

EC6.8 Attachment 3  
**TORONTO HOSPITALITY  
ZONE ASSESSMENT**



*After Dark  
Solutions*

**SOCIABLE  
CITY PLAN**



**Toronto Sociable City At Night: Hospitality Zone Assessment**  
**Prepared by Responsible Hospitality Institute**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### TRANSITIONING FROM NO LONGER TO NOT YET

Toronto is a vibrant destination for dining, entertainment and nighttime social activity. From events and festivals to bars, restaurants and nightclubs, there is a plethora of options for visitors and residents. Unique voices, flavours, and forms of artistic expression have a home in the city. Diversity truly is Toronto's strength, as the city's motto goes.

But balancing the diversity of opinions, priorities and needs of a population as large and diverse as Toronto is no easy feat. There is renewed vigor by different sets of stakeholders to preserve what makes Toronto great in spite of current trends and circumstances.

Cranes are currently ubiquitous in the skyline. Yet with a development boom comes rising costs. Nightlife venue operators struggle to keep the doors open while continuing to provide quality entertainment. Some businesses have already been displaced or shut down. For some residents, nightlife venues were the very amenities that drew them to live in the downtown core. For the businesses still operating, arcane rules and regulations restrict entrepreneurs' ability to innovate. Or, they are forced to convey half-truths because a checkbox doesn't exist for their business model. Although bureaucratic processes are cumbersome and economic trends add a layer of difficulty for business operators, the demand for nighttime social spaces is highly evident. In fact, social spaces are replacing brick and mortar retailers in some areas.

The current marketplace of consumers is still hungry to shop—but for experiences, not goods. More people inside venues and out on the street at night creates traffic, safety and sound impacts. As a result of nighttime disturbances, residents have galvanized to advocate for higher standards for quality of life.

Despite some residents' opinions, much of the city is still oriented to a daytime economy and doesn't provide sufficient support to address nighttime needs. For example, public safety agencies are forced to do more

with less—assure public safety with less than optimal staffing resources at night.

Pressure is mounting to develop a clear vision for the future of the city and create the systems to support that vision. Tough questions are being wrestled with—the answers to which may define the very heart of Toronto's future. Will the City of Toronto take its place among other global cities to become a vibrant destination for life at night or not? Is it possible for the city to be both a high quality, safe home to urban residents and welcoming host to nighttime revelers?

#### A VISION IS STARTING TO COALESCE

The city has invested resources to plan for the future, which will guide policy decisions relating to the nighttime economy. There are also many signs of hope. There is a newfound recognition that nighttime activity—life at night—is a significant contributor to society, culture and the economy.

Toronto is one of three cities (with Dublin, Ireland and Cancun, Mexico) participating in a Global City Project conducted by the Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) to reduce harm and enhance vibrancy in the nighttime economy. This project is a partnership between RHI and **Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA)** with support from the **City of Toronto's Economic Development & Culture Division**.

The suggestions outlined in this report aim to connect the disparate strategies into a comprehensive framework to support Toronto as a sustainable destination for safe and vibrant places to socialize.



## ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

**SOCIABLE CITIES** require an alliance of diverse stakeholders to facilitate vibrancy and safety. Alliances play a critical role in guiding the evolution of a city’s burgeoning nightlife by trendspotting, allocating resources and overseeing implementation of strategies developed by action teams. Recommendations in the following sections provide suggestions pertaining to RHI’s Building Blocks and Six Core Measures of a Sociable City Plan.

More detailed information about each action item is provided in the body of the report.



### **FORM AN ALLIANCE** RESOURCES | ACTION TEAMS

**FORM AN ALLIANCE** recommendations comprise suggestions for holistic, systemic changes in the nighttime economy; they would have wide-reaching outcomes to benefit all of RHI’s six core measures of the nighttime economy.

- A1: CREATE A NIGHTTIME ECONOMY UNIT
- A2: UPDATE LICENSE CATEGORIES AND PROCESS
- A3: CREATE A TRANSPARENT & EQUITABLE 4 A.M. PROCESS
- A4: LAUNCH SOCIAL MARKETING FOR PATRON BEHAVIOR



### **PLAN FOR PEOPLE** QUALITY OF LIFE | MOBILITY

**PLAN FOR PEOPLE** recommendations focus on facilitating high standards for quality of life by addressing issues such as sound management, as well as coordination of safe mobility options to/from and within the district.

- P1: BRIDGE THE DIVIDE BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND VENUES
- P2: ESTABLISH A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH TO SOUND
- P3: CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE NIGHTTIME MOBILITY PLAN



### **ASSURE SAFETY** PUBLIC SAFETY | VENUE SAFETY

**ASSURE SAFETY** recommendations engage a continuum of public, private and government stakeholders vested in public safety to systematize an approach to nightlife safety, organize nightlife businesses and reduce alcohol-related harm and disorder.

- S1: REFINE AND INSTITUTIONALIZE SAFETY APPROACH
- S2: FOCUS ON NEW NIGHTLIFE PERSPECTIVES FOR SAFETY
- S3: ORGANIZE VENUE ALLIANCE FOR SELF-REGULATION



### **ENHANCE VIBRANCY** ENTERTAINMENT | PUBLIC SPACE

**ENHANCE VIBRANCY** recommendations offer ways to support the creative entrepreneurs, performers and social spaces that comprise the nighttime vibrancy of a city through partnerships and awareness-raising among elected officials.

- V1: PUT “LIFE AT NIGHT” ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA
- V2: SUPPORT MUSICIANS AND NIGHTLIFE CONNECTIVITY
- V3: APPLY A NIGHT LENS TO DAY EVENTS AND STRATEGIES

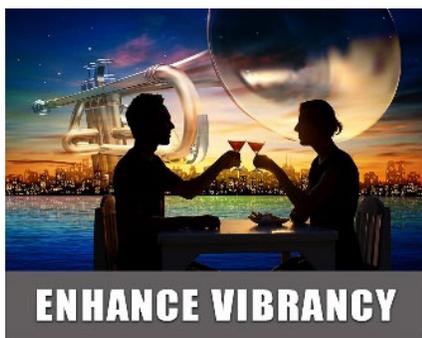
## REPORT CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

This report provides a snapshot of recommendations, as well as in-depth analysis generated from a variety of sources, including:

- ▣ RHI staff and consultants' observations
- ▣ Background research
- ▣ Roundtable focus groups held in September 2018
- ▣ Remote and on-site interviews and meetings with stakeholders between May and October 2018

Recommendations include a combination of ideas suggested by project participants and suggestions by RHI staff and consultants.

Strengths, challenges and priority actions were identified in each of the following areas, following the structure of RHI's Building Blocks and Core Measures of a Sociable City Plan:



**ENTERTAINMENT**

- Performance Venue
- Dining Venue
- Social Venue
- Marketing
- Craft Culture
- Demographics
- Talent Retention
- Economic Impact



**QUALITY OF LIFE**

- Noise Control
- Trash Pick-up
- Cigarette Litter
- Public Restrooms
- Public Standards
- Resident Forum
- Vandalism
- Zoning



**VENUE SAFETY**

- Safety Plan
- Server Training
- Security Training
- Nightlife Network
- Customer Service
- Age Identification
- Patron Behavior
- Extended Hours



**PUBLIC SPACE**

- Outdoor Dining
- Public Markets
- Vendors/Kiosks
- Pedestrian Safety
- Street Performers
- Accessibility
- Festivals
- Lighting



**MOBILITY**

- E-Hail
- Safe Rides
- Taxi Stands
- Valet Parking
- Transport Hubs
- Parking Safety
- Traffic Safety
- DUI Prevention



**PUBLIC SAFETY**

- Closing Time
- Crowds
- Permits
- Police Unit
- Ambassador
- Safety Alliance
- Business Mentor
- Crime Prevention

## METHODOLOGY



**RHI's Hospitality Zone Assessment (HZA)** is a strategic process for cities to evaluate and improve nightlife planning and management systems. Two social districts in Toronto were selected for data analysis to study changes in risk and harm that could be attributed to RHI's project.

For this report, there are two social districts: Dundas Street West and King Street West. Any mentions of the study area King Street West is represented by the boundaries of Adelaide Street West to south of Wellington Street West from Spadina Avenue to Niagara Street. Mentions of the Dundas Street West study area is represented by the boundaries of Dundas Street West between Ossington Avenue and Dufferin Street.

Consultations were focused in both study areas, but the goal is to replicate this city-wide.

