

NIGHTTIME ECONOMY IN PHILADELPHIA

YEAR ONE PROGRESS REPORT





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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR OF PHILADELPHIA

Fellow Philadelphians,

Since I took office in 2016, our city's equitable and inclusive economic growth has been a cornerstone of this administration. We are pleased to release this inaugural report from the Department of Commerce showcasing progress for the nighttime economy in Philadelphia. The nighttime economy represents the enriching cultural and creative spirit of our dynamic city of neighborhoods. Our diversity is our strength as we amplify Philadelphia as a wellspring of equitable economic opportunities supporting the needs of nighttime workers and businesses. This administration has been dedicated to advancing our 24-hour city with a bustling nighttime economy that is a dynamic driver of tourism, hospitality, world-class arts, and cultural assets.



To streamline this work within City government, the Department of Commerce hired the City's first Nighttime Economy Director. This new role, established in July 2022, is an implemented recommendation from the City of Philadelphia Arts and Culture Task Force sponsored by members of City Council including Councilmember Isaiah Thomas, who championed ongoing initiatives needed to support the creative and hospitality industries which are among the worst hit economically by the pandemic.

Throughout this past year, the Department of Commerce has been elevating public participation in governmental decision-making processes for the nighttime economy. The Nighttime Economy Director led public engagement efforts consisting of more than 180 listening tour stops and established a Nighttime Economy Advisory Council. This type of public engagement leads to innovative solutions for Philadelphians and has informed the progress of this initiative.

Philadelphia is the birthplace of our nation, the nation's first UNESCO World Heritage City and the largest city in the country to be designated a Certified Welcoming City. Our unique combination of arts, cultural amenities, talented and diverse workforce make us a top choice for companies within world-class sectors. Philadelphia has also steadily grown for more than a decade — bouncing back after the pandemic and resulting recession. Following this momentum, our city has grown with more economic opportunities.

Through our Fiscal Year 2023 operating budget and Five Year Plan, my administration has made additional historic investments for the Department of Commerce to begin implementing programs and initiatives in support of our nighttime economy. On behalf of our administration, thank you to all City departments, stakeholders, residents, business owners, committee members and neighborhood organizations that have been critical to the release of our inaugural nighttime economy report.

Sincerely,

James F. Kenney
Mayor

LETTER FROM CITY COUNCIL

Dear Philadelphians,

The quality of life in Philly’s neighborhoods – their youth and families – is my top priority. That includes advancing innovative opportunities for the arts and culture sector, which are integral for our nighttime economy, to thrive in Philadelphia. Our city’s social, economic, and cultural vibrancy is continuously amplified by industries that operate at night, including restaurants, arts and cultural venues. This sector of our economy is a vital engine that can transform Philadelphia into a 24-hour city, supporting thousands of jobs and businesses. Through our nighttime economy initiatives, we can help bridge safe and fun experiences at night for people of all ages. The goal is to open doors for Philadelphians to comfortably experience the joy of what makes Philadelphia a city that can continue to fuel creativity, inspiration, and enjoyable memories.



This vision is possible if we all work together. Philadelphia was one of the only major cities in the East Coast without a government position dedicated to the nighttime economy– until last year. After listening to recommendations from the Arts and Culture Task Force, I prioritized advocating for this position through the budget. We have been pleased to work with the Department of Commerce and the Nighttime Economy Director Raheem Manning to hear constituent feedback and advance the nighttime economy in Philadelphia. Arts and culture, when properly invested in, can create jobs, improve livelihoods, and boost the economy. It has been an honor for me to spearhead the creation of the Arts and Culture Task Force, and to see its recommendations start coming to fruition. The goal has always been to give voice to those representing the arts and culture communities to incentivize new investment in the sector by working closely in partnership with stakeholders in and out of government.

We look forward to the growth of arts-and-culture-related public-private partnerships. The public engagement efforts spearheaded by the Department of Commerce’s Nighttime Economy Director can help us advance Philadelphia as a 24-hour city by centering the nighttime economy as a sector for targeted equitable investment, good governance, public engagement, intentional reform, and assistance provision. We are dedicated to balancing the needs of all engaged in the nighttime economy by advocating for governmental policies, strategic initiatives, noise management resolutions, and capacity-building efforts.

My office will continue to promote Philadelphia’s nighttime economy and its cultural assets as a driver of tourism, hospitality, equitable economic development, and enhanced quality of life for all residents. Additionally, we will also be engaging my colleagues in City Council and City leadership to provide more resources in support of the city’s nighttime economy goals.

