

Savannah, Georgia Sociable City Assessment



Sociable City
SERVICES

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA SOCIABLE CITY PLAN
PREPARED BY: RESPONSIBLE HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE
JANUARY 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

SUMMARY OF TRENDS AND MARKET FORCES 5

GOVERNANCE ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT..... 12

CORE MEASURES ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT 13

WOMEN’S PERSPECTIVE ON THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: SNAPSHOT 14

TO-GO ZONE ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT 15

ACTION PLAN: SNAPSHOT..... 16

ACTION PLAN: SYNOPSIS 17

ACTIONS TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ECONOMY 23

ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY 33

ACTIONS TO ENHANCE VIBRANCY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY..... 63

ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY 71

GOVERNANCE ANALYSIS: DETAILED SUMMARY 93

THE TO-GO ZONE: DETAILED ANALYSIS..... 100

CONSENSUS ON CHALLENGES FROM PARTICIPANTS 102

CORE MEASURE 1: PUBLIC SAFETY 103

CORE MEASURE 2: VENUE SAFETY 104

CORE MEASURE 3: SOCIAL VENUES 105

CORE MEASURE 4: PUBLIC SPACE..... 106

CORE MEASURE 5: QUALITY OF LIFE..... 107

CORE MEASURE 6: MOBILITY..... 109

APPENDIX I: PROJECT TIMELINE..... 110

APPENDIX II: PARTICIPANTS 111

APPENDIX III: REFERENCES 114

APPENDIX IV: DRINK TAX DATA..... 116

APPENDIX V: CHATHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES DATA FOR ZONE 1 117

APPENDIX VI: JUVENILE ARRESTS IN THE NORTHWEST PRECINCT 119

APPENDIX VII: SECURITY PLAN GUIDELINES SUBMITTED TO ABC..... 120

APPENDIX VIII: AMBASSADOR PROGRAM REVIVAL GUIDELINES..... 121



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Overview

The Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) was invited to work with the City of Savannah’s Office of Special Events, Film & Tourism to help facilitate safe and vibrant growth in the social economy. RHI defines the social economy as the venues and events that facilitate sociability in the form of dining, entertainment, events, and nightlife. The focus of the report’s analysis and recommendations is primarily applicable to Downtown’s Historic Core. However, other key social clusters are referenced in this report and actions may address systemic challenges citywide.

Analysis of the Social Economy

RHI analyzed the following factors in the planning and management of the social economy:

Market Forces	Six Core Measures of a Sociable City
 <p>Market Forces that have led to current trends driving change in the social economy.</p> <p>Governance: Licensing systems and policies that exist or are needed to enhance management.</p>	 <p>Six Core Measures of a Sociable City: Strengths, challenges, and opportunities in mobility; quality of life; public safety; venue safety; public space and social venues.</p>

Action Plan

The Action Plan was developed through participant input and RHI’s expertise to address the challenges identified.

<p>ACTIONS TO LAY A FOUNDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1: Launch the Savannah Office of Nightlife ■ 2: Form a Social Economy Advisory Board ■ 3: Conduct an Economic Analysis of the Social Economy ■ 4: Explore Sources of Funding to Support the Social Economy and the Office of Nightlife <p>ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1: Improve the 311 System as a Resource for Residents, Not Tourists ■ 2: Revive an Ambassador Program ■ 3: Address the Impacts of Short Term Vacation Rentals ■ 4: Improve Notification Systems to Residents About New Venues ■ 5: Conduct a Lighting Assessment of Social Clusters ■ 6: Connect Visitors and Venues with Social Service Resources ■ 7: Expand Mobility Service to/from Downtown to the Arena ■ 8: Empower Parking Services to Authorize Towing ■ 9: Improve Communication on Street Closures for Events ■ 10: Create a Rideshare Hub for Closing Time Pick-Up 	<p>ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1: Create a Multi-Disciplinary Team Approach to Public Safety at Night ■ 2: Create a Dedicated Downtown Nightlife Police Unit ■ 3: Explore Improvements and Alternatives to Off-Duty Officers System ■ 4: Host Educational Forums Between Venues and Safety Agencies ■ 5: Develop an Accreditation Process for Server Training Programs ■ 6: Reinstate a Server Registry ■ 7: Create A Sexual Violence Prevention Program <p>ACTIONS TO ENHANCE VIBRANCY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1: Revive and Sustain a Nightlife Association ■ 2: Create Nighttime Recreational Opportunities for Youth ■ 3: Activate Public Spaces with Public Art
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Discovery Process and Stakeholder Engagement



100 People
65 Organizations Represented
Three On-Site Visits
30 Meetings (virtual and on-site)

RHI conducted an in-depth discovery and extensive engagement process in Savannah.

Between May and October 2022, RHI conducted three on-site visits with a total of 30 meetings (20 in-person meetings and 10 virtual interviews/meetings). Nearly 100 people participated in the project representing about 65 organizations/companies.

The Downtown Historic Core (and social clusters including City Market and Plant Riverside) were the primary focus of the study, but other social districts were also represented, including Starland.