Toronto's participation in RHI's Global City Project is one component of the City's comprehensive plan for the nighttime economy. The City of Toronto Economic Development and Culture Division is leading a process to develop a vision and action plan for the social, cultural and economic activities in Toronto between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

RHI's assessment focuses on late-night (after 10:00 p.m.) social activity primarily occurring in restaurants, bars, nightclubs and entertainment establishments in two social districts in different states of development: King West is a mature entertainment district while Dundas West is developing into a destination for music and nightlife.

Some information generated may be applicable to the City's nighttime economy outside of the two study areas, as well as outside of the downtown core.

## THE PROCESS

Phases of the Global City Project included the following:

1. **Implement RHI's Hospitality Zone Assessment.** The Assessment is a systematic team building process to organize an action plan to enhance vibrancy, assure safety and plan for people in nightlife districts. The process proceeded as follows:
  - a. **Engagement Meeting** in May 2018
  - b. **Orientation** in July 2018
  - c. **Roundtables** in September 2018
  - d. **Leadership Summit** held January 24, 2019
2. **Collect and organize data** to measure changes in crime, harm, disorder and venue compliance as recommendations are implemented. A priority will be to demonstrate a reduction in alcohol-related harm in key measures by ten percent over an 18-month period.
3. **Conduct a street level audit** to measure social occupancy, including diversity of storefront uses during the day, evening and late-night, mix of social venues (restaurants, cafes, bars, nightclubs, music clubs) and combined seating capacity in the district.
4. **Analyze correlation of social occupancy,** gaps in nighttime planning and management and indicators of crime, harm, disorder and compliance.

## TORONTO STUDY DISTRICTS

The two areas of study in Toronto are identified as the King West and Dundas West study areas.

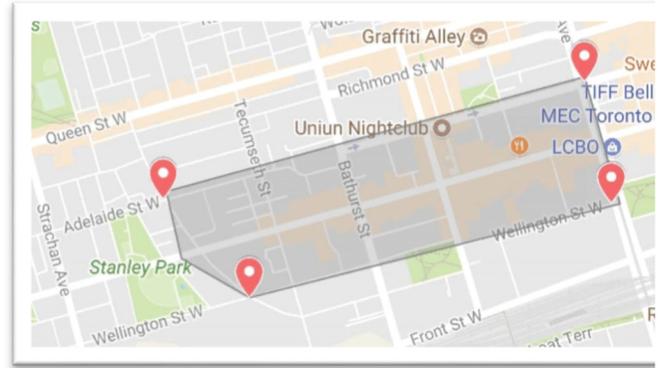
### Study Area #1: Dundas West



**Boundaries:**

Dundas Street West between  
Ossington Avenue and Dufferin Street

### Study Area #2: King West



**Boundaries:**

Adelaide Street West, Spadina Avenue,  
Wellington Street West and Niagara Street

The study will document data and trend analysis in the following areas and will be presented as a separate report with findings from an evaluation of baseline data and a one-year comparison.

## BENCHMARKS: PROJECT AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The following aims and outcomes of the process are to be considered the benchmarks of success.

### AIMS

- ▣ To preserve and advocate for the social, cultural and economic value of dining and entertainment venues and businesses
- ▣ To provide suggestions for improving the allocation of resources and updates to legislation
- ▣ To ensure public safety to reduce crime, harm and disorder while minimizing quality of life impacts
- ▣ To maintain communication between government and businesses regarding policy and procedures

### OUTCOMES

- ▣ Selection and training of dedicated staff to be leading advocates for a safe and vibrant nightlife
- ▣ Development of a citywide alliance to implement a consensus-driven action plan
- ▣ Data collection to evaluate and monitor progress over time, particularly in regard to alcohol-related harm reduction

## DEMONSTRATION OF EVALUATION PROCESS

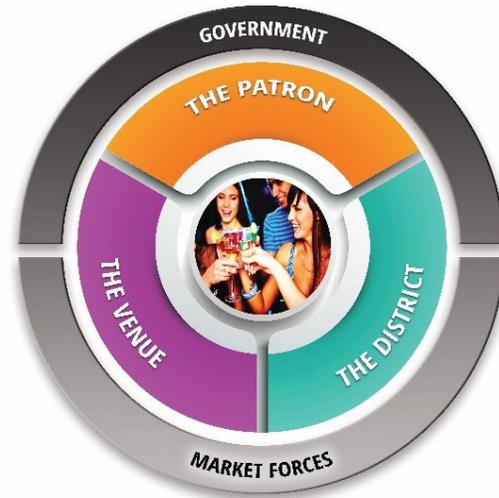
The **Global City Project** is an initiative funded by Diageo to establish a methodology for evaluating five variables that merge into a nightlife or social district. These variables will identify measures to document progress from systems changes in nighttime economy management.

This demonstration project builds on progress in patron and venue strategies to reduce alcohol-related harm by expanding the role of district management through progressive government and strategic response to market forces.

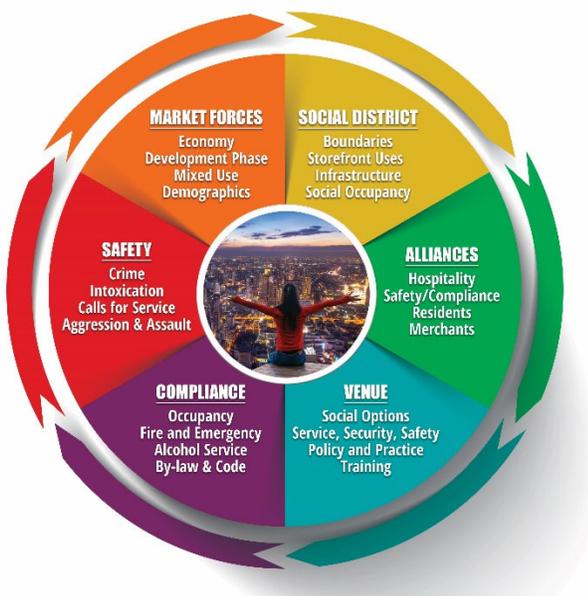
A central focus of the evaluation will be to collect and organize data and resources in each of the five variables contributing to or reducing alcohol-related harm:

- ❑ **PATRON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA** messages on responsibility and civility in social venues
- ❑ **VENUE STRATEGIES** for reducing risk and harm to patrons
- ❑ **DISTRICT ALLIANCES** to coordinate the planning, managing and policing a social district with dining and entertainment
- ❑ **GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES** and resources to support patron responsibility campaigns, licensing processes and education resources for venues, coordinated compliance monitoring
- ❑ **MARKET FORCES** driven by demographics, life stage, life styles, development and public health and welfare.

An Evaluation Team of city and provincial agencies, community organizations and nightlife alliances will collaborate in developing the methodology and collection of baseline and comparison data to measure crime, harm, disorder and venue compliance.



## Monitoring Progress in Nighttime Management



The **Global City Project** sought to evaluate how a city and district level assessment could contribute to the global goal of **reducing alcohol related harm by ten percent**.

Identifying a method for measuring this change that could be attributed to the HZA process proved quite challenging. Over time, and with much consideration, a precise definition of the cyclical forces influencing patron and venue behavior in social districts emerged.

Each stage can uncover the factors contributing to risk or risk reduction, and through focused actions developed through the HZA process. This resulted in a way to measure indicators such as crime, calls for service and venue compliance, as well as district planning and management, collaborative alliances and venue practices.



# FORM AN ALLIANCE



**RESOURCES**



**ACTION TEAMS**

## FORM AN ALLIANCE

The recommendations in this section, Form an Alliance, comprise suggestions for holistic, systemic changes in the nighttime economy; they would have wide-reaching outcomes to benefit all of RHI's six core measures of the nighttime economy.

### A1 CREATE A NIGHTTIME ECONOMY UNIT

#### **Background:**

The City of Toronto has support systems for a variety of industries that contribute to the city's culture and economy such as film, art, music and events. Information is centralized online and staff are dedicated to help guide entrepreneurs and innovators to navigate the application process. However, there isn't a similar support system in place to support

another critical industry sector—nightlife and the nighttime economy. The consensus among various stakeholders that attended RHI's roundtables was that the Economic Development and Culture Division (EDC) would be a natural fit to house a new unit focused on the nighttime economy.

