



Tourism Compliance Update

City Council Workshop
January 9, 2024

Planning & Urban Design
Code Compliance
Revenue
Special Events, Film and Tourism

Agenda

- STVR History
- New Software
- STVR Permitting and Compliance
- Walking Tour Pilot Program
- Tourism Service Vehicle Noise Abatement Ordinance Update



Short-Term Vacation Rentals

- An accommodation for transient guests where a residential dwelling is rented out for lodging in exchange for compensation
- Rental period must not exceed 30 consecutive days
- May or may not include an on-site manager
- Residential dwelling in this context encompasses all housing types—excluding group living or other types of lodging.
- Transient Guest: An individual staying at a location other than their usual place of residence for a period not exceeding 30 consecutive days—in exchange for compensation



STVR History

- In 2015, Council adopted:
 - Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance for STVRs
 - Created a new ordinance to regulate STVRs
- In 2017, Council adopted revisions to provide greater protections in the neighborhoods:
 - Introducing a capping system
 - Reducing in occupancy
 - Requiring proof of insurance



Software Implementation

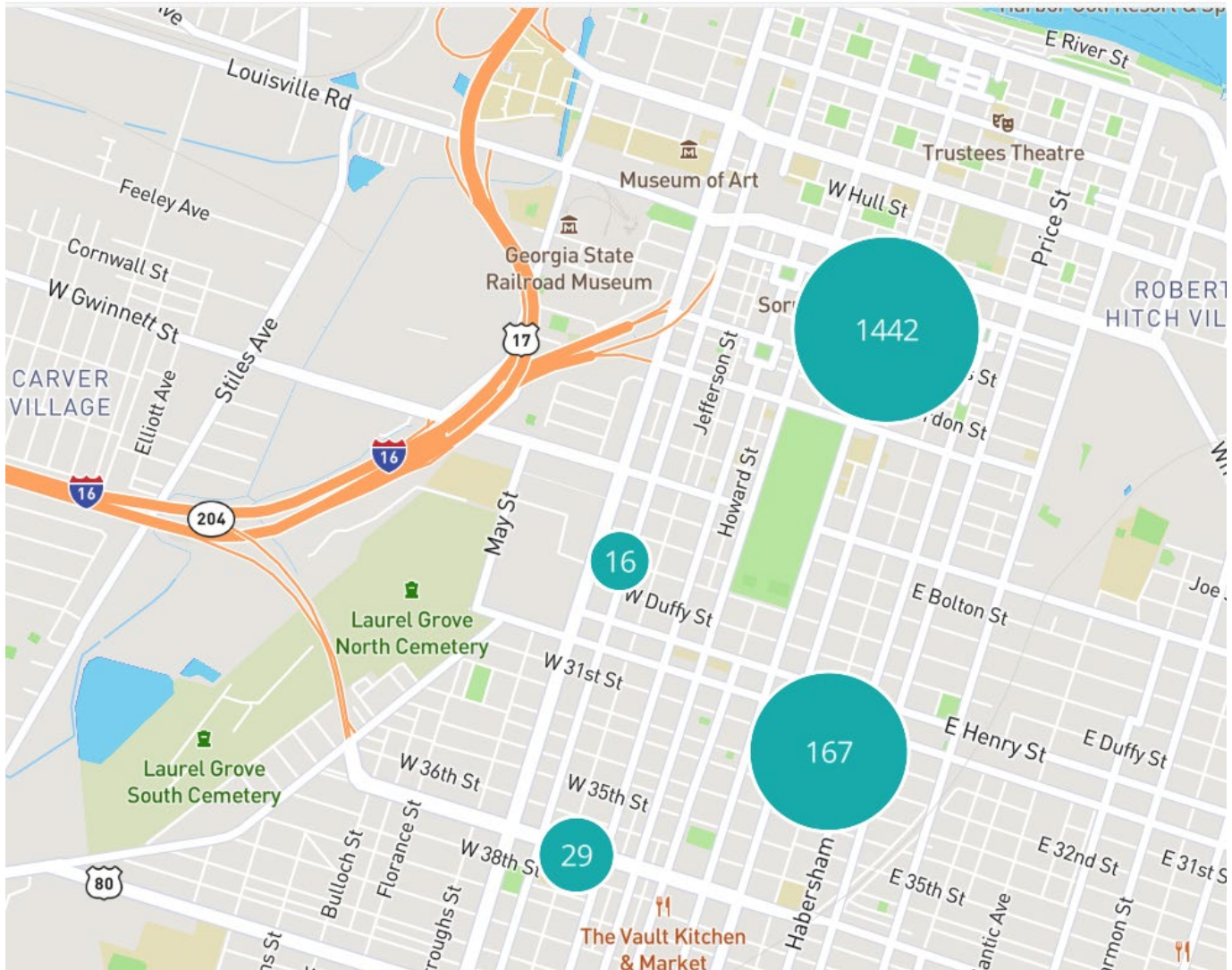


Strengthen STVR Management

- Approved by the City Council as part of FY23 budget
- Approved Rentalscape software purchase in July 2023 (\$290,000)
- Program officially launched in May 2024
- Modernizes how the City manages STVRs
- New digital platform simplifies the application process
- Includes a 24/7 complaint hotline
- Enables real-time tracking of STVR permits for effective revenue oversight and ensures compliance with tax and licensing regulations

Enhanced Coordination

- Strengthened collaboration among Planning & Urban Design, Revenue, Code Compliance, IT, and GIS departments

