

# Responsible Tourism: Help Shape Charleston's Next Chapter

Charleston was the first city in America to adopt a tourism management plan in 1978. The most recent update was completed in 2015, and now it is time to create the next chapter — together.

Tourism is an important part of Charleston's economy, supporting local jobs, businesses, and cultural attractions. At the same time, residents experience the impacts of tourism every day, including traffic, parking challenges, housing pressure, noise, and infrastructure demands.

The City of Charleston is launching a new Responsible Tourism Initiative focused on balancing the needs of residents, visitors, neighborhoods, and businesses. This effort will be guided by community input and grounded in one core principle: **Residents First**.

Mayor Cogswell has established and committed to five principles to guide this work.

- 1. RESIDENTS FIRST**

Put residents and livability at the center of tourism decisions.

- 2. THE CITY OWNS THE DATA**

City driven data to guide policy, infrastructure, and projects.

- 3. SPREADING THE LOVE BEYOND THE PENINSULA**

Promote destinations and amenities throughout Charleston beyond the peninsula.

- 4. MORE ENFORCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

Support sustainable tourism through policy, enforcement, and infrastructure improvements.

- 5. NEW REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES**

Identify funding sources to help manage tourism impacts and City costs.

## Your Voice Matters

Bloomberg Associates were engaged to provide an outside perspective on tourism in Charleston. They are a pro bono municipal consultancy with extensive global tourism experience. They reviewed best practices, analyzed available data, and interviewed more than 70 community stakeholders. We are sharing their recommendations to start the conversation, but we want to hear from you.

Over the coming months, the City will host public engagement sessions across Charleston and launch an online survey so residents can share their experiences, concerns, and ideas for the future of tourism in our city.

- How does tourism affect your daily life?
- What tourism-related issues concern you most?
- How should tourism-generated revenue be invested?
- What would success look like for Charleston in the future?

## **What's Already Happening?**

This year, the City implemented new business license fees for hotels and short-term rentals that are projected to generate an additional \$2 million annually to help address tourism impacts and improve livability.

**Stay Involved** This summer, the City will launch a dedicated tourism management webpage featuring:

- Public meeting schedules
- Community survey links
- Project updates
- Tourism and livability data
- Opportunities for continued public input

Charleston has managed tourism for nearly 50 years. This next chapter will be shaped by the people who live here.

**Your city. Your voice. Your plan.**