#### **CHALLENGES:**

- ❑ **Lack of a central location within city government** to provide guidance to new and existing nightlife business applicants and existing operators.
- ❑ **Confusion about which municipal division to engage with first** when either starting a new nightlife business or taking over an active business.
- ❑ **Inefficient system of information gathering** to demonstrate due diligence prior to approving a business application. Currently, councillors and staff go to different divisions individually for each license application. This is time consuming for both councillors and division staff.
- ❑ **Limited inter-divisional communication** about business applications and business transfers to assess risks, evaluate readiness and if applicable, place conditions upon the license. Police Service is engaged at the end of the process, after all other divisions have approved the application.
- ❑ **Limited inter-divisional coordination** of education or intervention with at-risk licenses to assist them with achieving compliance.

#### **GOALS:**

- ❑ **Create a public-facing, concierge-oriented, central location for nightlife business applicants and current operators. In effect, serve as the hub for the various spokes of the government divisions. This unit will:**
  - Provide a place for current and prospective nightlife operators to go to for questions and a suggested timeline for engaging with different municipal divisions and regional authorities.
  - Provide educational resources for applicants seeking to open or take over a business.
  - Provide an opportunity for pre-application review before expenses are incurred by the applicant.
- ❑ **Coordinate municipal divisions' process for:**
  - Pre-application review.
  - Intervention via field inspection or individual business meetings.
- ❑ **Provide a central location for city councillors to come to for multiple divisions' recommendations** on whether a business license (and extended hours license) should be approved or not, and whether conditions are suggested.

## STEPS TO CONSIDER:

- ▣ **Initiate process to gain buy-in and authority to create a Nighttime Economy Unit within EDC.**
- ▣ **Review applicability of models within Toronto:**
  - **Office of Emergency Management:** Existing staff were redeployed to this new office rather than hiring new staff.
  - **EDC's Event Support Unit:** Toronto has robust processes for event planning and management, where inter-divisional teams conduct pre-application review and make recommendations before an applicant goes through the full application process. A web portal provides resources with tips, timelines and permit information: <https://www.toronto.ca/business-economy/industry-sector-support/events/>
  - **City staff position of Music Sector Development Officer** to serve as a liaison between government and the local music industry.
  - **Open House Workshop for Events:** The City holds regular information sessions at City Hall that are open to the public with representatives from different municipal divisions to provide guidance to event applicants.
- ▣ **Review models from outside Toronto:**
  - San Francisco's Entertainment Commission (SFEC): In this model, the SFEC has the authority to approve, renew and revoke entertainment permits. The Entertainment Commission is a regulatory agency with power to enforce permit conditions, manage sound complaints, assist with outdoor event permitting, liaise with other city departments on behalf of venue operators (includes planning department and "agent of change" implementation) and drive legislation that improves the nighttime economy overall.
- ▣ **Hire the unit's leader, who could be considered Toronto's "Night Ambassador" or "Nighttime Economy Manager."**
- ▣ **Develop a strategy for compiling and creating educational resources to assist nightlife businesses.**

## A2 UPDATE LICENCE CATEGORIES AND PROCESS

### BACKGROUND:

Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) went through a licensing overhaul in the mid-2000s to simplify licensing options with most venues falling under eating establishment and later added a nightclub licence to accommodate standing room and entertainment venues. An unintended consequence is the current scenario, where restaurants morph into nightclubs—straddling the line between the two categories. In concept, a "restobar" is not a bad thing. After all, there is market demand for late-night places to socialize, and the costs of doing business are ever higher, so using the same space for multiple uses makes sense.

However, venues that provide entertainment with limited to no food service can present a higher level of risk and sometimes require increased security measures than a restaurant without entertainment. Yet, there is no current flexibility for businesses to ensure they can properly assure the safety of their patrons outside of their licensed business model. There is no simple way to amend a business's license at this time.

This situation is emblematic of a challenge in cities throughout North America in regard to business licensing for nightlife establishments. Nightlife is nimble and operators are quick to innovate. Trends move faster than government processes (or the checkboxes on an application form) can keep up with. If an operator doesn't see an option to select for their intended business model, they may provide as little information as possible. Or, their intended model may change after they open.

Narrow definitions of nightlife perpetuate a perception that nightlife operators are untruthful. It erodes trust with residents when a restaurant license is applied for, then the business converts into a nightclub. It also creates difficulty for enforcement agents if rules don't apply to businesses without the official, licensed designation of a "nightclub."

**CHALLENGES:**

- ❑ **Businesses licensed as restaurants convert into nightclubs** without any consequence or additional conditions.
- ❑ **Not enough teeth for nightclub licenses:** Nightclub license applications require that plans be submitted on crowd management and sound mitigation, yet there isn't sufficient enforcement capacity to ensure the business follows through.
- ❑ **Current fines not a strong enough deterrent.** Some businesses were reported to operate without a business license. There were no meaningful consequences to the business besides a small fee. The more important license is the liquor license from AGCO.
- ❑ **Criteria for granting a license is based on confirmation of zoning.** The primary factor in granting a license is confirmation that the business's intended use aligns with the allowed zoning for the area.

**GOAL:**

- ❑ **Explore how to expand definitions of nightlife businesses** to go beyond "restaurant" and "nightclub" to allow flexibility so that business operators can honestly report their intended business model (as well as other potential business models they may explore).

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- ❑ **Review conditions** that could be placed on a high risk or at-risk operator.
- ❑ **Promote MLS's planned public consultations** examining the licensing by-law to address issues related to nuisance and public safety.
- ❑ **Develop a system to allow businesses to operate as a restaurant as well as have entertainment uses.** Require that they submit plans for safety, noise mitigation and crowd management.
- ❑ **Expand current requirements** for a crowd management plan and sound mitigation plan.
- ❑ **Review licence categories** and definitions to better capture existing business models.

**A3 CREATE A TRANSPARENT & EQUITABLE 4 A.M. PROCESS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Events are ubiquitous in Toronto. There is a perception that at least one venue in the city is serving alcohol until 4:00 a.m. every weekend. Market demand and business interest in meeting that demand is apparent. Yet the process to get an extended hours license is cumbersome, costly and time-consuming. Approval of certain venues appears to be arbitrary due to the lack of clear, transparent guidelines.

There are multiple ways to obtain an extension of hours for alcohol service. The most common process is as follows:

- ❑ **Nightlife venues reach out to event organizers. The venue offers to sponsor the event and, in many cases, pay an additional fee to the event promoter for the extended hours application.** These costs vary widely, mostly ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 for a single weekend, but can be as high as \$10,000 in some cases, which is prohibitively expensive for most venues. In return, the event promoter applies to the AGCO for a 4:00 a.m. license on behalf of participating venues.
- ❑ **The event organizer must also provide a letter to the City of Toronto** convincing them of the importance of the event for it to be designated as "municipally significant."
- ❑ **City Councillors review the request and vote to approve or deny it** at both Community Council and City Council. Any councillor can make recommendations to AGCO about businesses that should be removed from the request list for an extended license, but the AGCO is not required to adhere to the councillors' recommendations.

▣ **Caveats:**

- An extension of hours license is only available for 2:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m., without exception. For example, 2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. is not an option, nor any other time of day even if aligned with an event of international significance in another time zone.
- The AGCO generally prohibits events from being granted on public holidays, which include Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day and New Year's Eve, or in association with any other significant date, such as an international holiday like Chinese New Year.
- The City can also permit extension of hours for any time of day without approval from the AGCO, but has only exercised this power on two occasions; both were during the early morning hours to accommodate international sporting events televised from other time zones.

**CHALLENGES:**

- ▣ **Lack of clear criteria or standards on why an event qualifies as municipally significant.**
- ▣ **Intrinsic link to events.** Event organizer must apply on the venue's behalf but could be affiliated with the venue.
- ▣ **Notification delays:** In some cases, business operators have been notified a few days prior to an event or even after a multi-day event has started that they have been granted an extended hours license.
- ▣ **Inefficiencies:** City Councillors go to municipal divisions individually to seek recommendations about whether venues should be approved for the extended hours license, which is time consuming for all staff involved.
- ▣ **Concerns that 4:00 a.m. licenses** will push the time when people go out even later and will thereby require more police and paramedic services to assure public safety.

**GOAL:** CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL WITH AN EQUITABLE PROCESS TO PROVIDE 4:00 A.M. LICENSES TO VENUES DIRECTLY (WITHOUT BEING LINKED TO AN EVENT).