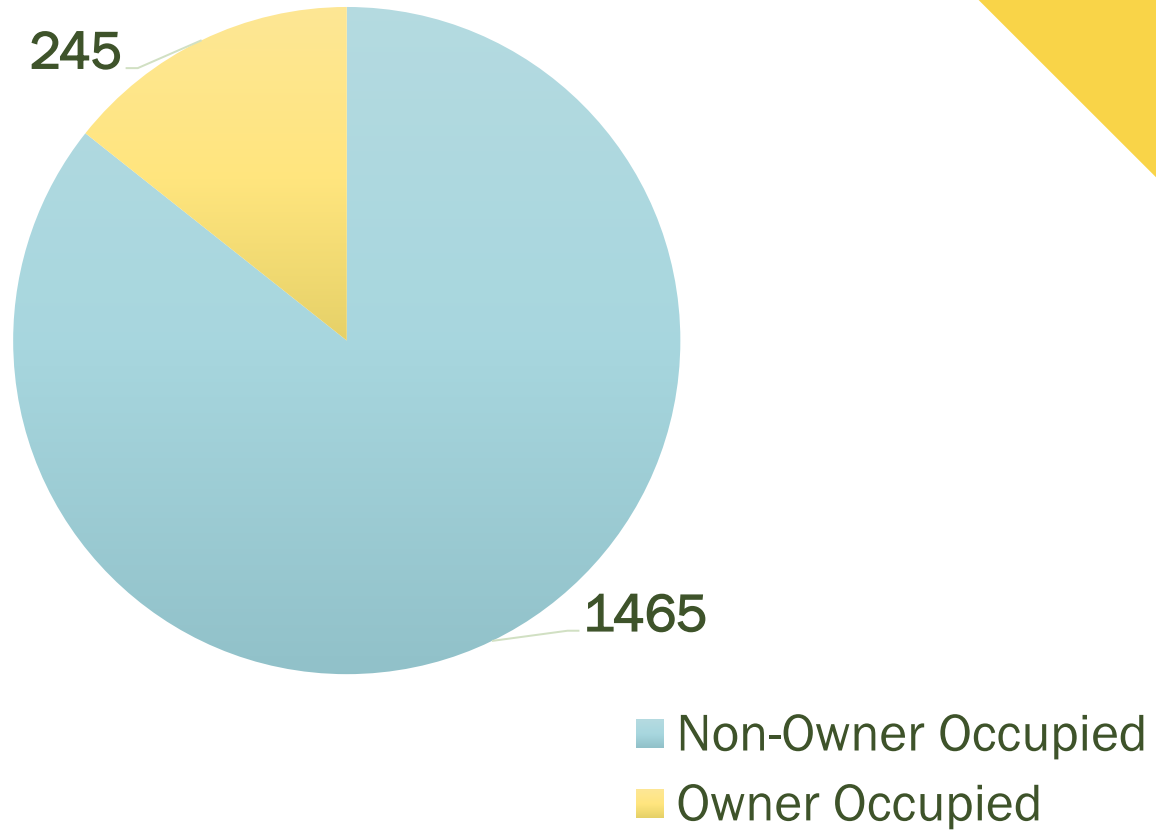


SAVANNAH GA 31401
LICENSED SHORT-TERM RENTAL

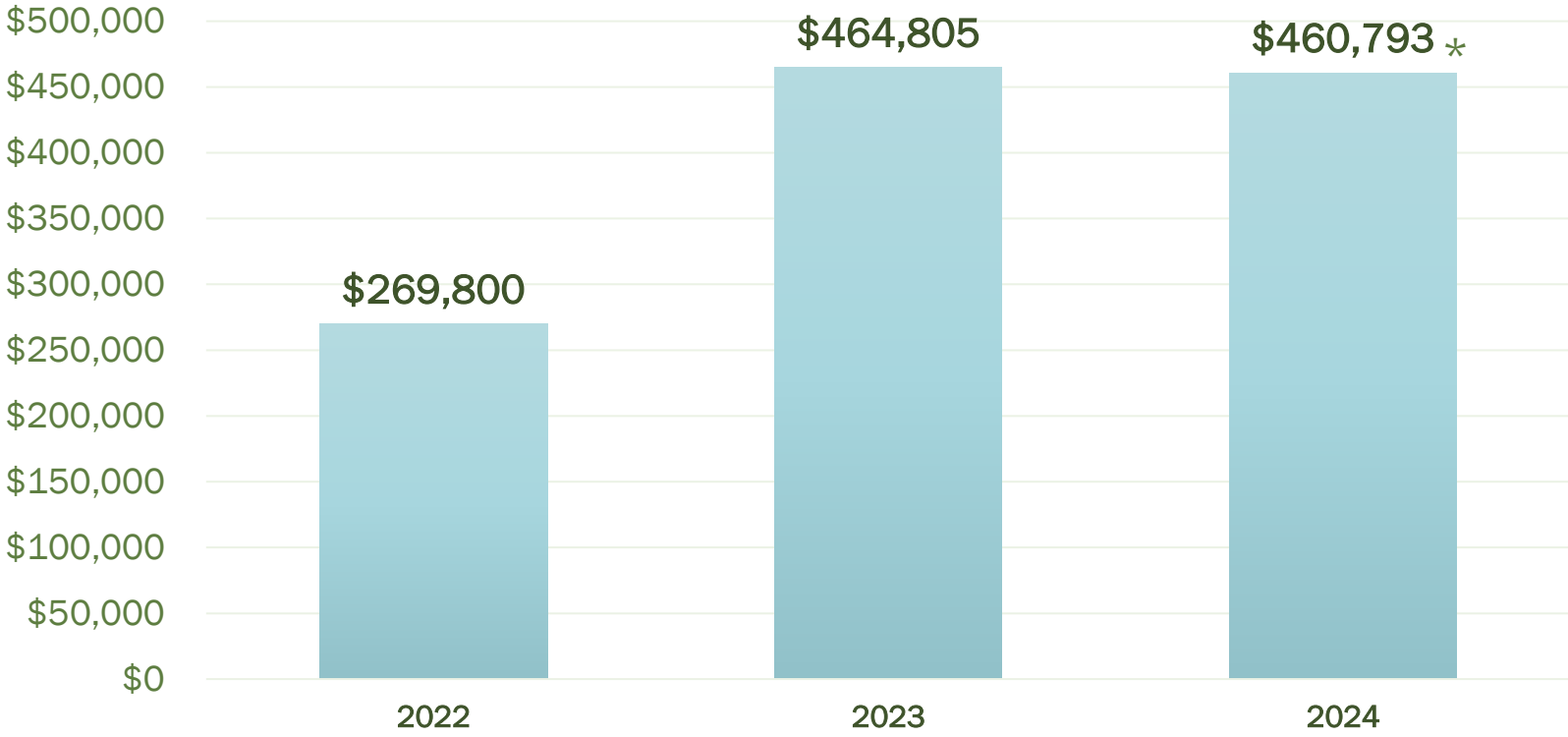
UNIT NUMBER	
PERMIT NUMBER	SVR-01802
APN	2005213010
RENTAL AGENT NAME	[REDACTED]
RENTAL AGENT EMAIL	[REDACTED]
RENTAL AGENT PHONE	[REDACTED]
OWNER OCCUPIED VS NON-OWNER OCCUPIED	Type 1: Owner-Occupied STVR Certificate
BEDROOMS	2
PARKING SPACES	0

