



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA NIGHTTIME ECONOMY OFFICE

Proposal 2021

Arts & Culture Taskforce

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PHOTOGRAPHY

The Nighttime Economy Office

“True cities of the world never stop.”

-New South Wales (Australia) - Sydney 24-Hour Economy Strategy

MISSION: Create and sustain a **safe, inclusive** and **creative** nighttime economy in Philadelphia that provides **opportunity** for all.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Nighttime Economy Office is to promote stronger and safer arts, culture, hospitality, and economic development at night by engaging nightlife stakeholders, facilitating services, and applying good governance. Caring for, understanding, and governing the nighttime economy is key to creating a dynamic and equitable arts, culture, and tourism sector. This office would allow our cities artists and entrepreneurs to fulfill their potential here in Philadelphia and create a better quality of life for all citizens, including those with traditional hours, and allow Philadelphia to compete with peer cities for residents, tax base and cultural prestige.

The challenges of governing a city during the day are still very present at night and are additionally compounded by several unique variables. City government, organizations, businesses, and citizens need to shift their thinking to a 24-hour perspective to sustain the safety and productivity of the nighttime economy. The need for cities of the future to operate as a 24-hour hub for business, creativity, arts, culture, and entertainment has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The nightlife community, which mainly consists of independent artists and small businesses, have been dramatically hit due to COVID-19 which has led to massive attrition, job loss, and shuttered businesses. As Philadelphia continues to re-open, the Nighttime Economy Office can listen to and address the concerns of the community. Additionally, can support efforts for these businesses to re-open in the safest and most ethical way. Life at night cannot simply be a byproduct of daytime activities, and the Nighttime Economy Office can provide a path to recovery and restoration that is innovative and structured around collective planning and targeted governance.

WHY A NIGHTTIME ECONOMY OFFICE?

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate the arts, culture, and hospitality industries in Philadelphia. These businesses were the first to close and will be last to re-open. The Philadelphia Cultural Alliance estimates a revenue loss of over \$200 million for Philadelphia arts and culture businesses since March 2020. Most operators see 2021 as their period of greatest need. The nighttime workforce is in dire straits - in 2020, arts and entertainment-related wage tax payments were down 25% from 2019. There is an urgent need to coordinate the safe re-opening of these sectors and invest in their future - doing so is integral to the character of the City.

By empowering a Nighttime Economy Office to facilitate services and apply good governance to the nightlife sector, Philadelphia can help the sector recover and subsequently thrive. The City's world-class creative entrepreneurs and artists can deliver Philadelphia as a capital of arts and culture if the

City's supply of creative space is expanded and cared for. This will create economic opportunities and improve quality of life for all Philadelphians - not just those who work and play at night. A central focus of the Office will be improving life for those who sleep at night through engagement related to nuisance and noise and the promotion of responsible business practices.

A Nighttime Economy Office is crucial to Philadelphia's economic recovery because its primary role is to support and stabilize small businesses, entrepreneurs, and workers. Government services and city functions touch all aspects of the nighttime economy, but seldom perform as intended because they are not designed for 24-hour circumstances. A dedicated office can build the bridge.

Creating this office would ally with a global movement towards nighttime governance. Over forty cities worldwide (including New York, Pittsburgh and Washington, DC) have founded similar offices to support their nighttime economies. These offices are built to address crises - they were created to preserve and promote creative spaces in the face of rising rents, dysfunctional licensing and enforcement relationships, and conflicts over noise or nuisance. They have performed well for their stakeholders during the pandemic - delivering information, business support and a seat at the table as complex relief was introduced, and procedures and rules changed rapidly. These successful models must be implemented here to help the nightlife sectors survive the crisis and grow to be healthier than ever. Our proposal is based on international research, years of community engagement, local survey research, industry experience, and interviews with nighttime economy officers in five US cities.

"Cities worldwide are paying increased attention to their nighttime economy, nightlife arts sectors, and to life at night in general. Doing so has meant confronting civic dysfunction and outdated approaches brought about by years of disregard for and prohibition of nighttime activities. According to a range of observers, including the pioneering "night mayors" appointed to steward this sector in cities worldwide - effective governance may be the most important factor in the success of a city's nightlife"

- Michael Fichman & John Michael Lasalle

DUTIES:

The Office, which should be housed in the City of Philadelphia's Department of Commerce, will execute its mission through engagement of public and private stakeholders with outreach, mediation, and assistance. It will advocate for the interests of nighttime economy stakeholders and historically underrepresented communities in the public square and in government administrative processes. The Office will create a strategic plan and economic impact study and it will coordinate with all relevant public departments to execute its mission.