Isaiah Thomas

Councilmember At-Large

Isaiah Thomas

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The Department of Commerce is the economic catalyst for the City of Philadelphia, envisioning a globally competitive economy that benefits all people who live, work and do business in our city. We aim for Philadelphia to be a more vibrant destination where employers flock, entrepreneurs thrive, and innovation abounds. The Department of Commerce helps businesses start, operate and grow in Philadelphia.

Strategic Priorities

- 1 Provide trusted guidance and a simplified process to establish, grow, and operate a business
- 2 Drive equitable neighborhood revitalization that contributes to vibrant commercial corridors
- 3 Attract and retain businesses through business resources and strategic investments
- 4 Connect talent to growth industries and to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages
- 5 Bolster equitable access to capital and contracts for people who have been historically underserved
- 6 Leverage partnerships and research to drive policy and strategy

Contact Us

The Department of Commerce provides one-on-one assistance to businesses in neighborhoods and commercial areas across the city. In addition, Commerce funds and works in partnership with neighborhood organizations to connect businesses with resources. Businesses can contact the Department of Commerce's Office of Business Services by calling **215-683-2100** or emailing **business@phila.gov**. We will continue to help all business sectors excel while enhancing our 24-hour city with a thriving nighttime economy. Together, alongside our partners, we remain committed to supporting the nighttime economy in Philadelphia that is a dynamic driver of tourism, hospitality, world-class arts, and cultural assets.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Nighttime Economy Director

Raheem Manning, is the City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce's first Nighttime Economy Director. In this newly created role, Manning leads public engagement efforts that can inform strategic investments for the nighttime economy in Philadelphia. Manning has been convening the Department of Commerce's Nighttime Economy Advisory Council.

Nighttime Economy Advisory Council

The Department of Commerce Nighttime (NTE) Advisory Council comprises a diverse group of 25 members, including City officials, business owners, residents, and representatives from local organizations. The NTE Advisory Council advocates for policies that enhance a welcoming, safe and thriving nighttime economy for Philadelphians.

NTE Advisory Council Leadership



Shaleem Prevez, Co-Chair
Mirage Lounge &
Roar Night Club



Evon Burton, Co-Chair
Anderson Street Project

NTE Advisory Council Members

Angela Val

Visit Philadelphia

Ben Fileccia

Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association

Chad Williams

Friday Saturday Sunday Restaurant

Dan Lodise

Office of Councilmember Isaiah Thomas

Dawn M. Tancredi, Esq.

Zarwin Baum

Donny Smith

Mayfair Business Improvement District

Dr. Marius Chukwurah

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Frank Antonio Aleman

Sin City Cabaret

George Lawrence

GL Agency / Philadelphia Arts & Culture Taskforce

Gregg Caren

Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau

Jennifer Johnson Kebea

Campus Philly

Joanna Winchester

Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

Ken Anderson

Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

Kerri Park

World Café Live /Philadelphia Arts & Culture Taskforce

L'Oréal Porçeia McCollum, LMSW, M.Ed.

Healing Artist • DJ

Laura Burkhardt

Avenue of the Arts, Inc.

Mark Broadnax

Philadelphia Licensed Taven & Merchants Association

Michael Fichman

Artist /University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design /Philadelphia Arts and Culture Task Force

Mike Harris

South Street Headhouse District

Mike Morrow

Public LVNG

Randi Klein-Davila

School District of Philadelphia

Stephen Doyle

Limitless Lounge

Tisha Albert

Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board

University of Pennsylvania

The Housing, Community, and Economic Development Practicum at the University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design’s Spring 2023 City Planning Program provided supportive research listed in the Department of Commerce’s inaugural nighttime economy report. Special thanks to Professor Lisa Servon, PHD and students Lynn Chong, Micah Epstein, Morgan Griffiths, Simón Gutkin, Myron Joel-Bañez.



The Department of Commerce has vital partnerships with economic development partners citywide to support our nighttime and daytime economies. We are pleased with the achievements and progress highlighted in this report. Special recognition is due to our Director of Nighttime Economy who has achieved these milestones in partnership with City departments, City Council, the Nighttime Economy Advisory Council, and numerous stakeholders of the nighttime economy. Their collective dedication is propelling Philadelphia towards becoming an even more welcoming, safe, and thriving 24-hour city, where the nighttime economy is a source of pride and prosperity for all.