Total Number of STVR Certificates

As of January 1, 2025



Permitting Fees



*As of 01/01/2025

Rentalscape: Advertising

All (9) Vrbo (4) Flipkey (2) Airbnb (3)

Vrbo [redacted] ✓ [Dispute](#) [History](#) [Live Listing](#)

Host	Unknown	Bedroom advertised	2
STR License displayed ⓘ	None	Occupancy advertised ⓘ	5
Unit type	Full Unit	Rental Structure	Multifamily
		First seen	2021-05-29

Flipkey [redacted] ✓ [Dispute](#) [History](#) [Live Listing](#)

Host	[redacted]	Bedroom advertised	4
STR License displayed ⓘ	None	Occupancy advertised	8
Unit type	Full Unit	Rental Structure	Multifamily

Vrbo [redacted] ✓ [Dispute](#) [History](#) [Live Listing](#)

Host	Unknown	Bedroom advertised	6
STR License displayed ⓘ	None	Occupancy advertised ⓘ	14
Unit type	Full Unit	Rental Structure	Multifamily
		First seen	2021-05-31

Flipkey [redacted] ✓ [Dispute](#) [History](#) [Not Live](#)

Host	[redacted]	Bedroom advertised	4
STR License displayed ⓘ	None	Occupancy advertised ⓘ	10
Unit type	Full Unit	Rental Structure	Multifamily

Airbnb [redacted] ✓ [Dispute](#) [History](#) [Not Live](#)

Host	[redacted]	Bedroom advertised	4
STR License displayed ⓘ	None	Occupancy advertised ⓘ	10
Unit type	Full Unit	Rental Structure	Multifamily

Rentalscape: STVR Property Information

Pending Identification

Possible Violations (0) We found no violations for this property	Open Complaints (0) We found no open complaints for this property
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All (1) Airbnb (1)

[Redacted]

- [Address](#)
- [History](#)
- [Live Listing](#)

Host	[Redacted]	Bedroom advertised	6
STR License displayed	[Redacted]	Occupancy advertised	12
Unit type	Full Unit	First seen	2023-10-15

Location

Booking Activities



Rentalscape: Booking Activities

Host Revenue

\$5,436 -\$0

Total Revenue



Booking Activities

39% -1%

156

Occupancy This Month

Nights Booked in past 12 Months



Average Daily Rate

\$453 -\$0

Avg Rate This Month



Transient Occupancy Tax

\$435 -\$0

• Est.

Total TOT



Rentalscape: Complaint Portal

25 complaints (1 open)

Download

Search for an address, person or complaint type

All Statuses

All Types

Columns

Date/Time Raised ↓	Complaint #	Status	Source	Complaint Type	Property Address	Complaint Description
2024-06-11 02:44pm	51	Closed	Complaint Portal	Illegal Rental	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] - I don't have a permit (checked e-trac and map) to operate this as a vacation rental. Listec website and airbnb. Property Manager is [REDACTED] Website: https://sidwashere.com/a-side/ https://sidwashere.com/b-side/
2024-06-10 05:06pm	50	Closed	Complaint Portal	Illegal Rental	[REDACTED]	I'm mostly sure this is an illegal short term rental. Over the last month there have several loud incidents at the property and lodger burning trash and causing smell smoke issues in the neighborhood
2024-06-08 11:35pm	49	Closed	Complaint Portal	Illegal Rental	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] is managing property and it is being used as a short term rental v coming in less than the 31 day min. The people that use it have been distantly frie when I went to introduce myself thinking it was an actual neighbor they would on the door. the people who stay don't clean up after their pets - we have no idea if t criminal histories - Gordonston has been a single-family home - not a place for co Airbnb [REDACTED] - the real estate agents that sell these homes, the sellers, buyers are ruining the neighborhood - RAPIDLY its irrelevant that [REDACTED] the website that it is 31 day rental - if you email and inquiry they will openly expl isn't "allowed" but can make accommodations regardless - its a scam

Complaints & Enforcement







- Complaints or concerns regarding the STVR can be submitted on the Vacation Rental Complaint Portal or you may contact the 24/7 hotline at 912-226-0320.
- All information received is investigated.

Short-Term Rental Complaint

If this is an emergency, please contact 911.

Otherwise, please fill out the form below to file a complaint about a short-term rental property.

What type of complaint(s) are you reporting? *

 Noise	 Trash	 Parking
 Illegal Rental	 Number of Guests	 Other

Where is the property you are reporting?

Type 3 or more characters to search for an address.


Is this your first complaint about this property?

