

## IV. Planning for Tourism

Any discussion of motorcoach tourism should include a discussion of tourism planning. Motorcoaches are, after all, an aspect of the tourism industry and it is appropriate to examine the evolution of some of the philosophies that have come into current use for planning, promoting, and managing tourism.

Businesses have long cast an enterprising eye upon the tourist industry as a way to generate revenues. Tourists have money to spend and it is the design of a tourist business for that money to be spent on the services that it offers. These businesses take the form of hotels, restaurants, retail shops, transportation, touring and other services.

The development of tourist services within a community is not without risks. Over the past few decades, it was noted how some tourist locations were able to prosper while others that were once popular had gone into decline. Those locations, while still receiving visitors, had lost much of their original appeal and had even developed a reputations as “tourist traps.” They had become places that no longer had that sense of uniqueness and some had even acquired a tawdry feel. This phenomenon led many to study the issue and it was determined that the success of tourist destinations had a lot to do with how the community approached tourist development. Two fundamental approaches became apparent.

**The Market-Led Approach vs. The Planning Approach:** Businesses exist to satisfy markets. The tourism market is generally viewed as a commercial opportunity and it is the natural instinct of any tourist-related business to advantage itself by tapping into the that market in any way it can and offering whatever the market will bear. When conducted without consideration to larger community desires and goals, this is known as the *market-led* approach to tourism.<sup>1</sup> A business sees a marketing opportunity and goes after it. The market leads the way.

It is worth noting that in focusing on promoting Alexandria to the motorcoach industry, the Alexandria Convention and Visitor Association (ACVA) has adopted a market-led approach to the motorcoach issue. The ACVA had taken note of the “burgeoning motorcoach industry”<sup>2</sup> in the region and wished to more fully tap this market in order to increase revenues. This is the same approach that a business would make to market products to customers and is a natural strategy in any business environment. But is this the best approach for a community?

This market-led approach to tourism, while common years ago, has come under considerable criticism. Over time the market-led approach has been largely discredited because of the harmful unintended consequences that accompany it and, in some cases, the actual long-term destruction of some tourist destinations. A completely market-led approach to tourism development that provides whatever attractions, facilities, and services the tourist market may demand, can result in environmental degradation and loss of sociocultural integrity of the tourism area, even though it brings short-term economic benefits. Some unplanned tourism places have had to take remedial actions to upgrade their environments and development patterns.<sup>3</sup>

It wasn't that long ago that tourism development was completely left up to local enterprise. Whether opening a hotel, resort, or capitalizing in some other way on local attractions, bringing in tourists was seen simply as a numbers game. Marketing plans were implemented to increase visitors with little thought to the consequences. It was thought that more visitors simply equaled more revenue and that there were no long-term costs involved.

But there were long-term costs. Communities that have followed this market-led approach have found themselves having to rethink policies that have had the long-term effect of damaging the very thing that they sought to preserve. Degradation of the environment in terms of ambiance, air quality, public safety, privacy, infrastructure, and even retail mixture are all recognized results of unmanaged tourist development brought on by many businesses operating in their own best interests.

In response to the failures of the market-led tourism approaches of the past, the importance of a *planned* approach began to be recognized.<sup>4</sup> In the planning of tourism, more communities now want to apply a policy of controlled development so that benefits can be gained from tourism without it generating any serious environmental or social problems. Based on experience gained during the past few decades, there is now much more emphasis being placed on planning for environmental and social considerations and on the *sustainable* development approach.

The sustainable development approach takes into account the interests of residents, tourists, and the tourism industry alike to arrive at a balance that maintains the attractiveness of the destination without degrading the quality of life for the community or the quality of the experience for the visitor. Regulation of the tourist activity is key to achieving this balance.

**Sustainable Tourism:** Because a planned approach to tourism generally seeks to achieve long-term benefits for the community while minimizing the harmful aspects, the planned approach has become generically known as *sustainable tourism*. The sustainable tourism movement is relatively new, having matured as a concept within the last twenty years and in reaction to the degradation of tourist destinations that had occurred through market-led approaches.