Neighborhood engagement primarily focused on the downtown community, but RHI staff also met with representatives from a total of 7 neighborhoods citywide: Downtown, Starland, Habersham Village, Feiler Park, Cloverdale, Carver Village, and Tatenville.

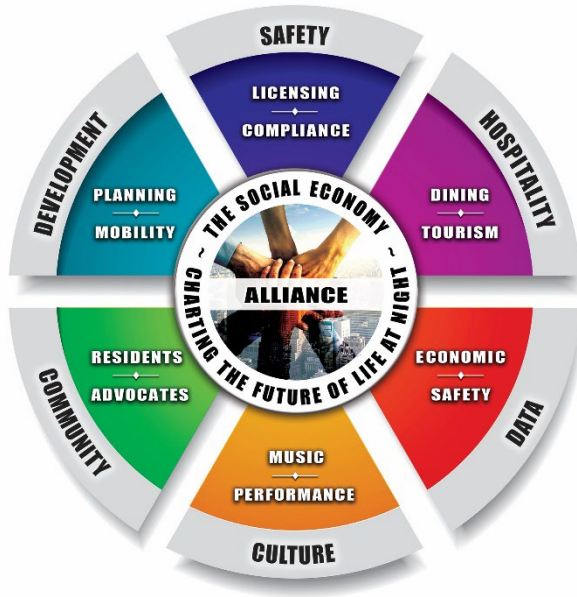
Highlights of the discovery process include the following:

- ▣ **A series of engagement meetings** gathered big-picture insights from department heads, safety stakeholders, and elected officials.
- ▣ **Three Listening Sessions** identified strengths and challenges in three content areas: Planning, Safety, and Vibrancy.
- ▣ **Six roundtables** were held to develop actions for the priority challenges identified during Listening Sessions.
- ▣ **Four neighborhood engagement opportunities** (two in-person and two virtually) provided RHI staff with an opportunity to meet with residents of seven neighborhoods.
- ▣ **A women's focus group** explored social preferences and mobility and safety concerns from a woman's lens, as well as discussed the LGBTQ+ community in relation to the social economy.
- ▣ **Venue operators meeting** was held with venue operators, managers, and staff to discuss areas of concern to the industry.
- ▣ **Observational tours** were conducted both day and night in the study areas on foot, in the car, and via trolley.
- ▣ **Police ride-alongs** provided tours of social clusters within and outside of downtown (e.g. Starland, EnMarket Arena, etc.)



Steering Committee: The Sociable City Transformation Team

Stakeholder recruitment was conducted by a steering group that strove to achieve a balance of perspectives.



The Transformation Team is a steering group selected by the coordinating team based on their recognition of the need for change, ability to mobilize stakeholders, and capacity to leverage resources to ensure the project's success. Members are representative of diverse stakeholder perspectives to ensure broad input.

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Brief and Full Versions of the Report

Information presented in this report was generated from a variety of sources, including RHI staff observations; virtual and on-site interviews and meetings; online research; and background reports.

A brief version of the report with a snapshot of each analysis area and a synopsis of the action plan:

https://sociablecity.info/services/savannah/brief_report_2022.pdf

A complete version of the report provides a full analysis with a step-by-step implementation plan:

https://sociablecity.info/services/savannah/full_report_2022.pdf

About RHI

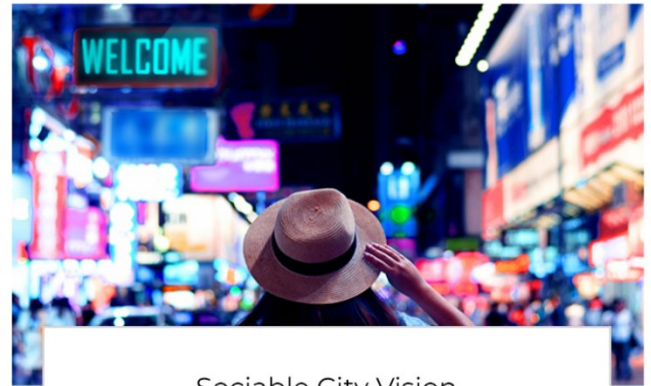
The Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) was commissioned with the facilitation of a Sociable City Assessment for the future of Savannah’s social economy.

RHI brings decades of experience in nightlife and social economy management. A private non-profit organization founded in 1983, RHI is the leading source for events, resources, and consultation services.

We help cities plan safe and inclusive places to socialize by convening diverse stakeholders to achieve a common vision.

Aims of the Sociable City Project

- To preserve and advocate for the social, cultural, and economic value of dining and entertainment
- To examine risk factors for crime, harm, and disorder in social districts
- To sustain the peaceful coexistence of residents and businesses in mixed-use areas
- To enhance communication between government and businesses regarding policy, procedures, and resource allocation



Sociable City Vision

We believe all people should have access to safe, vibrant places to socialize—regardless of age, life stage, race, ethnicity, sexual identity or disability. We help communities create diverse, welcoming social venues and districts where people have an opportunity to connect and lead more enriching lives.