- Anne Nadol, Commerce Director



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Philadelphia Industries

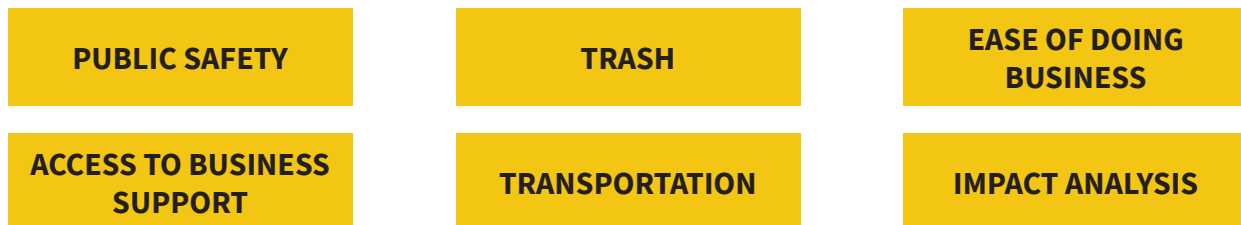
Philadelphia is home to an amazing array of businesses that provide recreational and social activities at night. That includes our restaurants, cultural venues, bars, clubs, and cinemas which drive the city's vibrant and creative reputation. In addition, Philadelphia's growth industries provide critical and functional 24-hour services for the well-being of our residents and visitors, including healthcare, janitorial, warehousing, delivery, manufacturing, construction, hospitality, and technology. All of these businesses make up our nighttime economy. The nighttime economy contributes significantly to the employment, revenue, and quality of life in our city, yet faces critical challenges that impede its dynamic growth.

Nighttime Economy Director in City Government

Philadelphia was one of the only major cities in the East Coast without a government position dedicated to its nighttime economy until last year. In July 2022, the Department of Commerce hired its first Nighttime Economy (NTE) Director. With this investment, we are proactively and diligently working to enhance our 24-hour city with a thriving nighttime economy that is a dynamic driver of tourism, hospitality, world-class arts, and cultural assets. Since coming on board, the NTE Director has been leading public engagement efforts consisting of more than 180 listening tour stops and established a Nighttime Economy Advisory Council. These critical efforts aim to elevate accountability and public participation in governmental decision-making processes for the nighttime economy. The Department of Commerce NTE Advisory Council comprises a diverse group of 25 members, including City officials, business owners, residents, and representatives from local organizations. This group advocates for policies that can enhance a welcoming, safe and thriving nighttime economy for Philadelphians.

Nighttime Economy Listening Tour Findings

Through the NTE listening tour this past year, six focus areas were identified by stakeholders as most critical to improve for the growth and vitality of Philadelphia's nighttime economy:



The NTE stakeholders who contributed to this report have highlighted important trends and issues that can inform further investments in programs, services and policies toward a safe and vibrant nighttime economy that works for Philadelphians. In response, the Department of Commerce will continue its efforts to inform NTE stakeholders of City resources and programs while providing one-on-one assistance. Additionally, based on the findings of the listening tour, the Department aims to launch new programs based on the key findings from our ongoing public engagement efforts.

Looking Forward

To support the growth of our nighttime economy, stakeholders including City government and economic development partners would need to further integrate services functioning after dark while designing innovative solutions that meet the specific needs of nighttime workers and businesses. The public engagement efforts and initial NTE programs outlined in this inaugural report lay the groundwork for a larger strategic planning process which would include an impact study. The Department of Commerce is dedicated to strengthening its alliances and partnerships. The success of ongoing nighttime improvements for Philadelphia relies on collaboration among government, businesses, creatives, and community stakeholders, working together to advance a vibrant nighttime economy that aligns with the needs and aspirations of Philadelphians.

INTRO + BACKGROUND

The Department of Commerce is releasing its first report detailing progress from the City of Philadelphia to support the nighttime economy. The goal of this report is to introduce Philadelphians to a sector that is vital for our collective quality of life with year one feedback based on how our city can improve its functions at all hours of the night.

Philadelphia’s Nighttime Economy

Philadelphia’s nighttime economy (NTE) refers to economic activities that occur from 5 p.m to 6 a.m which are integral to social and cultural dynamics citywide. The NTE encompasses a range of businesses operating at night such as restaurants, hotels, bars, entertainment, clubs, cinemas, and cultural venues. The NTE is a vital contributor to a city’s inclusive growth providing significant revenue, recreation, tourism and employment opportunities. The Department of Commerce envisions nighttime economy efforts to enhance our 24-hour city with a thriving nighttime economy that is a dynamic driver of tourism, hospitality, world-class arts and cultural assets.