Yes

No

Attachments (Optional)

Maximum number of files: 5; maximum file size: 150MB

 [UPLOAD PHOTOS, VIDEOS OR AUDIO](#)

Enforcement: Verification Checks

1. **Zoning** - Ensure the property is in an area designated for STVRs.
2. **Permit** - Confirm that the property has the required STVR permit.
3. **Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)** - Verify any historical designations or restrictions.
4. **Business License and Tax (BTC)** – Ensure the property owner or designated rental agent has the required business tax certificate (BTC).
5. **A Business Location Approval (BLA)**– Verify that use is permitted in the property’s zoning district and that the structure meets applicable building and fire code requirements.
6. **STVR Internet Search** - Investigate online platforms for current rental listings related to the property.
7. **Site Inspection** – A visual assessment of the property.

Enforcement

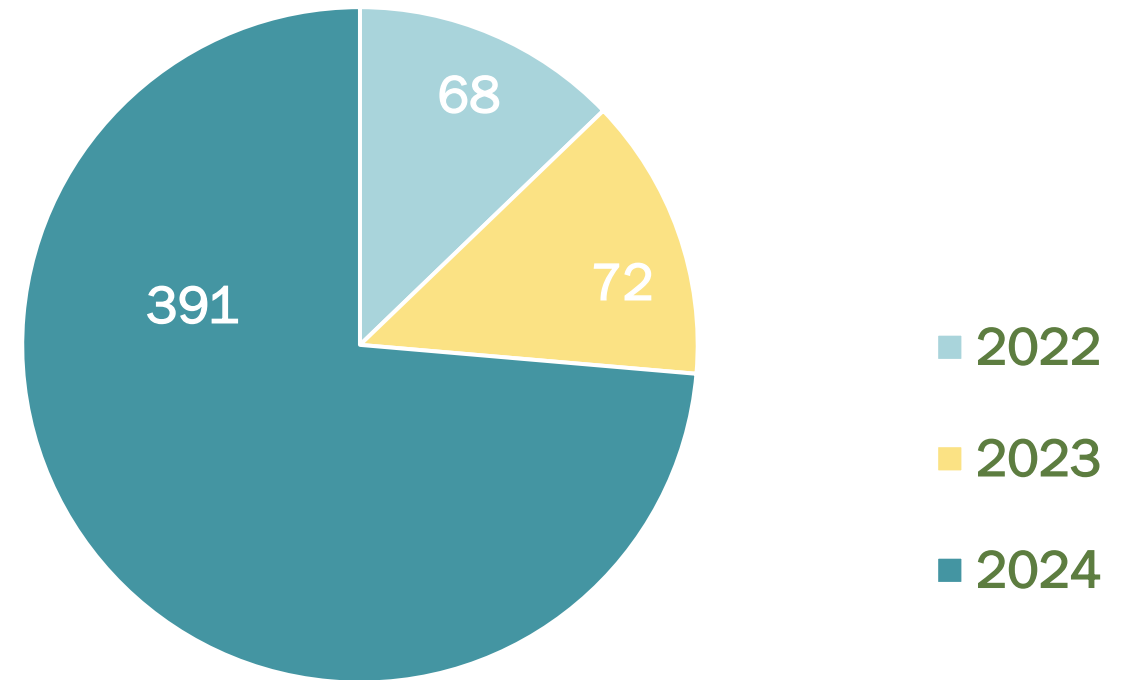
Violations subject to the following fines—which may not be waived or reduced:

1. First violation: \$500.
2. Second violation within the preceding 12 months: \$750.
3. Third violation within the preceding 12 months: \$1,000.

Accumulation of three code violations for a particular property within a period of 12 consecutive months, the city shall revoke any pending certificates and reject all applications for the subject premises for a period of 12 consecutive months.