Accomplishments Achieved during the RHI Process

During the Sociable City Assessment process (and before completion of the final report), Savannah’s coordinating team had already achieved several accomplishments related to the social economy. Key city leaders (mayor, city manager, chief operating officer) expressed support for the process and for the intention of establishing an Office of Nightlife with dedicated staff (i.e. Night Manager) to ensure follow-through of action items. To establish trust and familiarity with key stakeholders, Mr. Edward Grant was introduced to stakeholders throughout the process as the soon-to-be-announced Night Manager, which raised awareness about the planned roll-out of the Office and creation of the position.

Among the accomplishments achieved during the RHI process include:

- ▣ **Glass House in Ellis Square** was designated as a forward operating center for the Office of Nightlife staff. Located in the heart of downtown, Glass House is within easy walking distance of some of the densest clusters of social venues. Funding was approved for \$10,000 to install screens, meeting tables, and furniture. Tinted windows were also installed (so you can see out without seeing in). The facility was used for the October 2022 Pride festival volunteers.
- ▣ **Lighting enhanced in Ellis Square.** Temporary spotlights are set to be replaced with permanent fixtures with brighter bulbs.
- ▣ **Office of Nightlife added to the Review Committee for new alcohol licensed accounts** (as part of the new Alcohol Revision).
- ▣ **The Alcohol Ordinance Revisions** create new systems that are in line with and support RHI’s recommendations in this report. For example, requiring four mandatory meetings between venues and police is a way to enhance relations through trust-building and education.
- ▣ **Contact information compiled for social venue managers and owners** during a venue operator’s meeting so that Mr. Edward Grant can begin communicating directly with key venue staff.

SUMMARY OF TRENDS AND MARKET FORCES

A Destination on the Verge of Exponential Growth



Savannah is in a League of Its Own

Spared during General Sherman’s march to the sea, few southern communities survived the devastation of the Civil War as did Savannah. The city has an unparalleled

combination of southern charm, romantic gardens and squares, well-preserved historic architecture, and high-quality dining and entertainment options.

Progressive, inclusive, and welcoming, the city is described as a melting pot whose social assets attract diverse groups. The city is a destination for weddings, bachelor and bachelorette parties, girls’ getaways, and the LGBTQ+ community. The “to-go cup” zone is a novelty embraced by only a handful of cities nationwide. Host to the country’s second-largest St. Patrick’s Day parade and festival, this event has become the city’s premier showcase of hospitality offerings. Savannah’s list of accolades has cemented the city as a major attraction for domestic and international visitors, as well as an exciting, fun place to live.

Social Clusters Offer Dining and Entertainment Day and Night

The largest (and most well-known) epicenter for nightlife is the downtown historic district, which by day offers food, drink, and retail for all ages, and at night caters primarily to a young adult audience. New clusters of social venues have also recently emerged. Plant Riverside features an upscale experience for couples and families along the riverwalk. Starland is the up-and-coming area outside Downtown with an eclectic mix of food trucks and early evening social experiences. The Canal District surrounding EnMarket Arena is poised to develop new hospitality businesses. Habersham Village is already a destination for suburban dining and entertainment. Venues citywide offer unique opportunities to socialize.

A Pandemic-driven Acceleration

While many cities are still struggling to recover from the pandemic and economic downturn, Savannah’s destination status has only accelerated. Georgia was one of the first states to “reopen for business” after a brief lockdown. Savannah became a destination for out-of-state visitors eager to socialize. The year 2022 is expected to exceed even these numbers.

Trends on the horizon may dramatically increase visitation and tourism in Savannah. The expansion of the Convention Center to double its size by 2024/2025 (with a new Convention Center hotel to be completed shortly thereafter) means the city will finally be able to host large tradeshow and conventions. The Hyundai Plant being developed in nearby Bryan County will also draw a new workforce of 8,000 people, who will likely come to Savannah for after-work socializing. Yet these new developments beg the question of whether the city is ready to handle a significant increase in people who want to socialize.

The year 2021 broke records in tourism with 15.2 million visitors, \$3.3 billion visitor spending, 8.3 million overnight visitors and 6.9 million day-trip visitors

(Visit Savannah, 2022).

Scope of Social Venues and Resource Needs to Expand Beyond Downtown

Downtown's Historic District Has Long been the Epicenter of Social Activity

More than 300 venues are licensed to serve alcohol within 1.5 square miles. The majority of hotels and beds and breakfasts are located within walking distance of the Historic District. It makes sense that the status quo has been to focus on supportive resources, such as mobility services and public safety resources, in this dense area.

Need to Anticipate the Equitable Distribution of Resources Citywide

The development of social venues is expanding beyond the downtown core. Even hotels are starting to be developed outside of downtown. Social clusters in Starland, the Southside and Habersham Village are vying for greater support from public safety officers. However, resources and safety coverage focus mostly on downtown.



Push and Pull: Residents vs. Tourists

Downtown Residents Have to Share their Neighborhood with Visitors and Tourists

Downtown residents are impacted by nighttime sound, poor trash management, disorderly house parties from short-term vacation rentals (STVRs), and limited parking. The composition of the downtown community is perceived to be eroding due to the prevalence of STVRs. There is also a perception that attracting visitors is prioritized over sustaining existing residents' quality of life.