Inclusive Economic Growth

Philadelphia has industries that operate throughout the day and night. These industries located in neighborhoods and commercial areas throughout the city need strategic investments that are inclusive of their dynamic needs. This includes centering critical services for nighttime workers and businesses with policies that balance the needs of all residents. The goal is to coordinate strategies that can further establish Philadelphia’s nighttime economy and its cultural assets as a driver of tourism, hospitality, equitable economic development, and enhanced quality of life for all residents. We are dedicated to advocating for governmental policies, strategic initiatives, assistance provision, resolutions and business growth efforts that can enhance a welcoming, safe and thriving economy for Philadelphians. The Department of Commerce alongside economic development partners citywide are committed to supporting, attracting and retaining businesses within the nighttime and daytime economies.

Impact of Nighttime Businesses and Workers

Philadelphia has vital industries that provide recreational and social activities, such as restaurants, bars, entertainment, clubs, cinemas, and cultural venues at night. These industries are the backbone of Philadelphia’s creativity, world-class cuisines and cultural assets. View data below with example of establishments operating at night and their economic impact in Philadelphia.

Type of Establishment	Total Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wages
Food Businesses	3,388	46,437	\$1,326,455,453
Bars	476	8,389	\$347,658,600
Venues	257	3,076	\$154,580,810
Sports & Recreation	28	2,826	\$687,272,276
Total	4,149	60,728	\$2,515,967,139

Data Source: 2022 Annual Average, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition, Philadelphia has growth industries that provide critical and functional 24 hour services for the well-being of our residents including healthcare, janitorial, warehousing, delivery, manufacturing, construction, hospitality, and technology.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY PRIORITIES

Philadelphia is a central location on the Northeast corridor with world-class dining, history, and cultural attractions. Our nighttime economy with its diverse industries upholds Philadelphia as a world-class destination of arts, culture, tourism, and leisure. A nighttime economy that sustains and supports its industries within neighborhoods citywide can advance economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Philadelphians. To support the growth of our nighttime economy, City government and economic development partners would need to further integrate their services into 24-hour operations while designing innovative solutions that meet the specific needs of nighttime workers and businesses.



MISSION: The Department of Commerce is the economic catalyst for the City of Philadelphia dedicated to helping our economy grow, while supporting the needs of our nighttime workers and businesses. We aim for Philadelphia to become a well-functioning 24-hour city that enhances a welcoming, safe, innovative, and thriving economy for Philadelphians.

PRIORITIES: The Department of Commerce aims to execute its NTE mission through outreach, advocacy, mediation, and program administration. The Department of Commerce is dedicated to advocating for the needs of the nighttime economy businesses and workers. The nighttime economy (NTE) efforts are based on the following four core principles:

SAFETY

ASSISTANCE

INVESTMENT

OPPORTUNITY

These four core principles function through multiple strategies, such as:

- **Spearheading public engagement efforts** that center the voices of nighttime businesses and workers which can increase public participation in governmental decision-making processes.
- **Advancing economic opportunities** by facilitating access to government services, technical assistance programs, one-on-one assistance, and resources.
- **Promoting responsible business practices** based on nuisance and noise management resolutions that can improve the quality of life for Philadelphians.
- **Investing in initiatives and implementing programs** that meet the needs of stakeholders consisting of public agencies, business districts, residents, nighttime businesses and workers.

- **Advocating for governmental policies**, administrative processes and strategic initiatives that focus on the needs and interests of Philadelphia’s nighttime workforce, stakeholders and historically disadvantaged communities.
- **Strengthening interdepartmental coordination** and partnership for the ease of doing business and regulatory improvements that can have a direct impact on nighttime economic activity.
- **Promoting and supporting best practices** in harm reduction, venue operations, mental health and management of patron behavior as provided by public health stakeholders.
- **Conducting data collection, research and analysis** related to nighttime activities and the growth of our arts and culture sector which can inform our collective strategies.

PARTNERSHIPS: These priorities from the Department of Commerce are in partnership with individuals and stakeholders in the nighttime economy.

The core private stakeholders of this industry include, but are not limited, to venue proprietors, restaurant owners, artists and performers, creative industry entrepreneurs, service industry workers, trade groups, patrons, neighbors, and community members.

The core public and nonprofit stakeholders include, but are not limited to individuals and organizations that work in the areas of public safety, licensing, planning, transportation, public health, arts and culture, tourism and conventions, community and business improvement districts.