The Office will be organized around the furtherance of four core principles:

Safety, Inclusion, Creativity and Opportunity

Its specific functions will include, but are not limited to:

- Promote opportunity and economic recovery by facilitating access to government services, resources, best practices and funds for nightlife businesses and workers. Near-term focus will prioritize COVID-19 safe operation.

- Reduce nuisance, improve quality of life, and enhance trust by facilitating dialogue regarding complaints or licensing between nightlife operators, communities, and government stakeholders
- Convene a regular working group of stakeholders from public agencies, nightlife entrepreneurs and workers, business districts, and residents
- Provide input on planning and licensing decisions that have a direct impact on nightlife economic activity
- Oversee a strategic plan for the Office and an economic impact study for the nighttime economy with a focus on arts and culture, supported by a year-one engagement campaign
- Advocate for the interests of nightlife and the creative economy in public policy discussions and government business, with a focus on the interests of the nighttime workforce and marginalized communities
- Promote and support best practices in harm reduction related to COVID-19, venue operation, substance abuse, mental health, sexual harassment and anti-social patron behavior in association with public health officials and non-profit partners.
- Provide regular reports to an advisory board (see Structure).
- Conduct ongoing data collection and analysis related to activity in the city at night and the nighttime arts and culture sector in order to inform the Office's operations

These functions affect an ecosystem of individuals in the nighttime and creative economies.

The core private stakeholders of such an office include but are not limited to venue proprietors, artists and performers, creative industry entrepreneurs, service industry workers, allied professional workers in nighttime jobs, trade groups, patrons, neighbors and community members.

The core public stakeholders are included but not limited to public safety agencies, licensing and planning bodies, transportation agencies, business improvement and special services districts, advocacy offices, public health officials, arts and culture officials, tourism and convention officials.

STRUCTURE:

The Nighttime Economy Office will consist of three full-time staff (Director, Assistant Director, and Administrator) and two part-time staff (Intern 1 and Intern 2). The Director should report directly to the Mayor.

The Nighttime Economy Office will host quarterly meetings and submit in person quarterly reports to a board of advisors. Advisors will serve one term for two years and represent the diverse multitudes within the nighttime economic community. The board of advisors should rotate in membership and consist of at least one representative from each of the following groups:

Hospitality workers, artists and performers, special services districts, venue owners, independent nightlife entrepreneurs, a university representative, City Council and state government, the tourism or convention industry, a representative from the food and beverage industry, LBGTQIA+ organizations, patrons/consumers. The group should represent the social, racial and economic diversity of Philadelphia.

The Office will be responsible for coordinating an internal working group, which will be composed of representatives from the following public agencies:

PA Liquor Control Board, Philadelphia Police Department, Office of LGBTQ Affairs, Office of Licenses and Inspections, OACCE, Department of Commerce, GPTMC, City Planning Department, Office of Public Health, and SEPTA.

BUDGET:

NEO Director Salary: \$95,000 Annually

NEO Assistant Director Salary: \$70,000 Annually

NEO Administrator Salary: \$50,000 Annually

Intern 1: \$20,000 Annually (\$16hr x 25hrs x 50 weeks)

Intern 2: \$20,000 Annually (\$16hr x 25hrs x 50 weeks)

Consultants and Data Collection: \$100,000

Program Expenses: \$180,000

Marketing and Promotions: \$25,000

Supplies and Equipment: \$15,000

Total Office Budget: \$575,000 Annually + City HR Benefits

GLOBAL APPLICATION:

Amsterdam: “*The stuff of night mayors: Amsterdam pioneers new way to run cities after dark*” - [Here](#)

Sydney: “*Sydney nightlife boost with 24-hour plan*” - [Here](#)

New York: “*New York City Appoints Its First Nightlife Mayor*” - [Here](#)

Pittsburgh: “*The Pittsburgh Sociable City Plan is implemented by the Nighttime Economy Manager*” [Here](#)

THE CHARGE: *Will Philadelphia be a pioneer, as is the history and fabric of this city, or will we be late to the party?*

Urban politicians recognize that nighttime cultural assets drive tourism, drive economic development, and improve aspects of life for residents. They also realize that cities compete against one another for residents, jobs and tax base, and creating favorable conditions for nightlife can represent a competitive advantage. The scale and duration of the post-industrial ‘urban renaissance’ has increased the amount of nightlife in many cities around the world. If we encourage and foster responsible and safe nightlife, we will get good behavior, good art, and good economic outcomes. If we do not take an approach at all, the outcomes are out of our hands.