Residents Outside Downtown Need Services, Too

Residents want to go out and have fun, too. But many live in suburbs and neighboring communities. Transit access to/from downtown is infeasible or inconvenient, with some routes operating at irregular schedules. Residents in some neighborhoods don't have a safe way to return home if they have consumed alcohol.

Simultaneously, residents who live in under-served neighborhoods struggle to access basic services. Restoration of electricity after power outages, drainage after flooding, regular trash pick-up, and street maintenance are of paramount importance. Impacts from potential social venues are low on the totem pole for them, but these issues may become increasingly relevant as new hospitality development emerges around EnMarket Arena. Residents who live in Carver Village, Cloverdale, Feiler Park, etc. perceive downtown residents as having the benefit of prioritization for requests and support, in large part because of the presence of visitors.

Preservation of Existing Neighborhood Diversity Near New or Planned Hospitality Developments

New clusters of social venues can create exciting new destinations like Starland, but they can also displace historically African American communities. While the redevelopment and renewal of the Starland district does have intentional safeguards against gentrification, the fact remains that this was once a historic, majority African American community that is seeing long-time businesses shutter and new ones open, which are drawing largely a white audience.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Social Economy

LGBTQ+ Nightlife



October 2022 marked the return of the first in-person Pride parade and festival since the start of the pandemic. A participant remarked, “ ‘It showcases the inclusivity that Savannah has...the inclusiveness that I feel here is just really great. It’s a welcoming and loving environment,’ ” (Boland, 2022).

On the surface, the LGBTQ community may be embraced by Savannah, but participants of a women’s focus group indicated this perception is geared more toward tourists. The few “gay bars” are oriented to gay white men, with few options across the LGBTQ spectrum. Some dance nights are available for the lesbian and trans community, but overall, the sense is that opportunity exists to improve in this area. Bathrooms remain a contentious issue. Although gender-neutral restrooms have been approved by the City Council, retrofitting has not yet taken place in all venues. Some members of the community still face discrimination when using the restroom that matches their gender identity.

Barriers to POC Resident Participation in Social Venue Patronage and Ownership

One of Savannah’s greatest strengths is the diversity of its resident community, which is 52.3% African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). Visitors and patrons of the social economy also represent diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. While on the surface, there appears to be a general mixing of social venue patrons by race and ethnicity, project participants indicate that income disparities contribute to a separation in the city and the frequency in which residents can participate in their local social economy.



Participants of this project reported that POC ownership of social venues, and downtown businesses in general, is low. There is speculation that minority-owned businesses have been priced out of the market due to a lack of awareness about support resources or with intention, due to the perceived application of different standards placed upon people of color to open a business.

Lingering Perceptions from Generations Past that Downtown Doesn’t Feel Welcoming

The legacy of the Civil Rights movement in Savannah, which took place not so long ago—in the 1950s and 1960s—remains with a sense of unease. During the mass meetings held at African American churches, sit-ins were organized at white-only lunch counters on Broughton Street. The Great Savannah Boycott lasted 15 months, where African American residents were encouraged not to patronize white-owned businesses downtown because of discriminatory policies for service (Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum). Although Savannah would be declared “the most desegregated city south of the Mason-Dixon Line” by Martin Luther King, Jr., for desegregating all facilities nearly a year before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, some of the fear and unease still lingers, per conversation with RHI staff. (Georgia Historical Society, 2016).

Factors that Contribute to Challenges in the Nighttime Social Economy

Active social districts are often the most attractive and vibrant areas in a city, but they can also generate public safety and quality of life concerns. Yet challenges cannot be solely attributed to the venues themselves. There are systems and external forces at work that compound the challenges associated with nighttime socializing in Savannah.

Environmental Systems of Order



The physical environment of a social district can have a significant impact on both the reality and perception of safety. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a principle whereby if you eliminate the opportunity for crime through changes to the environment, you can also reduce the actual incidence of crime.

There are notable ways that downtown positively conveys systems of order. City Market is a prime example of how aesthetically pleasing lighting (affixed to buildings and twinkle lights in trees) can positively convey a sense of safety and order. Signage prohibiting people under 21 after 11:00 p.m. signals that the area

abides by rules. Tables and chairs are removed at a certain time to provide an environmental cue that lingering outside is no longer acceptable.

Cues of a Permissive Environment Where Disorderly Behavior is Tolerated



Low lighting on side streets, overflowing trash cans, and litter are cues that signal the Downtown area needs improvement in

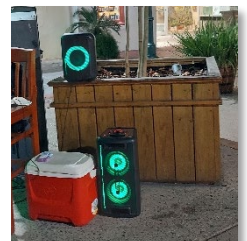
environmental maintenance. Unsheltered and transients are attracted to trash cans in alleys and high-trafficked areas, especially for food remnants and alcohol from discarded to-go cups.

The limited sidewalk space for the large number of patrons makes it less than ideal for passersby. People must navigate crowds waiting in line to get into venues. Sidewalks are barely passable. Patrons are thus forced to walk on narrow, crowded streets abutting a constant flow of car traffic.