Key to achieving sustainable tourism is balancing the various interests in a community—businesses, residents, and the visitors who come for the tourist experience. A sustainable tourism industry is the only tourism industry which can serve both the short and long term



Sustainable tourism is achieved by respecting the desires and expectations of the three main participants in the process—the visitors, the residents, and the businesses. All must be considered to establish a tourist program that is sustainable for the long term. When one interest is able to outweigh another, an imbalance is formed and the system becomes unstable and sustainability is harmed. If the imbalance is severe enough, the entire system can collapse and damage the experience of the visitor, the livability for residents, and the profitability of business.

interests all three parties. While there are many specific definitions for sustainable tourism depending on the whether one is talking about ecotourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism, etc., a sustainable tourism industry can be broadly defined by some general observations:<sup>6</sup>

**It is initiated with the help of broad-based community-inputs.**

Businesses, residents, civic organizations, government, historic organizations and the community should collectively maintain control of tourism development. Guidelines for tourism operations, impact assessment, monitoring of cumulative impacts, and limits to acceptable change should be established.

**It strives for quality, not quantity.** Communities measure tourism success not by sheer numbers of visitors, but by length of stay, money spent, and quality of experience. It has a unique “product” that engages the visitor.

**It is appropriate in scale.** Tourism should not overwhelm the resources of the community. A community must also determine the sustainable tourist carrying capacity because sheer numbers can damage aspects of the community.

**It pays its own costs.** The tourist industry is, after all, a collection of businesses that need to be healthy enough to bear the costs of tourism. Tourist impacts to the community are mitigated by special use fees, licenses, taxes, and other assessments which can then be cycled back to targeted uses such as the maintenance of historic structures, streetscapes, and other core assets which benefit everyone. Sustainable tourism does not involve ongoing government subsidies to allay the costs of for-profit tourist businesses.

**It entails a long-term perspective for the use of resources in tourism production.** Short-term profits are traded for long-term social equity and protection of the historical assets and ambiance that tourists find attractive in the first place. This helps ensure that a healthy tourist environment will last for future generations.

**It enhances or at least preserves the resource.** Sustainable tourism does not abuse its product. Stakeholders anticipate development pressures and apply limits and management techniques to prevent the “loved to death” syndrome. Businesses cooperate to sustain heritage sites, scenic appeal, and local culture. The important historic assets in the community see the benefits of increased tourism and are not bypassed in favor of fast food or shopping.

The community must assure that those who do come enhance, or at least do not damage, the community.

**It provides jobs, business opportunities, and other benefits for residents.** Local control leads to local benefits for those who live in the community. Local tourist businesses are preferable to tourist businesses from outside of the community that come only to exploit the tourist assets and then leave.

**It does not degrade the overall quality of life.** Tourism should not negatively impact the community nor should it impose burdens on other people or to subsequent generations.

**It is otherwise compatible with resident's goals and desires.** Residential areas are respected and are not adversely impacted by tourist activities. The scale of tourism is adjusted to achieve compatibility with residents' expectations.

### **The Interests of Residents, Visitors, and Business.**

Historic communities have long been concerned by the costs or damage that can be brought about by motorcoach tourism. In seeking to balance the interests of residents, businesses, and visitors, it is useful to examine the expectations for each of these groups. These expectations can be divergent. If care is not taken in the development of tourism, imbalances can be created that lead to unsustainable practices.

**Residential Interests** – Residents of a community expect a certain lifestyle that is in keeping with the concept of a residential area. It has long been recognized that there are limits to the types of commercial uses that can peacefully co-exist with residential uses. Zoning laws are routinely enacted to guide uses and enforce such restrictions. Only those additional uses are permitted that are complimentary to, and can exist in harmony with, a residential neighborhood.

Residents expect that their government will respect the nature of a residential area and the residential zoning laws. Since touring-for-hire represents a de-facto business being operated in residential areas, communities have brought this activity under control through licensing, permitting, and other types of restrictions.

Loss of privacy, changes in ambiance, reductions in safety, increases in traffic, noise, and pollution are all deteriorations of the expected lifestyle in a residential neighborhood that can be brought on by motorcoaches. Because the carrying capacity of residential areas for such kinds of tourist activity is necessarily low, care must be taken that such uses of a residential neighborhood are appropriate in terms of scale and frequency.

**Business Interests** – In the simplest and most basic of terms, the foremost expectation of a business owner is to make a profit. Other financial goals might be to increase revenues, improve the bottom line, etc.