“ A vibrant nighttime economy makes Philadelphia more attractive to visitors, provides more services for its citizens and makes our city safer. For the first time, our city recognizes that balancing City services (including transportation, safety and overall quality of life issues) once the sun goes down is vital to the success of our city. The commitment to appoint a Nighttime Economy Director to help facilitate this progress will prove transformational, and we have seen the positive effects already!

- Chris Mullins, McGillin’s Olde Ale House



YEAR ONE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In July 2022, the City of Philadelphia hired its first Nighttime Economy (NTE) Director housed in the Department of Commerce. Through this first year in office, the NTE Director accomplished the following:

- **Built capacity** within the Department of Commerce to address and prioritize the nighttime economy.
- **Established a nighttime advisory council** to represent and advocate for policies centering the NTE.
- **Launched a citywide listening tour** with NTE public engagement efforts.
- **Represented the City of Philadelphia** at domestic and international conventions.
- **Built relationships with City and State Departments** to share concepts and build collaboration.
- **Engaged the Philadelphia Police Department leadership** to understand the NTE-related challenges faced by police officers and the public by participating in police ride tours in key nightlife districts.

Building Connections

As part of the Department of Commerce's public engagement efforts, the NTE Director engaged with multiple economic development partners, including:

- Avenue of the Arts Inc.
- The Philadelphia Business Improvement District Alliance
- Campus Philly
- The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia
- The Greater Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
- Kimmel Cultural Campus
- Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau
- The Welcoming Center
- Visit Philly
- The Philadelphia Opera Company
- Opera Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations
- Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
- Philadelphia Licensed Tavern & Merchants Association
- The Philadelphia Nightclub and Cabaret Association
- South Street Headhouse District
- Center City District
- Old City District
- The Manayunk Development Corporation and the Manayunk Special Services District
- The Fishtown Kensington Area Business Improvement District
- Mayfair Business Improvement District
- Lancaster Avenue 21st Century Business Association, Community Development Corporation
- East Falls Development Corporation
- University City District
- Old City Community Action Group
- New Kensington CDC
- Chestnut Hill District
- Nicetown Community CDC
- The Recording Academy (Grammys) Philadelphia Chapter

There is a robust nightlife ecosystem in Philadelphia made up of businesses, shift workers and activities that must be governed. The Nighttime Economy Director's work to confront nighttime challenges, build relationships across multiple sectors, and regulate after hour business will help Philadelphia become a thriving 24-hour global city with more vibrant and safer streets.

- Angela Val, Visit Philly

Providing Assistance

While building relationships with NTE businesses, the NTE Director consistently provided them with technical assistance and connected them to Department of Commerce resources. In addition, the NTE Director shared information regarding best practices and resources around venue operations and regulatory processes. The NTE Director helped businesses access resources and enhanced trust by facilitating dialogue between nightlife operators, residents, and government stakeholders.

YEAR ONE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY LISTENING TOUR



In October 2022, the Department of Commerce launched a citywide listening tour to engage with NTE stakeholders, businesses and residents. The goal has been to invite feedback while elevating accountability and public participation in governmental decision-making processes for the nighttime economy. Public participation is integral to helping businesses thrive in Philadelphia. Listening and learning from people's direct experiences can lead to innovative solutions while meeting the specific needs of sectors that operate at night. We envision Philadelphia with a more dynamic economy that benefits people who live, work, and do business in our city.

181
Stops

12
Months

6
Focus Areas



By the Numbers: Engagement with Stakeholders

The Department of Commerce engaged stakeholders through one-on-one meetings and larger gatherings. The community engagement grouping below is defined as community meetings with nighttime workers, businesses and residents in attendance. In addition, the Department of Commerce hosted events for specific groups, such as *Black in nightlife* and *LGBTQIA in nightlife* during this past year.

46
ENGAGED
ORGANIZATIONS

102
BUSINESSES
ENGAGED

29
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

4
POLICE RIDE
ALONGS

YEAR ONE KEY FINDINGS

The following six (6) focus areas were identified by stakeholders as most critical to improve for the growth and vitality of Philadelphia's nighttime economy: public safety, trash, ease of doing business, access to business support, transportation, and impact analysis.

The City of Philadelphia, alongside all stakeholders, are dedicated to working together as we enhance a vibrant and thriving nighttime economy for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. The insights below, shared with us by NTE stakeholders, will continue to inform priorities for a thriving nighttime economy.