Traffic congestion in itself has many sources—from cruisers, people trying to find parking and rideshares. Rideshares pick up and drop off passengers wherever they choose to, which also backs up traffic.

The Street Has Become the Party

Sound attributable to social venues is significant and a major factor in contributing to a street party atmosphere. Sources of sound include amplified music escaping from open doors and windows, stereos on rooftops, and from Bluetooth speakers stationed at venue entrances. Cruising vehicles blast music and attract attention with modified exhausts. It is not even necessary to enter venues to hear the music; it can be heard from blocks away. People dance in the street, forming crowds that block car traffic.



The To-Go Zone

The ability to carry to-go drinks in open space, while a long-held (and for many, beloved) cultural tradition, the practice can exacerbate the perception of a street party. Intoxicated people are not as aware of their surroundings; they can be dangerous to themselves and vehicular traffic when walking around with open containers. Some continue to fill up to-go cups from their own beverages out of parked cars, without the potential intervention point of a server who could refuse service. (For more analysis on the To-Go Zone, read later sections of this report.)

The Debate Over Whether to Close the Street

Debates have loomed over the pros and cons of closing streets. Many venue operators expressed the desire of closing streets similar to the St. Patrick's Day model. Yet safety stakeholders are hesitant to move forward with that idea.

There is a delicate balance currently being struck to facilitate pedestrian safety while also not facilitating a block party. The current approach of discretionary traffic barricades helps provide areas that are pedestrian-only while also discouraging cruising. These seem to strike a compromise in a difficult situation and require keen discretion from local law enforcement.

Presence of Youth in Nighttime Social Districts

Youth have been observed lingering downtown at night. Some come to partake in the vibrant street party atmosphere by cruising, hanging out, and in some cases, bringing their own alcohol to consume in public spaces. Incidents of gun violence have occurred with perpetrators and/or victims who were under 18. A total of 233 arrests were made downtown in 2021 and 2022 for juveniles between 9 and 18 years old, with the most common ages between 15-18. The most common incident type included larceny (entering auto), auto theft, and disorderly conduct. (See raw data in Appendix VI: Juvenile Arrests in the Northwest Precinct).

Violence and delinquency involving youth downtown at night have an impact on the social economy. Youth were responsible for a string of car-break-ins of social venues' staff. Following the Fourth of July 2022 incident of gun violence by a 14- and 15-year-old, patrons inside social venues in City Market were locked down, then evacuated so police could conduct a criminal investigation. This resulted in a loss of revenue for venues but also contributed to negative perceptions of safety downtown. Social venues are often associated with violence that occurs during their operational hours, even though minors cannot legally enter licensed venues, and the violence took place in public space.

Nighttime recreation opportunities for youth are sorely lacking in the city. Studies show that boredom is linked to deviant behavior, including crime (Malizia, 2018). Youth of color who live in predominantly African American neighborhoods are particularly lacking in recreational enrichment opportunities. While high risk youth in particular need age-appropriate recreation options at night, there is an issue of overall equity: youth, especially youth of color, do not have equitable access to places to socialize.

Common Knowledge of Government's Off Hours

There is a pervasive lack of personal accountability driven by the common knowledge of government enforcement hours. "If it happens after 5:00 p.m. on a Friday and before 8:00 a.m. on a Monday, everyone knows they can get away with it" stated an anonymous participant. This emboldens patrons to push the limits due to the perception that there won't be consequences.

These combined factors contribute to challenges in managing Savannah's nighttime social economy.

Making the Leap from a Small Town to a Global Destination

City Services Haven't Yet Adapted to Meet the Demand of a 24/7 City



Government still operates on a Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule. There is an unmet need for support, resources, and deployment of city agencies during the “other 9 to 5”: 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on Thursdays-Sundays. Laws may exist on the books to regulate the nighttime social economy, but without resources deployed at night, compliance is not being monitored or enforced during the hours at which nightlife businesses operate.

Growing Pains: From a Dull Ache to Sharp Points of Contention

There is a tension between the experience Savannah promotes and the city's ability to deliver on that promise. Calls for service are experiencing delays, with some districts (especially those outside of downtown) unable to access resources promptly. Social venues continue to open at a rapid pace throughout the city, yet without a matching increase in city services with expanded hours to ensure a balance of vibrancy with livability.

As the social economy expands, there are numerous examples of “growing pains” where the city government has not kept up with the needs of citizens and businesses. Residents expressed frustration with the lack of accessibility of city departments after hours and on weekend nights for sound complaints to be addressed. Garbage pick-up is not frequent enough to ensure trash cans do not overflow. They would prefer greater engagement with the police to liaise with the community.

Systemic Challenges to Overcome

Some government departments that are critical to nighttime management do not provide nighttime or weekend services (after 5:00 p.m. on Fridays):

- ❑ **Code compliance department** for sound enforcement of social venues and STVRs
- ❑ **311 phone operators** to report sound complaints, lights out, and other maintenance needs
- ❑ **Parking Services** for ticketing and booting of cars (and potentially, authorizing summary tows)
- ❑ **Mental health and homeless services** to report people in need of services

Savannah Fire Department and Chatham Emergency Services do deploy staff at night for life safety checks and calls for ambulances, but they too face resource shortages and other barriers to increasing nighttime service. Police have therefore, in many cases, become the catch-all for public safety and quality of life challenges that happen at night and on weekends.