The environment in which a business conducts itself is of course a large factor in how successful it can be. Certain types of businesses need certain types of customers. Sit-down restaurants, antique shops, upscale boutiques, and museums all need customers with the time, interest and means to patronize them. But if the environment in which a business finds itself does not continue to provide them with the customers they need, then those types of businesses cannot survive and will be replaced with other types of businesses.



Fast food stops are an integral part of the motorcoach experience. Conveniently located just off the George Washington Parkway, the Roy Rogers on Belle Haven Boulevard is a popular stop for motorcoaches on their way to or from Mount Vernon. Large groups can be serviced quickly.



The Food Pavillion at the Torpedo Factory has recently become a popular motorcoach destination for a quick meal—often the only reason for a visit to Alexandria. This diminishes the Old Town experience by reducing the purpose of the visit to fast food and a bathroom break. Little time is allowed for anything else. Motorcoaches must transit residential areas to access this location and have been observed cruising the neighborhoods while waiting to reload their passengers.

In seeking to maximize the tourist business, extreme care should be taken as the character of a community and its business mix can actually be changed by the type of visitor they encounter. For example, the courting of a quick-stop visitors can change the restaurant mix. Sit-down restaurants can be pushed aside for fast-food since the visitor does not have the time for a longer meal.

Similarly, the quick-stop visitor on a motorcoach tour will likely not be as interested in upscale boutiques and will be more interested in souvenirs and impulse buys. Antique shops and other unique retail stores can give way to chain stores. All of this can result in a “sameness” that decreases the uniqueness of the visitor experience. The extreme result is a spiral of development that can result in a cheapened experience that converts a once desirable destination into a degraded tourist experience.

Alexandria is already a quick-stop for a number of tour companies utilizing the food court at the waterfront for fast food and a bathroom break in much the same way that a motorcoach would use a public rest stop on an interstate highway. However, in this case motorcoaches must transit residential areas to access this facility. This is an unforeseen use of the food court and of residential city streets. Is the continuation or expansion of these types of services a wise thing for the community?

Even though the motorcoach companies, in effect, operate businesses within the city limits of Alexandria, no fees or taxes are paid to the city. Any touring company locating their business offices within Alexandria will have to pay taxes to the City and be subject to City regulations

just as any other business would. Motorcoaches coming into the City from elsewhere are free of this burden.

It should also be noted that the presence of large touring motorcoaches in Old Town are a discouragement to the development of a local smaller tour-vehicle industry. As long as motorcoach touring in Alexandria is left unrestricted, any small-vehicle touring business would not be able to prosper. Such a service would provide a much better visitor experience enabling a more comprehensive and intimate view of Alexandria's history and architecture.

**The Visitor Experience** – Visitors expect a unique and engaging experience from tourist locations. The preservation and maintenance of that experience is critical to the long-term success of a tourist destination.

For the pedestrian visitor, the presence of motorcoaches can have a deleterious effect on their experience. Concentrations of motorcoaches detract from the uniqueness of a location and can subconsciously cause a place to be perceived as a “tourist trap.” Cities have become very concerned about “walls of buses”<sup>7</sup> that block views or of “belching tour buses”<sup>8</sup> that noisily intrude on quiet settings.

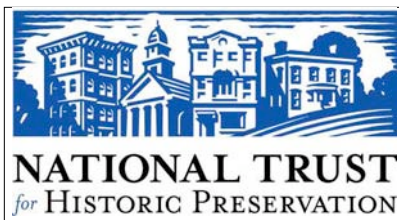
Motorcoaches adversely affect the character of Alexandria's historic area, which is a primary reason the tourists come to Old Town. The buses themselves are out of character in terms of scale and design and in the noise, vibrations and emissions they produce. Such effects decrease the ambiance of an area and make it less desirable to visit. In an ACVA Motorcoach Task Force meeting, when it was suggested that motorcoaches be restricted to commercial streets in Old Town such as King Street, a major objection was raised that motorcoaches would degrade the experience on King Street by producing negatives that would disturb diners and shoppers—ironically the same argument that residents have making regarding motorcoaches in residential areas!