Focus Area #1: Public Safety

Problem Statement

Business owners who rely on nighttime activities expressed that foot traffic has decreased in the areas where their storefronts are located which then negatively impacts their revenue streams. Many residents are hesitant to go out and frequent businesses after dark due to public safety concerns. Nighttime businesses and workers feel uncomfortable traveling to and from their destinations as a result of the high crime rates in certain areas. Due to these concerns, there are many businesses that would normally operate at night who are now closing earlier than initially intended. NTE stakeholders expressed a need for nighttime programming which includes more accessible late night food options, youth-related night events, and business safety training. Teenagers are expressing the need for adequate spaces across the city to have safe, positive, and innovative fun – especially during the evening hours.

Moving the Needle

In alignment with the [Philadelphia Roadmap to Safer Communities](#), the City continues to invest in several public safety strategies, such as the [Business Security Camera Program](#), [Community Evening Resource Centers](#), LED streetlight upgrades, and violence prevention efforts. Launched in 2022, the [Philly Streetlight Improvement Project](#) aims to create a safer, brighter commute for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The 3-year initiative is converting 120,000 streetlights into a network of efficient LED lights to improve night time visibility and lighting replacement times. The project will also reduce streetlighting energy use by more than 50 percent and is the single largest energy conservation project the City has undertaken.

Spotlights

SAFETY AMBASSADORS, *University City District*

Established in 1997, University City District's Public Safety Ambassadors are uniformed officers that patrol the district daily from 8 am – 3 pm funded by the Business Improvement District. Ambassadors are trained to serve as the eyes and ears for police, but also to assist residents, students, and local employees with things like walking escort services, vehicle lockouts and jumpstarts, homeless outreach, directions, and reporting public hazards like potholes and problem street signs.

FISHTOWN AMBASSADORS, *Fishtown-Kensington Area Business Improvement District*

In 2022, the Fishtown Business Improvement District established an Ambassador Program. Fishtown Ambassadors walk throughout the neighborhood, during day and night, to provide directions, identify graffiti and illegal dumping, check-in with local businesses, and de-escalate conflict situations. They also address public safety situations by contacting the necessary local authorities while preserving the health and welfare of the public.

Focus Area #2: Trash

Problem Statement

Stakeholders expressed that lack of trash management at night heightens perceptions of being unsafe as these areas are not actively maintained. Additionally, food and entertainment businesses expressed that infrequent and limited hours permitted by the City for trash collection puts an undue financial burden on their operations. Due to these challenges, many businesses finance private trash pick-up services and dumpsters to manage their waste with limited return on their investments. The limited public-private partnerships at night also result in private haulers contributing to congestion, pollution, and hazardous sidewalk conditions. For NTE stakeholders, trash is not only a quality-of-life issue but a major hindrance to attracting businesses and visitors to Philadelphia's tourism and entertainment sectors.

Moving the Needle

In 2021, the City expanded [Philadelphia Taking Care of Business Clean Corridors Program](#) and the [Mechanical Street Cleaning Program](#). In 2022, the City also increased penalties for illegal dumping and installed surveillance cameras at dumping hotspots.



Case Study

CLEAN CURBS WASTE CONTAINERIZATION, NEW YORK CITY (NYC)

In 2022, NYC launched the Clean Curbs Waste Containerization Pilot. NYC Sanitation Workers collect the bags from the locked and sealed containers on the street, freeing up sidewalk space for pedestrians. NYC Sanitation is partnering with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to manage the bins and offering reimbursement grants up to \$20,000 for rodent-proof Clean Curbs containers. The initial pilot of four bins in the Times Square Business District was a success, so the program was expanded to include eight more BIDs in 2023.

Focus Area #3: Access to Business Support

Problem Statement

Business owners expressed a great need for business technical assistance with customer service available during hours of operation, including at night. Most businesses lack dedicated staff with technical knowledge of City zoning, licenses, permits, and eligible business programs. These challenges along with administrative burdens lead to limited opportunities for historically underserved businesses to operate successfully. NTE businesses need multilingual access to capital, resources, and one-on-one assistance.

Moving the Needle

In 2021, Philadelphia published the [Equitable Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Assessment & Strategy](#). The strategy identified four critical needs among BIPOC business owners, namely 1) access to capital, 2) customers & markets, 3) business services, and 4) ecosystem navigation. Since then, the City and other business support organizations have implemented new tools to meet the identified needs, such as the [Philadelphia Business Lending Network Incentive Grant](#), a pilot program that provides a grant of up to \$35,000, up to 50% of each approved loan amount from a Network lender to businesses that meet the eligibility requirements. The PHL GRIT Fund, implemented by the [PA CDFI Network](#), is a 4 year \$100 million commitment launched to provide capital to Black and brown business owners. The Department of Commerce and partners are developing an interactive online business resource finder to connect small business owners with a continuum of technical assistance as they start and grow. To create a more vibrant and inclusive NTE, Philadelphia must continue to engage businesses and inform them of local tools and financial support programs, technical assistance resources available through the [Department of Commerce](#) and partner organizations.