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- ▣ Convene a forum with hospitality industry representatives, event organizers, residents and public safety divisions to discuss the following:
  - What is the level of interest in creating a more equitable process where venues can apply directly?
  - How many extended hours licenses should be allowed at one time?
  - What should be the criteria or conditions placed to grant an extended hours license?
  - What are the potential public safety and quality of life impacts of allowing venue operators to apply directly for an extended hours license?
  - Should the license remain primarily through AGCO or through the City?

## A4 LAUNCH SOCIAL MARKETING FOR PATRON BEHAVIOR

**GOAL:** CHANGE PATRON BEHAVIOR TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY, PUBLIC HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS BY TACKLING ISSUES SUCH AS NOISE, CIVILITY AND BINGE DRINKING.

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- ▣ **Launch a media campaign to reframe binge drinking** from a desired activity to a harmful uncool activity. Partner with local artists and theater department students.
- ▣ **Explore creation of a beacon system of text alerts** reminding nightlife patrons to keep sound down when they leave venues to be respectful of nearby neighbours. The text alert system could be coupled with business marketing.
- ▣ **Connect with e-hail companies** to send notifications to drivers encouraging them to pick-up riders away from main traffic flow to avoid slowing egress from the busy nightlife district.



**PLAN FOR PEOPLE** recommendations focus on facilitating high standards for quality of life by addressing issues such as sound management, as well as coordination of safe mobility options to/from and within the district.

**P1: BRIDGE THE DIVIDE BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND VENUES**

**P2: ESTABLISH A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH TO SOUND**

**P3: CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE NIGHTTIME MOBILITY PLAN**



# PLAN FOR PEOPLE



## MOBILITY



## PLAN FOR PEOPLE

**SMART GROWTH PLANNING** for nightlife seamlessly facilitates use of hospitality zones at different times of day and for different purposes. High standards for quality of life and safe mobility options to/from and within the district requires foresight to plan and the infrastructure to make it a reality.

### QUALITY OF LIFE



**QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS** in mixed-use social districts entails a balance of social amenities and requires effective management of sound, litter, trash, bio-waste and patron behavior. Updated policies, consistent enforcement and conflict resolution systems help facilitate high standards for quality of life.

### QUALITY OF LIFE STRENGTHS

- ▣ **Systemic Improvements in Sound Management**
  - **Reporting:** All sound complaints are now funneled from 311 and police to MLS.
  - **Priority matrix** developed by MLS (as of summer 2018) to categorize sound complaints by the number of complaints from different sources and the reasonableness of the complaint to help prioritize enforcement. A helpful addition could include consideration of a venue's current soundproofing measures.
  - **MLS will host public consultations examining the noise bylaw** in January/February 2019. **Legislative changes** are slated for Spring 2019.
  - **Sales Disclosures:** The City of Toronto's Economic Development and Culture division requires developers to include advisory clauses in purchase agreements in cases when a new residential building is constructed within 120 meters of a pre-existing music venue. Advisories alert unit purchasers to the possibility of increased sound impacts due to the music and associated nightlife activity.
- ▣ **Proactive Stakeholders take Initiative to Manage Sound**
  - **Noise Working Group** formed to review and provide input on bylaw updates.
  - **Some residential groups** have independently resolved issues with businesses and party boats that generated excessive sound.
  - **Some responsible business owners** have voluntarily closed patios after a certain time as a courtesy to residents
- ▣ **Agent of Change Policies Adopted City-Wide in May 2018.**
  - The principle is that whether residential or commercial development, whichever brings change to the area is the agent of change and has to provide sound attenuation to contain noise.

## QUALITY OF LIFE CHALLENGES

- Tense Relations Between Residents and Businesses**
  - There is limited outreach or friendly interaction between residents and businesses.
- Weak Community Engagement Process for New Businesses**
  - AGCO has minimal requirements for community engagement. A notification placard is posted on buildings for 90 days and listed on the website for new locations (business license transfers are exempt). In a culture where people look down at their phones instead of up at buildings, placards may not get noticed.
- Sound Management Considerations**
  - **Sound is generated from multiple sources at night.** Some sources of sound that disrupt residents' quality of life include: people in sidewalk cafes or rooftop patios; music/bass from social venues; and engine noise from cars and motorcycles.
  - **There is no clear measure for what qualifies as a sound disturbance.** Residents must make the case that the sound disturbed them. The current noise bylaw states that "no person shall make, cause or permit noise or vibration, at any time, which is likely to disturb the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of the inhabitants of the City." However, business operators express that it is unfair to rely on anecdotal reports of disturbing sound. Further, bass sounds are difficult to measure with a standard decibel meter and must include measurements of both dBA and dBC levels.
  - **Staffing shortage.** Out of about 200 MLS staff, only about 10 people work at night. If Toronto does move forward with decibel requirements for sound, sound measuring equipment and nighttime bylaw enforcement staff will be needed.
  - **Nightclub license applicants must provide a "noise control plan" to MLS, which is a technical report produced by an acoustical engineering firm.** Components include:
    - The maximum volume levels for music within the establishment
    - The wattage of the music or sound-producing systems used in the establishment
    - The sound insulation methods or mechanisms used within the building
    - A site plan that examines the surrounding area such as residential units

While a good step, the absence of an objective measurement in the noise bylaw makes compliance difficult to enforce.
- Disagreements about Approaches to Sound Mitigation**
  - Resistance by some residents to new and proposed approaches to sound mitigation, such as:
    - **Agent of Change:** Some residents believe that the source of the sound should be responsible for mitigating that sound, even if the business pre-dated a new residential complex.
    - **Sound Measurements:** Some residents are in favor of maintaining the current language around "disturbing sound" as they believe it allows more flexibility to prove their case.

## ACTION PLAN

**PLAN FOR PEOPLE** recommendations focus on facilitating high standards for quality of life by addressing issues such as sound management, as well as coordination of safe mobility options to/from and within the district.

### P1 BRIDGE THE DIVIDE BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND VENUES

**GOAL:** ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND VENUES

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- Explore how to enhance the **community engagement process** for new business licenses beyond posting of a placard (minimum requirement for AGCO). For example, new businesses could be required to show evidence of hosting a community meeting in the new location and provide written notice to residents and businesses in the surrounding area within a certain radius.
- Create a **voluntary good neighbour agreement** signed by nightlife venues.
- Collaborate with industry to create a **best practices toolkit**.

### P2 ESTABLISH A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH TO SOUND

**GOAL:** MITIGATE SOUND IMPACTS

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- Establish an **objective measure** (maximum decibel limit) for a sound disturbance, systems of notification to the business, and procedures for intervention. MLS is engaging stakeholders to develop strategies around noise bylaws.
- Translate **acoustical engineering studies** of venues into practical strategies to mitigate sound.
- Consider **alternative strategies to soundproofing**. For example, simply relocating speakers can help isolate sound.
- Use **technology to monitor sound levels** in a district (or possibly, a venue).
- Review **MLS' priority matrix** to see how they are prioritizing sound complaints. Add this to the agenda for forums.
- In the risk-based licensing system, explore how to **create standards for sound management**.
- **Street Ambassadors:** Adapt the transit authority model, where the transit authority provides ambassadors to guide people on where to go and serve as a social calming influence. They can also help remind people to lower their voices when exiting venues and help escort them out of the district faster.
- **Long term:** Work with provincial authorities on higher standards for soundproofing residential developments in high-density areas.

## MOBILITY



**MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION SUPPORTS PATRON AND VENUE STAFF'** need for safe, convenient and efficient transportation between home and to/from social districts at night.

Providing nighttime transportation options can enhance the visitor experience; ensure the safety of employees who work night shifts and may be carrying cash tips; expedite the process of clearing a social district at closing time; prevent impaired driving and reduce alcohol-related accidents and injuries; and decrease impacts generated by sound disturbances, fights and disorder from lingering crowds.

### MOBILITY STRENGTHS

▣ **Walkability**

- According to walkscore.com, Toronto is the second most walkable large city in Canada with a rating of 71/100. Many sidewalks are wide and accommodate foot traffic.

▣ **Variety of Options:**

- **Streetcars:** After subway closures, streetcar routes are replaced by night buses.
- **Subways:** On weekdays and Saturdays, trains run every few minutes from 6 a.m. until 1:30 a.m. On Sundays, they run from 8 a.m. to 1:30 a.m.
- **Buses:** Most buses run from 6 a.m. (8 a.m. on Sundays) until 1 a.m. every day. Night buses run on major routes from approximately 1 a.m. until the subway opens.
- **Go Transit** serve the outer suburbs.