For those visitors occupying seats on motorcoaches, Old Town motorcoach tours are generally short and superficial. The motorcoach visitor sees only what is convenient for the tour company, and from an elevation and environment that is artificial. In Alexandria, many tour companies offer cursory drive-thru tours of Old Town while on their way to or from someplace else. Visitors do not get to see or hear very much on such tours because the time spent on the tour is brief and the impact of the experience is generally low. In navigating Old Town streets, motorcoaches must take extreme care in making turns into oncoming traffic and avoiding fixed obstacles such as curbs and parked cars. Sometimes this can provide more entertainment than the tours that are given. The members of the ACVA Motorcoach Task Force, on a trial motorcoach run, had one such memorable traffic experience at the corner of King and Fairfax on February 15th of 2005. After a narrowly missing a parked vehicle, one Task Force member remarked that he would never park his car on a corner in Old Town again. This led the Motorcoach Task Force to recommend removal of parking spaces at corners... further reducing valuable parking capacity in Old Town.<sup>9</sup>

Touring activity can be inconsistent from tour company to tour company. Quality can differ because tour guides are not required to have any certification and each tour company provides its own training in the way that it sees fit. Some guides might be qualified, others are clearly not. Consequently, a depth of local knowledge cannot always be experienced. In many cases motorcoach drivers act as tour guides providing narration and splitting their attention between the road, the passengers, and sites of interest.

It is ironic that as motorcoach traffic has increased in Old Town, that the admissions to the historic museums in Old Town have not tracked this increase. Some have stayed the same or declined. Why is this? One of Alexandria's unique assets is its history. A desirable benefit of increased motorcoach tourist traffic should have been a corresponding increase in museum patronage; but this has not been the case. Is there a defect in the current tourist plan?

Because the visitor experience is so important to the success of sustainable tourism, cities have found it necessary to enact policies to ensure that the touring activity provides a quality experience for the visitor. Visitor feedback is helpful to ensure that the tourist expectations and their experience remains high. However, care must be taken that visitor surveys represent the common goals of the community and are properly interpreted. Tourism expansion based on these surveys should be in-line with sustainable goals and should not be based on market-led constructs.



### **Heritage Tourism – Sustainable Tourism for Historic Areas.**

The sustainable tourism philosophy is being successfully applied in a number of different tourist environments, from eco-tourism programs to modern full-service resort communities. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has taken the principals of sustainable tourism and has applied them to historic areas.<sup>10</sup> When the values of sustainable tourism are applied to historic sites or to similar cultural assets, the National Trust has labeled this Cultural Heritage Tourism or simply Heritage Tourism. It is a long-term focus on preserving the historic assets of a community while making those assets available to the visitor in a non-destructive way.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural resources.

Visiting historic sites and museums is the third most popular vacation activity for U.S. travelers behind shopping and outdoor activities. Cultural heritage travelers also spend more and stay longer than other travelers, generating more economic benefit. A good cultural heritage tourism program improves the quality of life for residents and serves visitors well.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation pioneered the process for heritage tourism programs in 1990 with a three-year initiative working with 16 pilot areas in four states-Indiana,

Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin. This intensive effort resulted in the time-tested five guiding principles and four basic steps for getting started.<sup>11</sup>

### **Five Guiding Principles for Heritage Tourism:**

- 1. Collaborate**—Cultural heritage tourism brings together many different perspectives: preservation, tourism, economic development, the arts, museums, main street, humanities, elected officials, public land managers and more. By working together, you can accomplish much more than by working alone.
- 2. Find the fit between the community and tourism**—A good cultural heritage tourism program balances the needs of visitors and residents alike. Every community has a different capacity for tourism, and it is important to involve the community in shaping your tourism efforts.
- 3. Make sites and programs come alive**—Find creative ways to engage visitors and provide them with a memorable experience. Provide interactive experiences that engage as many of the visitor's five senses as possible.
- 4. Focus on authenticity and quality**—Today's travelers are more sophisticated and well traveled than the previous generation, and they expect both quality and authenticity in their heritage travel experiences.
- 5. Preserve and protect resources**—Be sure that the historic, cultural and natural resources which make up your cultural heritage tourism program are adequately protected for future generations to enjoy as well. If these irreplaceable resources are lost, you can never get them back.

**Four Steps for Heritage Tourism:** Cultural heritage tourism programs develop in stages, and these four steps should be repeated with each new phase.<sup>12</sup> The marketing only takes place *after* all the planning and preparation for tourism has been done.