Resources

OFFICE OF BUSINESS SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Our Office of Business Services (OBS) helps businesses start, operate and grow in Philadelphia. Business owners can connect with our multilingual business services managers who are knowledgeable in various business types. OBS can help you:

- Navigate City requirements.
- Find financing and incentive opportunities.
- Address challenges as your business grows.
- Connect with community and neighborhood organizations.

Support is available in languages including Chinese, Khmer, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

✉ business@phila.gov

☎ (215) 683-2100

Focus Area #4: Ease of Doing Business

Problem Statement

Business owners expressed that navigating the regulatory processes necessary to open and operate in Philadelphia is a common challenge. Business types operating at night, such as creative and entertainment venues, must navigate multiple layers of special exemptions in the zoning code while applying for business licenses and coordinating inspections with government agencies. This process, which can last several months, results in a shortage of new and retained nighttime businesses to have completed the steps. Furthermore, this process deters diverse business ownership. Then, even after opening and operating, a nighttime business is more likely to be subjected to nuisance complaints, especially while neighborhood demographics are shifting and land uses are changing. The cumulation of complaints can result in additional regulatory processes and burdens leading some nighttime businesses to close. Creative operators and artists from lower-income and minority demographics, who expressed facing these complaints, are less likely to have the staff, capital, and experience to efficiently manage this process. These administrative burdens are challenging for nighttime businesses and operators to navigate.

We are grateful for our partnership with the Department of Licenses & Inspections and their recommendations for making it easier to do business in Philadelphia. We are dedicated to strengthening partnerships and advocating for regulatory improvements. These improvements can help increase economic opportunities and recreational spaces for residents to enjoy our world-class arts and cultural assets.

- Raheem Manning, Department of Commerce



Resources

OFFICE OF POLICY & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Regulatory reform requires time, interagency collaboration, public-private partnership, and political leadership. In 2022, the Department of Commerce established the Office of Policy & Strategic Initiatives which aims to make City government work better for our economy and facilitate regulatory improvements. Among other responsibilities, the Office also coordinates and oversees cross-departmental efforts including the [Permit Navigator](#), an online tool to help businesses identify what licenses and permits are required for their business type and location.

Focus Area #5: Transportation

Problem Statement

Stakeholders expressed heightened safety concerns due to inadequate lighting and unsanitary conditions in certain transportation hubs. Additionally, people experiencing homelessness, addiction, or mental health challenges seek shelter on public transportation hubs at night. These situations can be uncomfortable for nighttime workers and patrons. NTE stakeholders want more access to additional, transportation options such as bikeshare and e-scooters, and 24-hour services available from SEPTA. Philadelphia's transportation system is critical to the functioning of the city's NTE, as it allows workers, customers, and commuters to access jobs, resources, social centers, and their homes. Many of Philadelphia's most popular nightlife destinations, such as Center City, Northern Liberties, and Fishtown, are located along SEPTA's rapid transit; an indicator that adequate transportation creates nighttime destinations.

“ I live up in North Philly, it's a quick drive but that's my only option. I usually carpool with some other workers, but if our plans don't match, I have to take an Uber. If the bus came right here, I might take it, but I'm usually carrying a lot of cash and don't want to wait in the dark.

- Nightclub employee on her commute to work

Moving the Needle

In alignment with the [2023 Indego Equity Plan](#), Philadelphia will more than double the size of its bikeshare program, from 145 stations to more than 375. This includes building new stations in areas that currently lack Indego services, as well as densifying stations in existing service areas. Indego bike share service is available 24/7.



Case Study

PUDO ZONES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

In 2017-18, Washington D.C.'s District Department of Transportation (DDOT) began to pilot five rideshare Pick-up Drop-Off (PUDO) zones in heavily congested areas of the city. Initially only operating on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, the zones now operate 24/7. These zones are intended to serve both vehicular passengers and loading trucks. DDOT hopes they will reduce congestion, increase safety, and reduce travel-related injuries by 2024.