▣ **Current and Planned Expansions of Public Transit**

- For sporting events and festivals, public transit will occasionally extend hours.
- Extended service is planned from suburban trains into downtown and vice versa.

▣ **Data Resource:**

- Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) tracks information on transportation trends from quarterly customer satisfaction surveys.

▣ **King Street Pilot Project during the Day**

- Most participants agreed that the King Street pilot project works well during the day. It has achieved its goals of improving traffic flow and streetcar efficiency. A variety of public realm projects, which take over the right-hand lane closest to the sidewalk, have contributed unique artistic designs in the public realm that provide seating and space to socialize. Overall, the program is well liked by residents and daytime workers.
  - Transportation Services reported back to Executive Committee on March 21, 2019 with an evaluation of the King Street Pilot Project for Council Consideration. It was approved by Council on April 16, 2019 and will become permanent.

▣ **Crowd Dispersal Strategies that could be Applicable to Nightlife:**

- **Excellent track record for efficiently dispersing event crowds** after events such as the Santa Claus Parade, the Beaches Jazz Festival, New Year's Eve Celebrations at Nathan Phillips Square, Blue Jay games at the Rogers Centre, and after concerts at the Scotiabank Arena.
- **Efficient organization of taxis to handle sudden influxes of people and disperse them quickly** at the two Toronto airports, Union Station, at subway stations, shopping malls, and hotels.

- **Excellent model of security guards** ushering event patrons to taxi stands after shows at the Budweiser Stage.
- ▣ **The Toronto 360 Wayfinding project** includes pedestrian, vehicular, cycling and transit wayfinding delivered seamlessly by Transportation Services and their project partners. This multi-million dollar city-wide initiative will deliver approximately 230 on-street wayfinding signs, 510 bikeshare station wayfinding maps, an updated Toronto visitor map, and an updated Toronto cycle map by the end of 2019.

## MOBILITY CHALLENGES

Despite these strengths, the nighttime economy presents unique mobility challenges:

- ▣ **Patrons seek safe rides home in a compacted window of time** after closing time.
- ▣ **Subways** stop running before 2 a.m. last-call but are replaced with night bus routes.
- ▣ **Nightlife patrons** appear to have an aversion to riding public transportation at night. This was an observation by stakeholders in both study areas (Dundas Street West and King Street West).
- ▣ **Pedestrians are at risk of injury** as jaywalking occurs frequently. Many pedestrians cross mid-street or run into the street to access their taxi, Uber or Lyft.
- ▣ **Nightlife venue employees** have difficulty returning home, especially if they live outside the downtown core. Some staff have to tailor shifts to leave earlier so they can return via public transportation.
- ▣ **Low lighting** in some alleys and main thoroughfares.
- ▣ **Parking Lots**
  - After-partying activity occurs in some parking lots that are not closely monitored by staff.
  - Limited security presence or monitoring by Ontario Place in the parking lots surrounding the Live Nation Budweiser Stage. The venue itself cannot enforce security because the parking lot isn't on the venue's lease. Pre-drinking occurs in the parking lot, which causes challenges for venue security once ticket holders reach the entrance.
- ▣ **Observations of King Street in Relation to Transit at Night:**

Observations by the consulting team to consider in the upcoming evaluation report on King Street (between Bathurst and Spadina):

  - **Traffic congestion** along the route caused by taxis and the streetcar between 10 p.m. - 3 a.m. when patrons leave the bars in a compacted window. This is the same condition that exists in all other entertainment areas throughout the city.
  - **Patrons seek safe rides home in a compacted window** of time after closing time. This is a challenge because the number of pick up and drop off locations necessary for this small window is impossible to provide for directly in front of a venue, also because of the fact that patrons want to be picked up directly in front of their venue, and don't want to take public transit.
  - **Rideshare users must walk to side streets** that are not well lit and have minimal foot traffic to access rideshare vehicles. This poses a safety hazard for female riders.
  - **Loitering** in public seating areas after closing time as nightlife patrons wait out the traffic. The longer people stay in the district, the more opportunity for fights and noise.

## ACTION PLAN

### P3 CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE NIGHTTIME MOBILITY PLAN

#### GOALS FOR IMPROVED NIGHTTIME MOBILITY:

- ▣ *Safe rides home for social district patrons and employees.*
- ▣ *Address after 10:00 p.m. traffic congestion along the King Street West route.*
- ▣ *Quick and efficient egress from the district after closing time.*
- ▣ *Better coordination of public and private transportation modalities at night.*
- ▣ *Increase ridership of trains at night.*

#### STEPS TO CONSIDER

- ▣ **Consider the following changes:** Let people ride the streetcar for free between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m.
  - Feature live music on the streetcar. Showcase up and coming to mid-level professional musicians by having them play on the streetcar.
  - Streetcar as connection transit: Use the streetcar to get people to a designated transportation hub.
  - Identify locations to serve as transportation hubs: These locations will serve as pick-up and drop-off points for ride-share vehicles and taxis. Address community concerns about moving a large number of nightlife patrons to other areas with less police monitoring. To ensure safety, it will be most successful with:
    - **Expediter/taxi marshal** to help direct passengers to vehicles.
    - **Safety presence** to manage the area.
    - **Portable washrooms.**
    - **System for pooled taxis and ride-share services** such as Uber Express Pool.
    - **Increased lighting** in the transportation hub area.
  - Anticipate pushback:
    - Ride-share business models are based on being picked up where the rider desires. Educating riders and drivers to change that behavior will be a challenge. Be prepared for immediate pushback from shared ride providers, drivers and riders, but be consistent in messaging that it is for safety.
- ▣ **Collect Data:**
  - **Patron and employee surveys:** Where are people coming from and where are they going in the nighttime economy? This will help coordinate transportation expansion (routes, hours).
  - **Nightlife venue surveys:** Which businesses would be interested vs. resistant to removing curbside patios adjacent to their businesses?

## **ADDITIONAL MOBILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- ▣ **Cost/benefit analysis:** What are the costs vs. benefits of extending subway hours? What nighttime safety measures or promotional campaigns would be necessary to motivate nightlife patrons to use them (and assure female passengers of their safety)?
- ▣ **Loading zone usage:** Assess how often and when loading zones along the King Street West route are used and whether sufficient space is provided.
- ▣ **Lighting inventory:** Conduct an inventory of pathways on main thoroughfares and secondary streets (e.g. alleys) between social districts and public transit to identify areas that need better lighting.
- ▣ **Explore adaptability of current models** for dispersing crowds from public spaces after events and at the airport to social districts.
- ▣ **Establish a better feedback loop** between municipal divisions and nightlife stakeholders regarding the nighttime impact of transportation and streetscape projects.
- ▣ **Venue and Patron Education:** Increase social media and marketing messages to encourage awareness of caution at pedestrian crossings and when boarding taxis and e-hail vehicles.



# ASSURE SAFETY



## ASSURE SAFETY

**NIGHTLIFE SETTINGS** are typically high-intensity environments with complex dynamics and risk factors. A continuum of stakeholders, principal of which are police and venue security, are invested in protecting patrons from violence, sexual assault, theft, underage drinking and impaired driving.

### PUBLIC SAFETY



Public safety in the nighttime economy requires an interagency collaboration to identify risks and coordinate intervention and education with the objective of improving compliance by nightlife venues and efficiently responding to nighttime incidents.

### PUBLIC SAFETY STRENGTHS

- ▣ **High level of trust and open communication** between 14 Division Detective Sergeant and nightlife venue operators.
- ▣ **14 Division's policing strategy** considered an excellent model for nightlife safety, despite resource limitations and officer shortage:
  - **High visibility bicycle and foot patrol** on King Street West.
  - **Police presence starts earlier in the evening** around 10:00 p.m. to set a tone of order prior to patrons arriving to venues.
  - **Friendly interactions** between patrons and patrols on bike and foot.
  - **Consistency of supervisors** who request off-duty shifts in the Entertainment District. If a new supervisor applies to work in the area, the Detective Sergeant briefs them about expectations for conduct and comportment while performing their duties. Supervisors then relay these expectations onto constables.
  - **Relative consistency of constables** due to the restriction that only 14 Division officers can apply for an over-time duty due to their experience working in the Entertainment District.
  - **Staff are dedicated to ground-level calls** pertaining to nightlife in the Entertainment District (i.e. they don't get called away to other areas). Overtime officers take the strain off of on-duty officers in the area handling related calls.