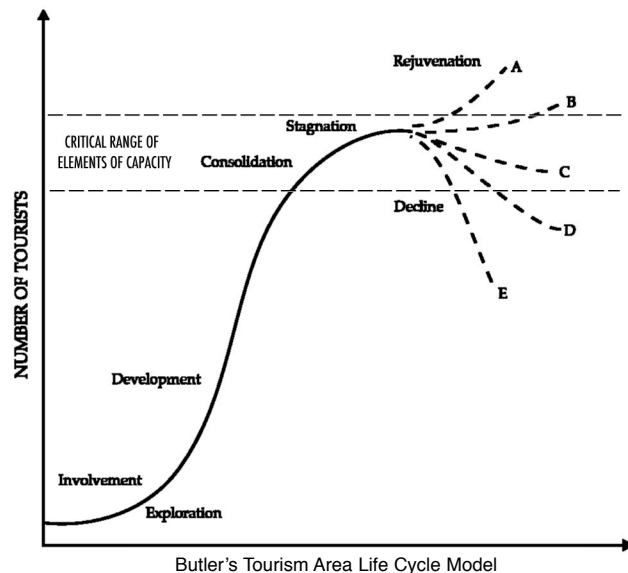
- 1. Assess the potential**—Evaluate what your community has to offer in attractions, visitor services, organizational capabilities, ability to protect resources and marketing.

- 2. Plan and organize**—Make good use of human and financial resources. They are keys that open the doors to sustainable heritage tourism. Set priorities and measurable goals.
  
- 3. Prepare for visitors; protect and manage resources**—Look to the future as well as the present. Be sure that the choices you make now improve your community for the long term.
  
- 4. Market for success**—Develop a multi-year, many tiered marketing plan that targets your market. Look for partners in local, regional, state or national groups.

**Old Town Alexandria and the Tourist Area Life Cycle.** The Old & Historic District of Alexandria is at a crossroads with regards to tourist development. As tourism grows, critical decisions must be made regarding how tourism will be managed and controlled within the City. So far the government of the City of Alexandria has been very hands-off with tourism, leaving it instead to industry groups such as the Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association (ACVA) and, by extension, various tourist-related private companies. But by their very nature, such groups tend to adopt market-led approaches when pursuing tourism development.

Much has been written regarding a concept known as *The Tourist Area Life Cycle*.<sup>13</sup> R.W. Butler of the University of Ontario identified a number of stages that tourist areas go through from inception to maturity and, if not properly managed, into decline. These are 1) the **Exploration Stage**, the point at which an area is “discovered” by the tourist; 2) the **Involvement Stage**, when local residents will begin to care for the historic or architectural assets and to provide some services for tourists; and the 3) **Development Stage**. How this third stage is handled is absolutely critical to the long term health of the community.

The Development Stage reflects a well-defined tourist market area, shaped in part by heavy advertising in tourist-generating areas. Characterizing this stage, local involvement and control of development will decline rapidly, supplanted by outside or large corporate entities. The original natural or historic attractions are supplemented by artificial or imported attractions characterized by fairs, festivals, or other “tourist-generating” venues. The tourist industry (transportation, touring, and otherwise) is eventually dominated by major chains and franchisees and to great opposition and dis-



content of local residents. Large modern facilities (hotels and other hospitality facilities) are planned and built primarily by external/outside organizations. By this time, the tourism industry is so entrenched in the local economy and political structure that residents ability to control and own community can be lost.

Conditions indicate that the Old & Historic District of Alexandria has been in the Development Stage of Butler's *Tourist Area Life Cycle* for some time and is approaching the Consolidation Stage. Some have argued that Old Town and King Street are actually in the Consolidation Stage right now and that tourism is indeed flattening, hence the rationalization that has been put forth by the ACVA for increasing motorcoach visitation to these places.

But in making that argument, it should be appreciated that the Consolidation Stage is characterized by a "critical range of elements of capacity" (see diagram on page IV-9) which *must* be properly managed to maintain a healthy environment for tourism. These "elements of capacity" refer to those things that define the point at which unacceptable deterioration of the experience begins. Ignoring this *carrying capacity* of the tourist area is done at the peril of the community. Motorcoaches are but one of these "elements" that carry substantial costs which are discussed in the following chapter and the carrying capacity of this class of traffic is necessarily low.

