hospitality taxes for short-term rental properties? i.e. VRBO/airBNB (In a perspective to increase peninsula non-hotel lodging)

42.

Why does the City feel it has the right to make a concession of the entire city? It is being treated as one big James-Rouse style festival marketplace. The residents are just onlookers. It's out of control.

Comment on the day-tripper: Much of the daily and particularly the night traffic is from surrounding counties. Charleston is also their entertainment center. That is a crush of local tourism.

43.

Can we have the 4 full time tourism enforcement officers promised in the 1998 plan?

Can we manage total impact of tourism, events dept., filmings, traffic, unpermitted events like house tours, now uncoordinated?

Does City agree Historic District is above carrying capacity in peak months?

44.

#### Broken Admin. Promises

The growth of the College of Charleston has broken promises to residents for years. Cap 6,000;

Cap 8,000; Cap 10,000. Now there are 12, 000 plus -

The college provides many wonderful opportunities but the growth has created so many problems for residents that many of those who live in the city find they are the most serious problem we have -

Noise, traffic, dangerous lack of following safety with their bikes, skate boards, walking ... they go through red lights, run you down on the sidewalk. Drop their tops in Marion Square, etc. etc.

45.

Need for bathroom facilities at the Battery area

46.

Rest rooms at Battery

47.

Why does the city feel that it is necessary to provide toilets in private neighborhoods?

Why does East Bay Street have a double yellow line - putting those who need to pass carriages or tour buses - liable to a ticket for a moving violation?

Why do we not charge a "head" tax for cruise ship passengers?

48.

Can we have bathrooms in the White Point Gardens area?

49.

Could public restrooms be built underground at White Point Gardens? There could be a few steps down with no appreciable visible impairment above ground. This, of course, would depend on the water table.

50.

Is the panel unaware of what goes on near and around restrooms – open to the public?  
Perhaps not.

The residential area South of Broad is not Disney World. The city could help itself and the rest of us if it put signs and noted in flyers that South of Broad is a residential area and there are no restrooms there.

Also – how many of this panel have public restrooms in their neighborhood, near their house?

51.

Before adding new restrooms, which the peninsula needs, the City needs to be vigilant at keeping present ones clean. The Waterfront Park/Vendue Range bathrooms are very often nasty.

52.

In considering the importance of restroom facilities, what areas are being considered?

Is it possible to enlarge the restroom facilities at Hazel Parker Park to accommodate guests of the city?

Is it possible to purchase portable restrooms – as North Charleston has done and park them during the prime tour times below Broad Street.

Comment: Much talk over the years about guest restroom facilities in the South of Broad area and yet we continue to be without restroom facilities. To be a world travel highly rated city, we are seriously lacking restroom facilities.