## PUBLIC SAFETY STRENGTHS (Continued)

- ▣ **Venues that Hire Officers (Paid Duty System):** Although the system of allowing nightlife venues to hire officers can present numerous challenges, Toronto Police Service has several safeguards in place to protect the integrity of the police service.

  - Venues pay police headquarters; they are not allowed to pay in cash. The police service must also verify that the venue is in good standing.
  - 14 Division Detective Sergeant has the authority to approve whether or not a venue can hire paid duty officers. Only venues that demonstrate a willingness to comply are approved.
  - To assure accountability and supervision of paid duty officers, venues are required to hire at least one supervisory officer (i.e. sergeant) along with a complement of officers.
  - Off-duty and paid duty officers are on the same radio band so they can communicate in the case of an emergency.
  - One of the off-duty supervisors in charge of the Entertainment District meets with the pay duty officers on-site to verbally relay expectations.
- ▣ **Police/Nightlife Forums:**

  - Toronto Police's 14 Division hosts at least two invite-only meetings per year with operators and owners of large occupancy venues or multiple venues on Queen West and King Street West. Meetings provide an opportunity to discuss trends, emerging issues and challenges.
- ▣ **Shift away from complaint-based systems**

  - MLS and AGCO both have complaint-based enforcement systems. But both agencies are currently exploring how to transition to a compliance-based system based on level of risk that is not necessarily driven by complaints.
- ▣ **Current and Future Data resources:**

  - **Last Drink Data:** Some last drink data is collected but not in a consistent or reliable manner. This can be a tool for educating businesses on trends.
- ▣ **AGCO is working on a new resource** to help them prioritize how to allocate limited staff resources based on density maps and level of risk associated with different venues.

## PUBLIC SAFETY CHALLENGES

### ▣ Top Public Safety Challenges in the Nighttime Economy:

- Intoxicated persons
- Sexual assault
- Drug overdoses
- Fights
- Impaired driving
- Gun violence

### ▣ Challenges with Current Police Deployment in 14 Division

- **Buy-in from the top** (mayor, city council, police chief) is needed.
- **Shortage in police resources:** Like many municipalities in North America, Toronto is experiencing a shortage in police officers. Only about an average of 75% of requested staffing is deployed to the Entertainment District.
- **Lack of formal training curriculum** for officers that work in the Entertainment District.
- **Lack of institutionalization** of the current public safety approach (in regard to deployment and scheduling) used in 14 Division.
- No continuity in the approach to policing in social districts located in different police divisions. This results in uneven enforcement for businesses located in different parts of the city.

### ▣ Joint Inspections

- Joint inspections are conducted among police, licensing, AGCO, fire, MLS, etc. however, they are difficult to coordinate.

### ▣ Minimal Teeth with Citations

- Toronto Fire Services report that businesses continue to engage in risky business practices even after a citation has been issued. Some even blatantly advertise continued practice on social media. e.g. Use of flares on patios.

### ▣ Food Handling Certificate Requirement

- Only one person in the kitchen needs to have a food handling certificate. Proactive businesses require all staff that handle food to have food handling certificates.

## ACTION PLAN

ASSURE SAFETY recommendations engage a continuum of public, private and government stakeholders vested in public safety to systematize an approach to nightlife safety, organize nightlife businesses and reduce alcohol-related harm and disorder.

### S1 REFINE AND INSTITUTIONALIZE SAFETY APPROACH

#### GOALS FOR AN IMPROVED PUBLIC SAFETY APPROACH:

- ▣ *Create systems for proactive education prior to the need for intervention.*
- ▣ *Establish consistency in the way nightlife is enforced by multiple agencies throughout the City.*
- ▣ *Ensure sustainability of effective approaches despite staff turnover in various divisions. Right now, there are individual champions in each division, but what if they move on or get promoted?*
- ▣ *Improve current approaches and address gaps.*

#### STEPS TO CONSIDER:

- ▣ **Convene quarterly or biannual forums with hospitality industry and government stakeholders.** The objective of this event will be to expand collaboration and build trust between municipal and provincial regulatory and enforcement agencies (e.g. MLS, AGCO, police, fire, etc.) and hospitality/nightlife representatives (e.g. ORHMA, venue operators, training providers, etc.). Agenda could include licensing updates and review of materials such as Purple Flag and Best Bar None Ontario.
- ▣ **Review and analyze the current policing model** (includes using overtime at night) to determine if changes can be made to establish a cost-effective and efficient model with limited resources.
- ▣ **Review potential for extended hours of enforcement divisions** (e.g. MLS) other than police until closing time.
- ▣ **Increase crowd control plan requirements for nightclub licensees** and explore how to apply them to restaurant licenses.

#### STAKEHOLDER CONTACTS:

- ▣ **Brian Kelly** (Detective Sergeant, Toronto Police – 14 Division)
- ▣ **Spencer Sutherland** (TABIA and Toronto Music Industry Advisory Council)
- ▣ **Sean Spence** (Security Consultant, INK Entertainment)
- ▣ **Mike Tanner** (Music Sector Development Officer, City of Toronto)
- ▣ **Alok Sharma** (Tourism Services Manager, City of Toronto)
- ▣ **Rose Burrows** (Bylaw Enforcement District Manager, City of Toronto)

## S2 FOCUS ON NEW NIGHTLIFE PERSPECTIVES FOR SAFETY

### GOAL: EVALUATE NIGHTLIFE DISTRICTS FROM A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

#### STEPS TO CONSIDER:

- ▣ **Conduct an audit of safety in the entertainment district using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles** as a framework for evaluating environments inside and outside of venues, as well as before, during and after events. Venue owners, security and police should be made aware of when audits are being conducted.
  - Audit categories should include:
    - Overall impressions and perceptions
    - Lighting
    - Signage
    - Sightlines
    - Isolation: eye and ear distances
    - Movement predictors and egress routes
    - Stairwells and exits
    - Accessibility
    - Maintenance
- ▣ **View nightlife venues and districts through women's perspective.** Conduct focus groups on what's missing in the experience for women and what would make women feel safer.
  - **Resource:** Since 1984 a leading advocate for public safety in Toronto has been **The Metropolitan Action on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)**. Their guiding principle is "where women and children feel safe, everybody feels safe." Permanent improvements inside the clubs could use METRAC's approach and focus on the needs of women in crowded situations. Improvements to washrooms (i.e. spaces to sit, better lighting), for instance, could result in their being considered 'sanctuaries' for women who feel uncomfortable at any time during their visits to clubs.

## VENUE SAFETY



Venue safety is comprised of the initiatives that venue operators and event organizers (including DIY) undertake to protect the health and safety of their patrons and staff at night. An important part of venue safety is to collaborate with regulatory and enforcement agencies to increase industry safety and compliance.

### VENUE SAFETY STRENGTHS

- ▣ **Interest in formal collaboration:** Nightlife venue owners and operators have expressed interest in collaborating on a formal level with each other and with municipal divisions to advocate for changes in policy. They can build off of the foundation of trust and communication established between operators and 14 Division police.
- ▣ **Consensus that in-house security is preferred** over private, subcontracted security. In-house security is preferred because venue owners can hire based on experience, professionalism, sense of investment in the venue's success, as well as familiarity with the community and patrons.
- ▣ **Safety strategies used by venues:**
  - Security cameras.
  - Dress code enforcement. Recently, men have been prohibited from bringing in bags or purses.
  - Group Chat: Door security on King Street West are connected by group chat regarding problem patrons.
  - Participation in Best Bar None (BBN) Ontario. Twelve licensed venues on King West are currently accredited by BBN.