Butler warned that with the Development Stage of tourism, "local involvement and control of development will decline rapidly." Alexandria is no exception. Local involvement in tourist development is indeed in question and residents are increasingly unhappy with the unregulated use of residential areas by outside touring companies and the use of heavy motorcoaches in particular. The patronage of local museums and historic homes is stagnant or in decline while festivals and fairs that have nothing to do with the historic and cultural assets of Old Town are on the increase. The increasing corporate and foreign ownership of commercial real estate on King Street and elsewhere in the City, the recent efforts to create a separate political taxing and spending entity (King Street **Business Improvement District**), and the growth of publicly funded (but private) trade associations (such as the ACVA) are all indicative of a trend of declining involvement by residents in tourist development issues.

Beyond the Development Stage of Butler's *Tourist Area Life Cycle* lies, 4) the **Consolidation Stage**, 5) the **Stagnation Stage**, and the 5) **Decline Stage**. All of these stages are indicative of the final phases of the cycle which, if left unmanaged or unregulated, will inevitably lead to a loss of an area's appeal allowing it to stagnate or decline. One travel writer said it well: "We can visualize a destination moving across a spectrum, however, gradually or slowly, but far too often inexorably toward the potential of its own demise. Destination areas carry with them the potential seeds of their own destruction, as they allow themselves to become more commercialized and lose their qualities which originally attracted tourists."<sup>14</sup>

But decline does not have to be the inevitable end of the tourist area. Good planning and management has the ability to not only forestall the negative fate that awaits an unregulated and unmanaged tourist destination, but to make it healthy for the future. Butler concludes:

“a change of attitude is required on the part of those who are responsible for planning, developing, and managing tourist areas. Tourist attractions are not infinite and timeless but should be viewed and treated as finite and possibly non-renewable resources. They could then be more carefully protected and preserved. The development of the tourist area could be kept within predetermined capacity limits, and its potential competitiveness maintained over a longer period. While the maximum number of people visiting an area at any one time under such arrangements may be less than most present policies of short-term development, more visitors could be catered for in the long term.”<sup>15</sup>

End of Chapter IV.

## Chapter IV Notes

1. Sheinberg Associates and Juneau, Alaska. *Juneau's Visitors's Industry, Tourism Analysis and Planning Recommendations*, Prepared for: Tourism Working Group, City and Borough of Juneau, 155 South Seward Street, Juneau, Alaska 99801. May 1996.

Sheinberg Associates and the Tourism Working Group in Juneau also warned that an unrestrained *market-led* approach to tourism can eventually lead to a *spiral of tourism development*. These dangers were first outlined when developing a tourism plan for islands of San Juan County, Washington. This was...

“...coined by the Madrona Group in their San Juan County Tourism Plan. They term it the “spiral of tourism development.” Entrepreneurs who perceive economic benefits of tourism, particularly after a good year, start or expand their tourism businesses. The owner promotes the business which attracts more tourists. As more tourists come, more merchants see opportunities --- the industry eventually overdevelops and to try and succeed, markets even harder. Eventually the number of tourism businesses increases faster than growth in the number of tourists and tourist spending. As the natural attractions that initially brought visitors to the area become saturated, businesses begin to create artificial attractions to bring in more people. This creates conflicts in communities whose goal is to sustain and enhance the natural beauty and cultural heritage that initially drew visitors to the area.”

2. *Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association Motorcoach Task Force Report*, November 2005, p. 4.

Strategic Growth: If the City Council wishes to increase the contribution of the motorcoach industry to the City of Alexandria, then Council will need to direct the ACVA to aggressively market to capture a large percentage of the burgeoning motorcoach industry. This implies that the Council is committed to finding a long term solution to providing parking and other reasonable amenities to the motorcoaches who visit the City. What financial and staff resources will be made available for this long term solution?

3. Inskip, Edward. *Tourism Planning, An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*, John Wiley & Sons, New York; 1991. pp 14-17.
4. Ibid.
5. Sheinberg Associates, op. cit.
6. Many different sources have produced definitions for Sustainable Tourism. One of the more concise ones also appears in *Juneau's Visitors's Industry, Tourism Analysis and Planning Recommendations*, Sheinberg Associates and Juneau, Alaska (May 1996): Sustainable Tourism—A tourism industry which is appropriate in scale, pays its own costs, enhances or at least preserves environmental values, provides jobs, business opportunities, and other benefits for residents, does not degrade the overall quality of life, and is otherwise compatible with resident's goals and desires. Another good reference for definitions may also be found in the research paper: *Toward a Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Industry in Montana: An Examination of Concepts And Industry Perceptions*, McCool, Burgess, and Nickerson. Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, University of Montana. Missoula, Montana; Research Report # 54, February 1998. Sustainable tourism...