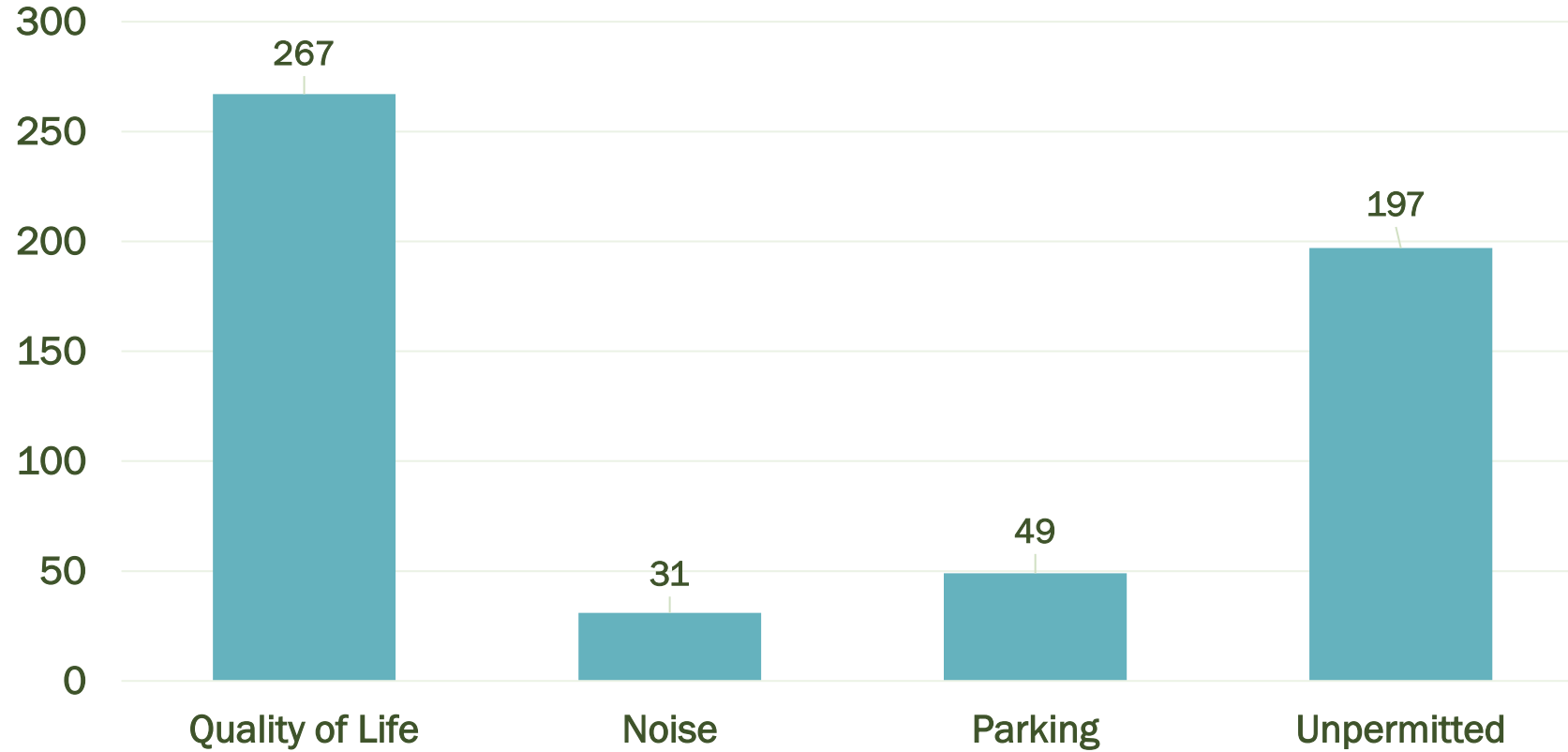
STVR Code Cases

- Most Common Violations:
 - Quality of Life - Sanitation & Rental Occupancy
 - Noise
 - Parking
 - Unpermitted – Illegally Operating



STVR Complaints

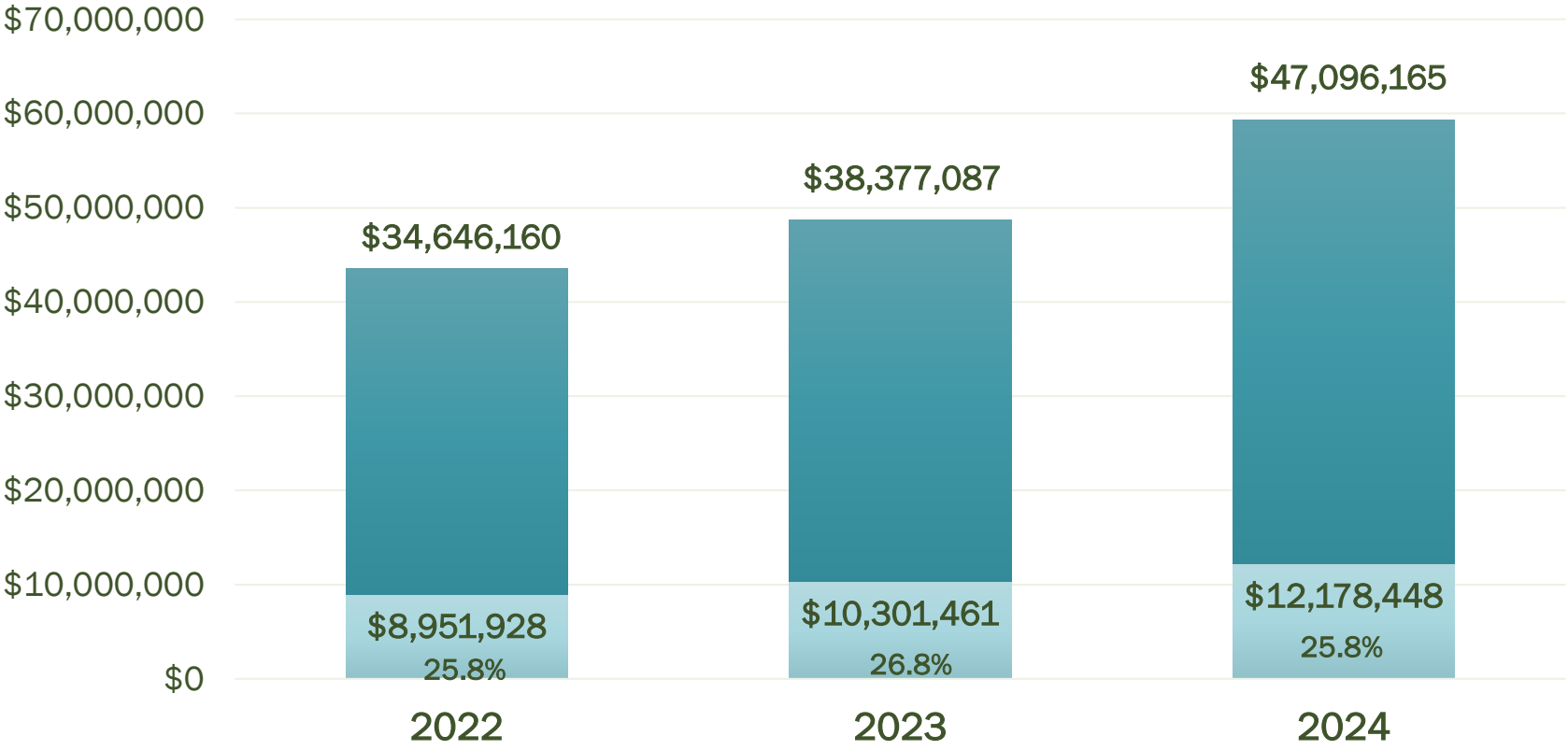
Jan 1, 2022 - Dec 10, 2024



Revenue Department

- Ordinance requires:
 - Annual Business Tax Certificate
 - Remittance hotel-motel tax remittance
 - Payment of annual fee