## VENUE SAFETY CHALLENGES

- ▣ **Top Challenges for Nightlife Venues:**

  - Rising costs (rent, minimum wage increase, insurance, etc.)
  - Replacement of social venues with residential housing
  - Co-existence with residents
  - Lack of city support for business/industry development
  - Lack of industry organization/central/voice for the industry
- ▣ **Top Challenges with Patron Behavior:**

  - Over-drinking
  - Lack of civility/respect towards authority
- ▣ **Inconsistency in level of training, professionalism, deployment, and uniforms for door security.** Difficult to distinguish staff from patrons. No formal training program exists for nightlife security outside of education provided by individual venues.
- ▣ **Hesitancy to call emergency services on behalf of patrons in need of medical care for fear of reprisals.** Some staff are reluctant to call emergency services for fear of compromising their reputation.
- ▣ **Apprehension to hold perpetrators:** When venues apprehend someone who has allegedly committed an act of violence, a security staff member who is licensed to use handcuffs can handcuff the alleged perpetrator until police arrive. Or, they are forced to release them, whereupon they go to another venue.
- ▣ **Resto-Bars:** Desire to address establishments licensed as restaurants but operating as nightclubs (“resto-bars”) to meet higher standards for safety.
- ▣ **Speakeasies (illegal, unlicensed “booze cans”) re-open after being shut down by enforcement officers.** There is not enough of a deterrent to prevent them from re-opening. Police resources are stretched thin with licensed venues, much less unlicensed venues.
- ▣ **There is not one unified industry voice or primary association that can be at the table on behalf of the nightlife industry, especially in regard to any new legislative changes.** There are several prominent operators who are willing to take the first steps in forming one, though. Open dialogue is needed with elected officials and decision makers about the value of the industry and steps to protect it.
- ▣ **Rising costs:**

  - **Increased rent has led to displacement and business closures** as a result of the heightened state of development in the city.
  - **Businesses face steep increases in real estate taxes** based on the highest and best use property tax, where businesses are re-assessed based on the value of a new development nearby.
  - **Several high occupancy venues** have closed down.
  - **Insurance coverage is expensive** due to the annual increase in claims. It is difficult to find an insurance company willing to write a policy for use of force or to cover sexual assault that occurs in the venue.
- ▣ **Opportunity to require more robust Crowd Control Plan for Nightclub licenses.** Currently, nightclub licensees must submit a description of:

  - The manner in which people seeking entry or re-entry into the establishment, including the location of line ups, maximum number of people permitted to line up, and how lines will be monitored to ensure only the maximum number of people are waiting and that their conduct is orderly.
  - This information is limited in comparison to the emergency management plan submitted by event organizers.

## ACTION PLAN

### S3 ORGANIZE VENUE ALLIANCE FOR SELF-REGULATION

#### GOALS FOR SELF-REGULATION:

- *Create a unified voice for the industry to lobby for their interests and to better liaise with municipal government.*
- *Increase public recognition and awareness of how nightlife positively contributes to the community and proactive safety measures that are taken.*

#### STEPS TO CONSIDER:

- **Establish a nightlife association to provide a voice for the industry.** Explore pros and cons of different models. (See appendix).
- **Create a formal guide for nightlife best practices.** Collaborate with all stakeholders to create a formal guide.
- **Develop a training curriculum** for nightlife venue security.
- **Develop press releases promoting proactive initiatives** undertaken by the nightlife industry to protect public safety and improve quality of life.
- **Conduct an economic impact study** to demonstrate the economic and fiscal impacts of nightlife.



**ENHANCE VIBRANCY** recommendations offer ways to support the creative entrepreneurs, performers and social spaces that comprise the nighttime vibrancy of a city through partnerships and awareness-raising among elected officials.

**V1: PUT “LIFE AT NIGHT” ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA**

**V2: SUPPORT MUSICIANS AND NIGHTLIFE CONNECTIVITY**

**V3: APPLY A NIGHT LENS TO DAY EVENTS AND STRATEGIES**



**ENHANCE VIBRANCY**



**ENTERTAINMENT**



**PUBLIC SPACE**

## ENHANCE VIBRANCY

VIBRANCY IS CREATED by a variety of social experiences in bars, restaurants, cafes and live music venues. Spontaneous encounters in public space, such as in outdoor cafes, plazas, etc. also signal the vitality of a district.

### ENTERTAINMENT



ENTERTAINMENT IS DEFINED as indoor social options such as dining, dancing, live entertainment, theater, etc. in the city at night and the systems to recruit and retain talent.

ENTERTAINMENT is also measured by mix of clientele, systems for promotion, and retention of talent. Factors to consider are number of venues, combined number of seats available, hours and economic impact.

### ENTERTAINMENT STRENGTHS

- **Excellent variety and high quality** of food, cocktail and craft culture, live music and entertainment with diverse offerings.
- **DIY scene** based on content-driven events.
- **Professional development and educational opportunities:**
  - **Many venues and organizations** help to foster live music through concerts, festivals, cultural exchanges, education and outreach as well as audience and professional development for musicians.
- **Systems in place to support the music industry:**
  - **Creation of a music unit and position** of a music sector development officer.
  - **Toronto Music Advisory Council (TMAC)** comprised of 30 volunteer members representing a wide spectrum of Toronto’s music sector, along with 6 City Councillors and 2 City staff.
- **Engaging with the DIY Community**
  - **The DIY movement** is defined as event organizers who may be artists, promoters or a hybrid of both who generate progressive art, music and culture. They may represent styles of music, genres and communities that don’t feel welcome in mainstream venues or don’t have the financial capacity to host events in traditional brick and mortar venues. Hence, they tend to host events in unregulated locations—in homes, under bridges, in basements—that may not have the safety measures or infrastructure in place to host large numbers of people.
  - **Mike Tanner**, Music Sector Development Officer, City of Toronto, just completed a six-month consultation with the DIY community on pain points and sustainability. This could become a resource to help facilitate better engagement between DIY organizers and municipal agencies to better protect life safety and support this movement. If DIY events continue to operate underground, there is greater risk that someone may get hurt.

## ENTERTAINMENT CHALLENGES

- ▣ **Need for a clear vision on Toronto’s entertainment as a regional attraction.** At the heart of the debate is the question of whether Toronto will compete with other global cities with a vibrant 24/7 entertainment scene or shut down early to appease residents.
- ▣ **Gaps in Social Options:**
  - Places for 18 and under to safely socialize at night
  - Entertainment activities not focused on alcohol consumption
  - Places for 50+ to hang out
  - Small and mid-sized music and entertainment venues
  - Gap in 700-1000 occupancy venues
- ▣ **All-ages collectives/social spaces are perceived to be unsafe places** where older men prey on younger women. In fact, some have closed down because of sexual assault allegations.
- ▣ **Shifting the Culture to Value and Pay for Music and Entertainment Experiences**
  - With audio streaming services, YouTube, etc. so much music and entertainment is available for free. That mindset transfers over to In Real Life (IRL) experiences, making it a challenge for venues offering quality entertainment to attract paying customers. Musicians also report difficulty in getting paid a living wage by venues. In fact, some say they are spending money or breaking even rather than making money to perform.
- ▣ **Event and festival organizations are not formally listed or licensed.**
- ▣ **Events and nightlife venues have a symbiotic relationship, as event goers also patronize nightlife venues before and after the event.** This can be a challenge when people drink to the point of intoxication at an event or venue.
- ▣ **Need for greater support for aspiring musicians** along the continuum including affordable spaces to practice, rehearse and perform.

## ACTION PLAN

ENHANCE VIBRANCY recommendations offer ways to support the creative entrepreneurs, performers and social spaces that comprise the nighttime vibrancy of a city through partnerships and awareness-raising among elected officials.

### V1 PUT “LIFE AT NIGHT” ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA

#### GOALS FOR ENTERTAINMENT:

- ▣ *Advocate for the importance of supporting the nighttime economy.*
- ▣ *Raise awareness of elected officials about the nighttime economy.*

#### STEPS:

- ▣ **Promote New Language for Nightlife**
  - Move away from using “entertainment” and “nightlife,” which can have negative connotations.
  - Try introducing the broader phrase, “life at night” to incorporate activities such as shopping and socializing in non-traditional nighttime spaces such as museums and libraries. This can help diffuse negative connotations around intoxication and violence.
- ▣ **Engage Patrons as Advocates.** Engage “life at night” patrons and fans as advocates for the value of the nighttime economy. Use Seattle and San Francisco’s examples of supporting political candidates who take a positive position on the nighttime economy.
- ▣ **Replicate Seattle’s initiative to have all nightlife venues stop the music** for a certain number of minutes to get nightlife patrons’ attention and thereby engaged in politics. The question could then be raised: What if Toronto were silent after 10pm?
- ▣ **Develop promotional campaigns, including billboards, to promote the value of music** and that it’s worth paying for. Example: “Music Matters. Pay for it or the city will be silent.”