Focus Area #6: Impact Analysis

Problem Statement

Stakeholders expressed that impact studies would be beneficial to further understand the size, scope, and economic impact of the sector. Furthermore, the collection of information can help make informed decisions to achieve intended objectives and identify potential outcomes. These analyses would require funding while building upon previous efforts including the Department of Commerce's public engagement efforts and the 24HrPHL's Nighttime Community Survey. The nighttime economy in Philadelphia accounts for economic activity that extends beyond nightlife entertainment industries – such as medical centers, childcare, gas stations, grocery stores, warehousing and other 24/7 services. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the nighttime economy sector is currently scarce.

Case Study

NIGHTLIFE ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY, NEW YORK CITY (NYC)

In 2018, New York's Office of Nightlife commissioned an economic impact report. Nightlife was divided into five categories: bars, food services, venues, arts and culture, and sports and recreation, with a focus on job and wage data. The study found that the nightlife sector is growing faster than the rest of the local economy and represents a \$35 billion impact. It also complemented quantitative analysis with 1,300 interviews and surveys to help identify core concerns for business owners, customers, and residents alike.



STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION: NEXT STEPS + LOOKING FORWARD



The focus areas in this inaugural report were identified by stakeholders as most critical to improve. The City of Philadelphia, alongside all stakeholders, are dedicated to working together as we enhance a thriving nighttime economy for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. We aim for Philadelphia to be a more vibrant destination where employers flock, entrepreneurs thrive, and innovation abounds. The Department of Commerce aims to execute its NTE mission through outreach, advocacy, mediation, and program administration. We are dedicated to elevating accountability and public participation in governmental decision-making processes as we follow-through with next steps in our efforts for the nighttime economy.

The Nightlife industry is vital for any growing, international city. However, historically in the city of Philadelphia, this network of entrepreneurs, restaurateurs, musicians, and creatives has been ignored by the city at large. It is an honor to help keep this flourishing industry alive by working with the Nighttime Economy (NTE) Advisory Council. The creation of a permanent position within City government along with its NTE Advisory Council was step one. To make long-standing policy changes that positively impact the industry and the thousands of workers that it supports, is a much more difficult yet conceivable step two.

- Evon Burton, NTE Advisory Council

Next Steps

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

The Department of Commerce will continue strengthening interdepartmental coordination and partnership for the ease of 24-hour business operations in Philadelphia. In November 2023, Councilmember Isaiah Thomas introduced Bill No. 230764 to revise rules and definitions related to nightclubs and private clubs. The revision is intended to better define what types of venues would fall under the city's Nightclubs and Public Entertainment Venues zoning, licensing, and permitting requirements and to eliminate barriers for restaurants and other non-nightclub establishments looking to offer entertainment. This Bill has been a cross-departmental effort to help various business types – such as event spaces, lounge-style karaoke, restaurants, and other public entertainment venues – navigate zoning uses. These updates can spur growth and innovation for Philadelphia businesses to operate safely and legally. The City of Philadelphia will

continue providing one-on-one assistance to businesses as they navigate zoning uses. Our NTE Advisory Council is dedicated to advocating for policies that can enhance a welcoming, safe and thriving nighttime economy for Philadelphians.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Commerce will invest in initiatives and launch new City programs in coordination with our administration based on the key findings from our ongoing public engagement efforts. In year one, NTE stakeholders expressed a need for nighttime programming which includes more accessible late night food options, youth-related night events, and business safety training. As we remain accountable to public feedback, the Department of Commerce will continue to engage NTE stakeholders to help shape next steps in our program development efforts. Furthermore, the Department of Commerce funds and works in partnership with neighborhood organizations to connect businesses with as many resources as possible. We continue our efforts of supporting nighttime businesses and workers with access to City resources and one-on-one assistance that are currently available.

IMPACT STUDY

The Department of Commerce will launch an impact study that assesses the size, scope, and economic impact of the nighttime economy in Philadelphia. The City will conduct data collection, research and analysis related to nighttime activities along with the growth of our arts and culture sectors. These analyses can help NTE stakeholders make further informed decisions to achieve intended objectives and identify potential outcomes.

EXPANSION OF STAFF CAPACITY

The City of Philadelphia will expand its staff capacity to serve nighttime businesses and workers. This includes the hiring of a program manager to oversee development and implementation of nighttime economy initiatives.



Serving as Chair of the NTE Advisory Council and helping tackle the issues of the NTE has been rewarding work. However, we need to continue to push for a full Office of Nighttime Economy. If the City of Philadelphia wants to compete with other cities regionally and around the world, it needs to take the next logical steps and expand the work we are doing by investing in the growth of the NTE with all the support and services that a city of this size needs.

- Shaleem Prevez, NTE Advisory Council