Hotel-Motel Tax Collections*



*NAICS #721199 - All Other Traveler Accommodations

Tourism Update

Walking Tours

City Council Briefing
January 9, 2025

Special Events, Film, and Tourism Department
City of Savannah

Tourism Advisory Committee Ad-Hoc Walking Tour Committee

TAC Members

- Melinda Allen - Downtown Neighborhood Association
- Charlie Brazil - Old Town Trolley
- Jason Combs - Victorian Neighborhood Association

Walking Tour Representatives

- Dan Le'ger - Savannah Dan
- T.C. and Brenna Michaels - Genteel & Bard
- Vaughnette Goode Walker – Footprints of Savannah
- Kathie Bissett – Integrity Tours
- Dan and Bridgette Riedel – Savannah History and Haunts
- Andre Frattino – Savannah by Foot, Creepy Crawl
- Stu Card – Savannah Taste Experience

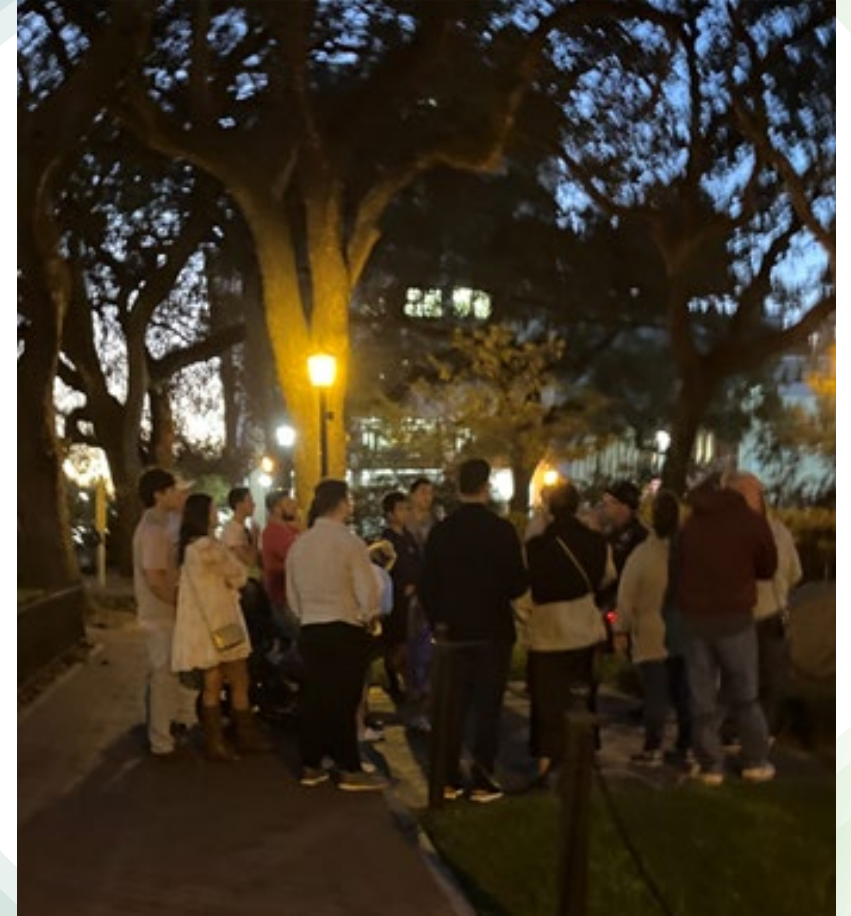
The Walking Tour Ordinance in Savannah regulates walking tours to ensure they are conducted safely and respectfully within the city. The ordinance needs updates to address growing concerns about noise, residential disturbances, and the viability of local walking tour companies.