### V2 SUPPORT MUSICIANS AND NIGHTLIFE CONNECTIVITY

#### GOALS FOR TALENT AND VENUE DEVELOPMENT:

- ▣ *Support the interconnectivity between music and nightlife.*
- ▣ *Support new and mid-level talent through unique showcase opportunities.*

#### STEPS TO CONSIDER:

- ▣ **Connect large, established venues as sponsors of small, up and coming musicians.** For example, “Massey Hall presents (an artist) at Yonge Dundas Square or (public space location).” The intention is for venues to sponsor performers that they would like to see perform one day at their venue, but who still need time to hone their craft.
- ▣ **Connect retailers with musicians.** There is currently a men’s clothing store that sponsors a musician, who wears their clothing on stage.
- ▣ **Engage the Bloor Street Culture Corridor** as a resource as they are creating a cultural plan for the area.
- ▣ **Build mid-level talent opportunities in more formalized areas or plazas on the streets designated as “Great Streets” or “Ones to Watch” (future great streets)** with the infrastructure to support a crowd and musician. Feature musicians in areas outside the downtown core to engage suburban residents.

### **ADDITIONAL ENTERTAINMENT STEPS**

- ▣ **Host a Music Walk similar to what is held in Fort Myers, Florida**, where retailers provide space for musicians to play.
- ▣ **Explore use of the underground retail system for small shows.** Identify and engage the multiple different people and businesses that own the tunnels. Develop a crowd management and emergency management strategy.
- ▣ **Establish better connections with event and festival organizers**, as they can reach out to musicians' agents or the musicians themselves.
- ▣ **Explore how street performers can drive foot traffic to desired areas.**

## PUBLIC SPACE



Public space vibrancy offers a continuum of outdoor activities such as sidewalk dining, outdoor seating, street performers, markets, food vendors, festivals, and art walks at night.

Truly vibrant cities maintain social activity at all times of day, evening and late at night. But vibrancy requires work. It takes systems to support venues, nurture performers and provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to showcase their talent.

### PUBLIC SPACE STRENGTHS

▣ **Toronto’s Great Streets, a report by Ryerson City Building Institute**

- Five streets that have been “redesigned for greatness”:
  - Harbord Street
  - Roncesvalles Avenue
  - St. Clair Avenue West
  - Queens Quay West
  - Market Street
- Five future great streets that have potential for revitalization and change:
  - Bloor Street
  - King Street
  - Downtown Yonge Street
  - Yonge Street North
  - The Golden Mile
- The “Recipe for Greatness” includes the following:
  - **Placemaking:** Inviting streetscape, vibrant public spaces, neighbourhood character
  - **Mobility:** Multiple mobility options; flexible and adaptable
  - **Economic vitality:** Mixed use, variety of businesses and services, diverse and inclusive
  - **Safety and accessibility:** Safe for all road users, pedestrian priority

▣ **Open Streets TO**

- The concept is to “open streets to people and close them to cars to allow people to walk, run, bike, and play in the streets... encouraging participation in physical activity and healthy recreation. They are free, regularly occurring programs, and offer communities the opportunity to experience their city streets in a whole new way. At Open Streets there are no finish lines, parades, or sidewalk sales and this is something that sets Open Streets apart from other events like marathons or street festivals.”

▣ **Strong City support for events. Layered level of support for events in the city. The City:**

- Supports different organizations that put on events.
- Established an events support unit to work with community organizations to help them through the application process.
- Has units focused on creating events.

## PUBLIC SPACE STRENGTHS (Continued)

- ▣ **Some street entertainment.**
  - TTC has a licensing process for buskers at transportation stations called Tracks on Tracks.
- ▣ **Website featuring food truck locations and events:** <https://torontofoodtrucks.ca/>
- ▣ **Nineteen new public spaces were created from curb lanes** as part of the King Street pilot project. Most are temporary public space installations with artistic designs intended to provide pleasant spaces for people to walk, sit and socialize. They also serve as an extension of business seating;
- ▣ **Support for Public Art**
  - Street art has been transformed from nuisance into destination in locations like Graffiti Alley. The City's StArt mural program has extended street art throughout the city.
- ▣ **City support through the Arts & Culture Section of the Economic Development & Culture** helps to coordinate active programming for public spaces.
- ▣ **The City of Toronto has developed new guidelines for outdoor cafes and seating areas**, providing more flexibility and varied options for businesses to implement cafes. This will go to Council in Q1/2 of 2019.

## PUBLIC SPACE CHALLENGES

- ▣ **Limited window for festival season due to weather constraints.** Most events are held between May and the end of September/early October. There is some “festival fatigue” but in general, the market regulates the number of events by attendance numbers. Street closures and traffic diversions can be difficult for residents.
- ▣ **Some cultural festivals have stopped operating due to sound complaints from residents.** Some uses of public space are also opposed by some residents due to sound impacts.
- ▣ **Public space installations in the King Street pilot project area.**
  - As the King Street pilot is a pilot, business owners are reluctant to invest in “weatherizing” them to make them comfortable in the winter due to the minimal anticipated benefit (too few seats) for the cost.
- ▣ **Some areas may be perceived to be public spaces**, but are actually privately owned, and have limited use because of cost and liability for public events and displays.
- ▣ **Cost for using outdoor space:** Putting on a show at some public venues is cost-prohibitive.
- ▣ **The night tour observed mobile food vendors (e.g. pushcarts) on King Street** sidewalks, which created crowd congestion at closing time. Food vendors do not assist with crowd dispersal. Better patron management may be needed.
- ▣ **More panhandlers than buskers at night.**

## ACTION PLAN

### V3 APPLY A NIGHT LENS TO DAY EVENTS AND STRATEGIES

**GOAL:** RAISE AWARENESS OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

**STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- ▣ **Partner with Ryerson City Building Institute** to add additional criteria to the “recipe for greatness” to qualify as a “Great Street”: nighttime activation regarding vibrancy and safety.
- ▣ **Partner with Open Streets TO** in order to host an event at night.
- ▣ **Conduct a nighttime pedestrian count and traffic analysis around main entertainment areas.**

## PARTICIPANTS

Individuals from the following organizations participated in one or more strategic planning sessions. Participation does not imply an endorsement of recommendations in this report, only that their input was considered in development of the recommendations.



**ASSURE SAFETY**  
PUBLIC SAFETY | VENUE SAFETY

### PUBLIC SAFETY

Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
City of Markham  
Ink Entertainment  
Ryerson University  
Toronto Fire Services  
Toronto Public Health  
Toronto Public Health, Drug Strategy Secretariat  
Toronto, Economic Development & Culture  
Toronto, Event Support  
Toronto, Municipal Licensing & Standards  
Trademark Hospitality  
University of Toronto

### VENUE SAFETY

HUB International HKMB Ltd  
Ink Entertainment  
Legion Security  
Leviton Lawyers  
Live Nation  
Mademoiselle  
METRAC: Action on Violence  
ORHMA  
Publica Design Consultants Ltd.  
Queen Street West BIA  
Smart Serve Ontario  
The Citizen  
The Dandelion Initiative  
The Hideout Toronto  
Toronto Police Service  
Toronto, Municipal Licensing & Standards  
Trademark Hospitality  
University of Toronto



**ENHANCE VIBRANCY**  
ENTERTAINMENT | PUBLIC SPACE

### ENTERTAINMENT

Alissa Vox Row / Queen & Kings  
BELI  
Burdock  
Canadian Association of Stand-up Comedians  
Collective Concerts - Horseshoe Tavern  
Freed F&B  
Lula Lounge  
Music Canada  
Music Canada Live  
The Garrison  
Toronto, Economic Development & Culture  
Trademark Hospitality  
Vassos Law LLP

### PUBLIC SPACE

Burdock Music Hall  
Downtown Yonge BIA  
GM  
METRAC: Action on Violence  
ORHMA & Best Bar None Ontario  
Ted Rogers School of Hospitality Management  
The Young Novelists  
Toronto Entertainment District BIA  
Toronto Police Service  
Toronto, Economic Development & Culture  
Toronto, Municipal Licensing & Standards  
Toronto, Solid Waste Management  
Trademark Hospitality



**PLAN FOR PEOPLE**  
QUALITY OF LIFE | MOBILITY

### QUALITY OF LIFE

City Place Residents' Association  
Grange Community Association, Inc  
Lavelle  
Entertainment District Residents Association  
Toronto Noise Coalition  
Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards  
Toronto, Solid Waste Management  
Trademark Hospitality  
University of Toronto  
York Quay Neighbourhood Association

### MOBILITY

Freed F&B  
John Doe Group  
The Citizen  
Toronto Police Service  
Toronto Transit Commission  
Toronto, City Planning  
Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards  
Toronto, Transportation Services  
Trademark Hospitality  
Uber