1) Entails a long-term perspective for the use of resources in tourism production. *In a sense, short-term profits are traded for long-term social equity and environmental protection concerns. Thinking long-term about profits may permit greater concern about impacts to the environment of development activity.*

- 2) Contributes to creating equality and economic and social welfare for the local community. *There tends to be greater local retention of income, thus, keeping tourist expenditures in the community longer, benefiting a wider variety of people.*
- 3) Careful use must be made of the natural and cultural conditions, including the built environment. *Impacts of tourism development on our natural and cultural heritage are carefully considered and mitigated.*
- 4) No burden shall be given to other people or subsequent generations as a result of tourism development. *We ensure that options for development, economic opportunity and environmental quality are built into tourism decisions.*
- 5) It should not degrade the resource and should be developed in an environmentally sound manner. *Careful consideration is given to impacts on the environment; planners consider the acceptability of these impacts.*
- 6) It should involve participation among all parties--local communities, government, nongovernmental organizations, industry, and tourists (before, during, and after the trip). *Tourism development involves all components of our society; each person and group can offer knowledge and expertise for planning decisions. Individuals can help tourists understand the special character of Montana.*
- 7) Preservation, protection and enhancement of the quality of resources which are the basis of tourism. *The tourism and recreation industry should understand its dependency on natural resources and work with managers and land owners to protect those resources.*

Sources for definitions 1 thru 7:

Aronsson, L. (1994). *Sustainable tourism systems: the example of sustainable rural tourism in Sweden*. Journal of Sustainable Tourism. 2(1&2): 77-92.

Pigram, J. J. (1990). *Sustainable tourism - Policy considerations*. The Journal of Tourism Studies 1(2): 2-9.

Wight, P. (1993). *Sustainable ecotourism: Balancing economic, environmental and social goals within an ethical framework*. The Journal of Tourism Studies 4(2): 54-56.

7. *The District of Columbia Tour Bus Management Initiative (TBMI)*, 2004. Introduction. p. 1.

8. A *belching tour bus* is an amusing poetic image that turns up from time to time in planning and historic preservation writings when describing the generally unpleasant intrusiveness of motorcoaches into sensitive areas. Alex Marshall, an independent journalist living in New York City, has written extensively on the subject of urban planning. In 1996, he used the term when writing about the historic San Antonio neighborhood of King William.

King William was not chosen as one of the historic areas to study in Chapter VI of this paper because it did not quite fit the criteria that was established (it would have been included had it been located in the eastern United States). A close look at King William would have also necessitated a close look at many other cities and neighborhoods in the west and midwest. There simply wasn't not the time nor the necessity to do so.

This does not mean that the story of King William is not relevant. On the contrary, King William is interesting because its journey from decrepitude to restoration is largely parallel to Alexandria's transformation. Also, like King William, Alexandria has found itself caught up in the "tourist machinery" of a larger metropolitan area and is wrestling with how to control it. Both King William and Alexandria are victims of their own success.

Marshall's article in Metropolis Magazine makes a number of points regarding tourist planning. His observations of the "tension between long-term and short-term gain" and of the decline in charm and ambiance that can occur if an area is "overrun with tour buses... or chain restaurants" are perceptive. He also notes the importance of a "balance between tourism and the indigenous life of the neighborhood."

## A Sweet Neighborhood In San Antonio: King William

BY ALEX MARSHALL, SEPT. 5, 1996, Metropolis Magazine (edited)

The fat man in the Budweiser T-shirt and shorts gawking up at the Moorish inspired arches of the front porch of the palatial home was one sign of why life in this elegant neighborhood is not always easy. Despite his admiral interest in historical homes, the man and his companions were not the easiest sight on a Saturday morning if you had just climbed out of bed.

And keep in mind the Budweiser man was one of the good tourists, or at least uncontroversial ones. He was on foot, not in a belching tour bus.