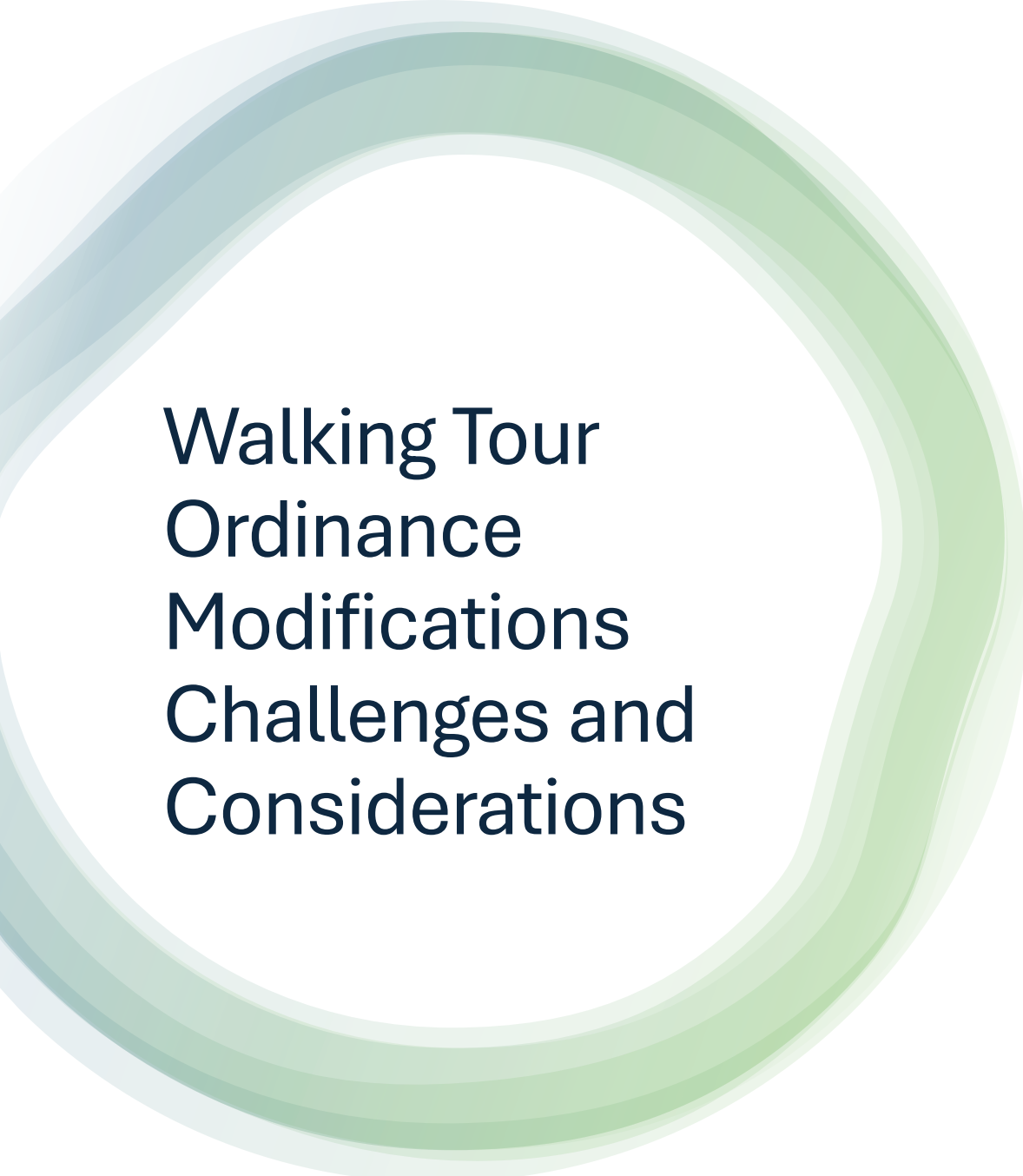


Goal: Propose modifications to address these concerns while balancing the needs of residents, walking tour businesses, and tour guides.

Walking Tours at a Glance

- 62 Registered Walking Tour Companies
- 250 (+-) Tour Guides
- Potentially 45 Tours Offered after 10PM
- Currently no “End Time” for tours – only small restricted area
- 30 Total number of Guests allowed per Walking Tour
- No Voice Amplification Systems Allowed
- Tour must not block sidewalks
- Tours must not encroach on Private Property





Walking Tour Ordinance Modifications Challenges and Considerations

Resident Feedback

- Noise in Residential Areas
- Large Groups of People, particularly after hours
- Resident Privacy

Tour Company Feedback

- Impacts to Employees of Tour Companies
- Small Business Vitality – Financial Impact
- Visitor Experience
- Current Rules on Tour Sizes

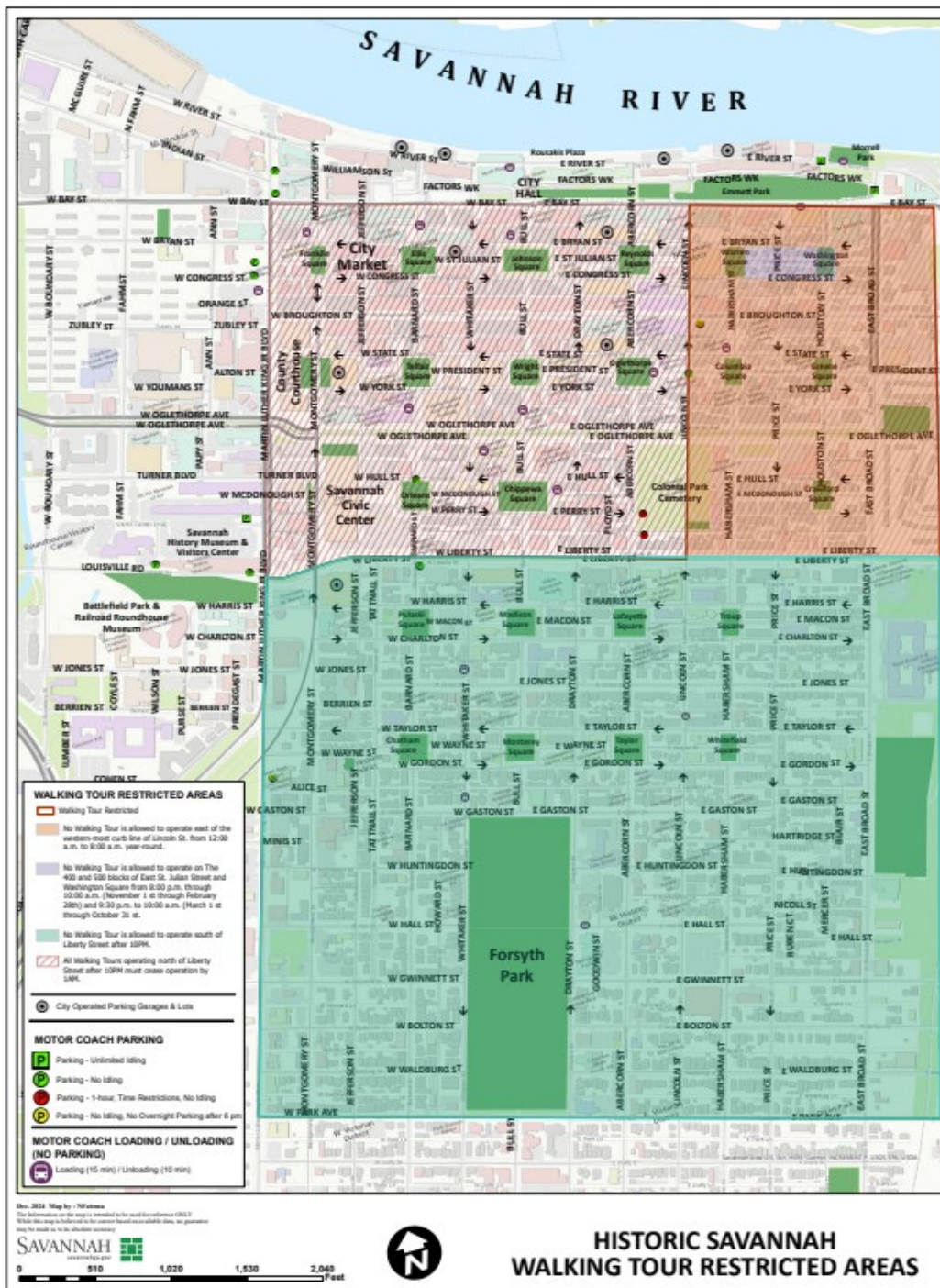
Description of Pilot

- **Initiate Pilot February 1, 2025, for 90 Days**
 - Includes “slower” Visitor Travel Month – February
 - Longer Days – March 9, 2025, Spring Forward
 - Busiest time for Visitor Travel – March and April