Reactionary Approach to Compliance Perpetuates Distrust Between Venues and Government

Due to staffing and budget shortages, many departments are forced to take a triage approach to address the most at-risk situations and calls for service. Lower-level issues are not addressed. Many safety departments (e.g. police, fire), expressed interest in a community-engagement model, but lack the resources to carry this vision to fruition.

Currently, proactive communication is minimal. Interactions are based on enforcement of violations, leading to a perception that the “government is out to get us” instead of the more ideal, concierge-based model, of “how can we help you succeed?” Venues operate out of compliance without intervention except in the most egregious of cases due to insufficient resources to follow through on compliance checks, provide education, and move forward with enforcement if necessary.

Gap in Continuity Due to Changes in Administration

Gap in continuity amidst turnover of political administration (e.g. precedent for high turnover of city managers, mayors, and police chiefs), has led to shifting priorities. Some initiatives have been abandoned with a new change in administration. Yet sustainability and consistency are key to rebuilding trust with venue operators.

A Vision for the Future of Savannah's Social Economy



Opportunity for Accolades in Governance

Savannah is already heralded on numerous “best of” lists. The city has an opportunity to expand this list to one of the “best places to open a business” and one of the “best cities for business/government relations.”

Building Trust and Transparency

Project participants expressed a desire for consistency and transparency in decision-making and follow-through on commitments. It is time to rebuild trust between government and both residents and venue operators.



Office of Nightlife: A Critical First Step

Establishing an Office of Nightlife will be a critical first step in the right direction for Savannah's social economy governance. The City's demonstration of commitment to the nighttime social economy is pivotal for changing the narrative and rebuilding trust with key stakeholders. But an Office of Nightlife is not an end-all solution. Citywide change will be necessary for long-term change to be achieved.



Mr. Edward Grant facilitating a venue operator meeting.

GOVERNANCE ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT



Challenges in Opening a Business

While Savannah is an inviting and popular destination for visitors, it is also a challenging place to open a new business that serves alcohol to the public.

Multiple agencies must be engaged throughout the process and those agencies operate in silos, making the process lengthy and confusing.

Need for Streamlining and Transparency

RHI's findings indicate that there is uncertainty, mistrust, and a lack of clarity from business owners who operate in the city. There is an opportunity to streamline this process and possibly bring in more transparency.

Barriers and Challenges for a Business Applicant

There is considerable confusion on where to start the process with the city and the state, and sometimes the county. There is no central place or person identified to contact, nor a comprehensive guide or workflow document.

In some cases (such as new businesses doing new construction), the applicant is unable to connect with certain departments. There is a requirement that a lease be signed before beginning the licensing process, and this means spending money well before the business can open and start earning income.

Silos and Technological Improvements within Government

Various departments are unaware of each other's activities regarding the same applicant, and this confuses both the city and the applicant. Often applicants are given inconsistent or contradictory information from different departments, leading to delays and further confusion.

The City Council has a heavy hand in approving licensing after staff work has been completed, and this leads to some inconsistent outcomes for similar projects.

While city agencies do their best with the technology and resources they are given, there is definitely a need to simplify the process and create transparency.



Social Venues Merit Support and Resources

According to data received, close to 8% of all businesses in the city are licensed to sell alcohol for onsite consumption. These businesses not only pay business taxes but also collect an alcohol tax worth millions to the city's general fund.

For Savannah to continue to thrive as a sociable city, the new Office of Nightlife should strive to improve the process of opening a new social venue in the city.

A more detailed governance analysis is available in a later section of the full version of this report.

CORE MEASURES ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT

RHI analyzed Savannah’s social economy using the Six Core Measures of a Sociable City.