King William is a sweet honey of a neighborhood, a tasty blend of elegant mansions, decrepit Victorians and more non-descript homes nestled down amid the scarred landscape of freeways and vacant lots on the edge of San Antonio's downtown. A slum at one time, it was rediscovered in the late 60s and 70s. Since then, many of its palatial mansions have been renovated, and their residents live in harmony with the more middle-class denizens that reside in the smaller homes and apartments there...

...Despite its beauty, King William might be just another inner-city, gentrified neighborhood were it not for its position on the edge of San Antonio's tourist machinery. Both a convention city and a historic tourist town, San Antonio receives some 10 million visitors a year who trot through The Alamo, wander the River Walk, and increasingly, make their way to King William to look at the houses.

Tourism was not on the minds of those who homesteaded the neighborhood back in the late 1960s and early 70s. The godfather of this movement is Walter Mathis. When his home elsewhere in town was put in the bullseye of a freeway's path, Mathis moved into King William in 1968, bought a crumbling mansion, and then - he says he wanted to assure himself of having good neighbors - bought 14 other homes. ...he had the foundations repaired, put on new tin roofs, and then sold them as is to young couples eager to renovate the homes themselves. Like many people who subsequently moved in, they then spent years or even a decade or more slowly renovating their homes, a la This Old House...

The tourism debate has developed over the last few years. It has centered on two items of tourism: bed and breakfasts, and tour buses.

Of the two, the tour buses are clearly obnoxious. In King William, the full-sized city buses glide through the neighborhood at a crawl in the middle of the street, forcing regular drivers behind them to wait or try to squeeze around them. According to residents, they often sit and idle their engines after they have disgorged their passengers for a stroll. Sometimes they stack up, two or three at once. My visit to the neighborhood was not during the high-tourist season, but I could tell they are obnoxious as hell.

"I've had times when right in front of my house, I've had two buses and one trolley parked, and I didn't feel I could work in my bathing suit or shorts on a hot day, because people are staring at me," said Karen Van Nort, who lives in a palatial residence on King William street, the main drag for tour buses.

...Although some limits have already been set - they are not supposed to cruise before 11 a.m. or after 6 p.m., they still bother some people. The problem is more difficult in that they generally only bother one street - King William - where most of the mega-mansions are clustered.

What many there want is to create a parking lot on the edge of the neighborhood, where the buses could park and then its occupants disembark and walk on foot through the neighborhood. Failing that, they want limits on the size of the buses, and the number that can go through at any onetime. A committee is studying the issue now. It's using as its model, among others, the ordinances in place in Charleston which not only set limits on buses but on horse drawn carriages.

That tourism is both a problem and a blessing there can be no doubt. Last year, [November 1995], the Historic Annapolis Foundation held a seminar entitled *Living with Success: Managing Residential Life and Tourism in Historic Communities*. Among its participants were San Antonio, Newport, Charleston, Santa Fe and Savannah. The report's conclusions were common-sensical - there must be a balance between tourism and the indigenous life of the neighborhood - but no less true because of this.

What comes across when looking at tourism is that there is often a tension between long-term and short-term gain. If King William is overrun with tour buses, or San Antonio's River Walk is overrun with chain restaurants, they will both lose some of the charm that makes them successful. But in the short run, the profits from such ventures - should we say predatory ventures? - are tempting...

9. *Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association Motorcoach Task Force Report*, op. cit., p.3.
10. National Trust for Historic Preservation website. *Heritage Tourism*.  
[http://www.nationaltrust.org/heritage\\_tourism/index.html](http://www.nationaltrust.org/heritage_tourism/index.html)
11. National Trust for Historic Preservation, Cultural Heritage Tourism website. *Five Principles for Successful and Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism*. [http://www.nationaltrust.org/heritage\\_tourism/index.html](http://www.nationaltrust.org/heritage_tourism/index.html)
12. National Trust for Historic Preservation, Cultural Heritage Tourism website. *Four Steps for Successful and Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism*. <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/foursteps.htm>
13. Butler, R.W., University of Western Ontario. *The Concept of a Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution: Implications for Management of Resources*. Canadian Geographer, Vol. XXIV, 1980, pp. 5-12.
14. Quoted by Butler, op. cit. Plog, S.C., *Why destination areas rise and fall in popularity*. Unpublished paper presented to the Southern California Chapter, The Travel Research Association, 1972.
15. Butler, op. cit.