- **Restrict Walking Tours south of Liberty Street after 10PM**

- **Maintain Current Group Size – avoiding potential revenue loss**

- **Set cut-off time of 1AM for all Walking Tours**



Impacted Locations and Squares

North of Liberty – Walking Tours allowed between 10PM and 1AM

- Chippewa Square
- McDonough's Restaurant
 - Six Pence Pub
 - Wright Square
 - Johnson Square
- Savannah Civic Center
 - River Street
 - City Market
- Broughton Street
 - Ellis Square
- Colonial Cemetery
 - Franklin Square
- Warehouse District

South of Liberty – No walking Tours after 10PM

- Madison Square
- Sorrell Weed House – closes 11PM
 - Monterey Square
- Mercer House – closes 5PM
 - Forsyth Park
 - Taylor Square
 - Lafayette Square
 - Chatham Square
 - Whitefield Square
 - Troup Square
 - Pulaski Square
 - Pinkie Master's Bar
- Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

Pilot Program Enforcement

Number of Citations w/in 30 Days	Fine
5 or more	\$500
10 or more	\$750
15 or more	\$1,000

Enforcement of the Tour Service for Hire Ordinance will be in effect for the duration of the Pilot Program.

- \$100 Fine – Touring in Restricted Zones and Touring during Restricted Hours
- Any tour service company or other business operating a tour whose operators receive five or more sustained citations for violating this article in a 30-day period shall be assessed additional fines.

Pilot Program – Potential Impacts

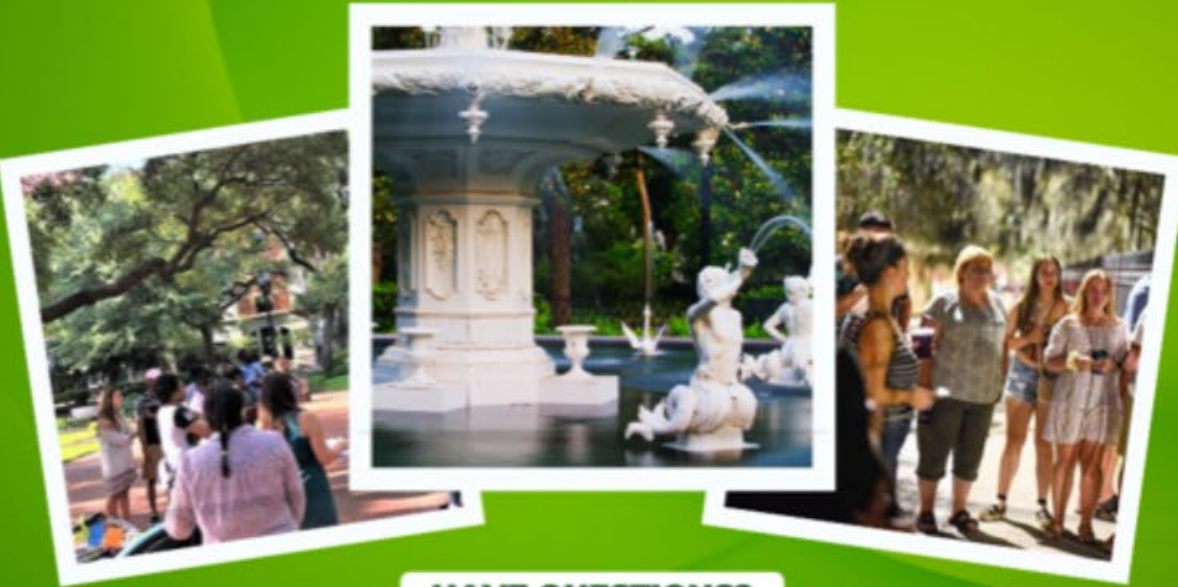
- Potential for fewer tours offered due to restriction south of Liberty Street after 10 PM.
- Financial impact is minimal compared to a reduction in the number of guests per tour.
- Residents should have relief from noise, crowds, and blocked sidewalks, especially in residential areas after 10 PM.
- Tour operations more confined to the commercial district.
- Possible increase in pedestrian congestion on streets in commercial areas after 10 PM.

Overall Balance: Provides relief to residents while allowing tour companies to maintain operations without significant financial strain.



WALKING TOUR PILOT PROGRAM

You're invited to join us for a discussion on our **NEW** pilot program launching February 2025, impacting all walking tours! Come learn key details and address any questions you may have.



HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact Ashley at
912-351-3737 Ext 1888

Community Input Opportunities

- Monday, January 13th
Coastal Georgia Center
11:30AM and 6PM
- Wednesday, January 15th
Coastal Georgia Center
6PM



Trolley Noise Abatement – Progress

June 1, 2025 – Year 1 Deadline

Trolley Company	Total # Open Air Trolley/Shuttle in 2025 Fleet	Year 1 (35%)	Year 2 (75%)	Year 3 (100%)
		Number of trolleys to be outfitted to meet the goal in Year 1.	Number of outfitted trolleys to meet the goal in Year 2.	This should match your Total # in fleet, unless you have added or removed vehicles.
Old Savannah Tours	37	13	28	37
Old Town Trolley	49	17	37	49
Kelly Tours	13	4	9	13