<p style="text-align: center;">SOCIAL VENUES</p>  <p>Social venues are thriving in Savannah, despite limited positive interactions with government. The gap in communication about new policies before enforcement has fostered resentment. Systemic disincentives contribute to mistrust between venues and police, as calls for service count against venues. While many venue operators want to do the right thing, they are cited when systems break down. There is a sense of powerlessness and lack of representation, despite making contributions through the drink tax.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC SPACE</p>  <p>Public green spaces and the riverfront views are key assets, though some lack activation. The to-go zone is a novelty deeply ingrained in the public space experience. The city struggles with the presence of unsheltered and transients. While mostly peaceful, some struggle with mental health and substance abuse; there have been a few incidents involving physical assault. The public is frustrated by the perceived lack of action. But the unsheltered have rights too, and social services are limited in their response.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC SAFETY</p>  <p>All safety departments face labor shortages. Out of necessity, the current safety model is reactionary, with few opportunities for proactive communication with venues. A triage approach leads to a focus on downtown due to the dense cluster of venues and the to-go zone. Savannah police are the “catch-all” for issues at night—calls for service, sound complaints, towing, etc. The current scheduling and deployment model for the Northwest Precinct does not yet reflect the resource-intensive needs of downtown on weekend nights. Some venues are required to hire off-duty officers to provide a visible safety presence, which serves as a stopgap but is not an ideal model given their limited role.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">VENUE SAFETY</p>  <p>Strong camaraderie exists among venue staff, who communicate via Facebook Messenger. A formal alliance could help create voluntary standards and best practices to elevate industry professionalism. Among the issues identified by enforcement are over-service, service to minors, and overcrowding. There are no training standards for “door security.” The reliance on off-duty officers (either mandated or voluntary) creates a problematic system of inequitable safety coverage in social clusters. Since off-duty officers cannot check IDs, servers are forced to check IDs. Citations go to staff, without continuity of consequences to ownership.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">QUALITY OF LIFE</p>  <p>Savannah is a fun place to live, but downtown residents struggle with sharing their community with visitors. Downtown residents are impacted by sound, parking, trash/litter, and STVR house parties. They are frustrated with the lack of after-hours access to city help and the gap in nighttime enforcement. Residents outside of downtown, especially in predominantly Black neighborhoods, face challenges in access to basic services and infrastructure repair. They perceive their neighborhoods as de-prioritized compared to downtown.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MOBILITY</p>  <p>Downtown is highly walkable, but nighttime pedestrian safety is impeded by dim lighting and large crowds on narrow sidewalks. Traffic congestion is created by cruisers, rideshare vehicles, and people trying to find parking. Barricades have given some relief by rerouting traffic. Drivers park illegally without fear of reprisal after hours and on weekends. Mobility options are limited outside the downtown core, which raises concerns about preventing impaired driving as residences, hotels, and venues expand outside the core.</p>

WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: SNAPSHOT

RHI conducted a focus group among women of different ages to analyze Savannah's social economy.

Social Offerings and Programming



Strengths in social offerings include the variety of options for high quality food and drink, rooftop spaces, ease of walkability, and a sense of community from “locals' spots.” The ability to take drinks to go was identified as an advantage to women's safety due to the option to leave a venue where one didn't feel safe.

Gaps in social venues include nighttime activities for those who don't drink alcohol and outdoor bars for women to smoke cigars. Unofficial/unlicensed social venues e.g. house parties and the DIY scene fill some of the gaps in diverse music e.g. underground hip-hop scene in Victory North.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

While most social venues are integrated by race and ethnicity, focus group participants identified some cues and signals that diversity and inclusion remain challenges in the social economy. For example, when the majority of restaurant patrons are white, yet the majority of staff are black; when people of color are ignored when trying to order a drink at a bar; and when staff uses code words for people of color.



On the surface, the LGBTQ community may be embraced by Savannah, but focus group participants indicated this perception is geared more toward tourists. The few “gay bars” are oriented to gay white men, with few options across the LGBTQ spectrum. Some dance nights are available for the lesbian and trans community. Bathrooms remain a contentious issue. Although gender-neutral restrooms have been approved by City Council, retrofitting has not yet taken place in all venues. Some members of the community still face discrimination when using the restroom that matches their gender identity.

Public Safety



The physical environment of a social district has a large impact on whether women feel safe at night. Environmental cues such as good lighting, eyes on the street, presence of security, police, and parking attendants in garages contribute to a positive perception of safety. Among the ways women cited that they take proactive steps for their safety include making sure her phone is fully charged, wearing shoes they can run in, not carrying a purse, bringing mace and tasers, traveling in groups, and sharing location with friends.

Venue Safety

Women are a key barometer for safety in social venues; their preferences often coincide with best practices for safe venue operations. The professionalism of staff—from door security to servers—was cited as a key indicator of a safe venue. Servers who cut off visibly intoxicated people and who ask for consent before delivering drinks ordered by another customer were lauded. Signals that a venue is not safe include unprofessional door security (the stereotypical “tough guy” who jokes and flirts), servers who free-pour, continue to serve intoxicated patrons, and indications of a permissive environment—open drug use, fighting, etc.

Sexual Violence Prevention

A key gap identified in the social economy relates to a coordinated effort to prevent sexual violence. There is a need for staff training, posted signage in venues, and educational campaigns for the public. While “Angel Shot” posters can be seen in some venues' bathrooms, they are not widespread. There is a desire for across-the-board participation by social venues in an organized campaign to prevent sexual violence in the community.

Resource: Mary's Place of the Coastal Empire used to conduct server training on sexual violence.

TO-GO ZONE ANALYSIS: SNAPSHOT

Savannah’s unique opportunity to take drinks “to go” was brought up numerous times during the RHI process. People seem to either love or hate it, although it is universally agreed that the to-go zone distinguishes Savannah from other destinations. The to-go zone is widely considered an advantage for tourism and contributes to the perception of vibrancy in public spaces. This chart outlines the concerns and challenges associated with the policy.

BENEFITS	CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Unique novelty for visitors and residents. ▣ Supported by tourism and hospitality venue operators, who would support expansion due to the belief that to-go cups make the city more social and safer. ▣ Some residents believe open containers are a good concept as this doesn’t force people to drink quicker when leaving a venue, which may cause higher intoxication. ▣ Women’s focus group participants like that a patron can easily leave a venue with their drink if one environment feels unsafe or uncomfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ No signage to clarify the boundaries of the to-go zone. ▣ Currently, last-call is only 5 or 10 minutes before closing time (the industry standard is 30 minutes). Thus, allowing to-go cups to be taken out at closing time may encourage lingering in the district. ▣ Loitering after closing time outside social venues can lead to a “street party” atmosphere. ▣ Compliance agencies find it difficult to clear the district as people continue to linger outside. ▣ Concerns about impaired driving. ▣ Concerns about underage access to alcohol if they bring their own alcohol to drink in public. ▣ Increase in crowds in social districts beyond nightlife patrons: people hang out in the to-go zone who BYOB from cars or who walked from homes nearby. ▣ Public safety agency staff and community activists do not support the expansion of the to-go zone. ▣ Plastic cups are not eco-friendly; contribute to litter in resident and business districts. ▣ EnMarket Arena’s participation in the to-go zone concept leads to tailgating in the parking lot or driving with an open beverage (prohibited), thus potentially contributing to impaired driving.

For a more detailed analysis, please review “To-Go Zone: Detailed Analysis.”

ACTION PLAN: SNAPSHOT

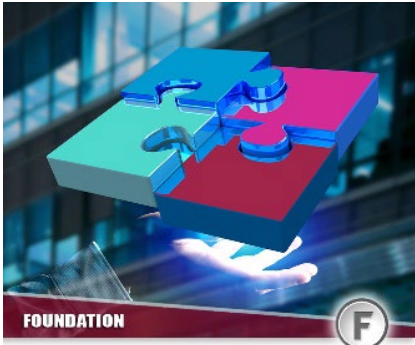
<h2 style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ECONOMY</h2>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Action 1: Launch the Savannah Office of Nightlife ■ Action 2: Form a Social Economy Advisory Board ■ Action 3: Conduct an Economic Analysis of the Social Economy ■ Action 4: Explore Sources of Funding to Support the Social Economy and the Office of Nightlife
<h2 style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY</h2>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Action 1: Create a Multi-Disciplinary Team Approach to Public Safety at Night ■ Action 2: Create a Dedicated Downtown Nightlife Police Unit ■ Action 3: Explore Improvements and Alternatives to Off-Duty Officers System ■ Action 4: Host Educational Forums Between Venues and Safety Agencies ■ Action 5: Develop an Accreditation Process for Server Training Programs ■ Action 6: Reinstate a Server Registry ■ Action 7: Create A Sexual Violence Prevention Program for Social Venues
<h2 style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS TO ENHANCE VIBRANCY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY</h2>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Action 1: Revive and Sustain a Savannah Nightlife Association ■ Action 2: Create Nighttime Recreational Opportunities for Youth ■ Action 3: Activate Public Spaces with Public Art
<h2 style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY</h2>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Action 1: Improve the 311 System as a Resource for Residents, Not Tourists ■ Action 2: Revive an Ambassador Program ■ Action 3: Address Impacts from Short-Term Vacation Rentals ■ Action 4: Improve Notification Systems to Residents About New Venues ■ Action 5: Conduct a Lighting Assessment of Social Clusters ■ Action 6: Connect Visitors and Venues with Social Service Resources ■ Action 7: Expand Mobility Service to/from Downtown to the Arena ■ Action 8: Empower Parking Services to Authorize Towing ■ Action 9: Improve Communication on Street Closures for Events ■ Action 10: Create a Rideshare Hub for Closing Time Pick-Up

ACTION PLAN: SYNOPSIS

The Action Plan was primarily informed by discussion during the Action Roundtables, which were based on challenges identified during Listening Sessions. Some actions were created by RHI based on gaps or priorities identified during interviews and meetings that took place before the Roundtables.

ACTIONS TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

The Foundation section’s action plan is based on RHI’s research and global best practice for nighttime governance.



Action 1: Launch the Savannah Office of Nightlife

The creation of an Office of Nightlife with dedicated staff will be central to the city’s commitment to sustaining a safe, vibrant, and well managed social economy. The Office will serve as a liaison between government and nightlife venue operators to help disseminate educational resources, advocate for industry needs, and to help rebuild trust and open communication. Buy-in has already been achieved for the establishment of an Office of Nightlife, and plans are underway to move forward.

Action 2: Form a Social Economy Advisory Board

Advisory Boards or “Commissions” are a critical organizational structure to represent broad stakeholder interests and provide oversight to drive an Office of Nightlife’s priorities and policy direction. They provide a level of oversight into the activities of an Office of Nightlife. *Note: the make-up of these bodies and the appointments can be somewhat politicized, so it’s important to consider this when creating an oversight body.*

Action 3: Conduct an Economic Analysis

Conducting an economic analysis can achieve heightened recognition and legitimacy for the social economy. Compiling and analyzing information about the fiscal, economic, and employment impacts of the social economy can establish a baseline measure for the industry. Patterns of growth, decline, and renewal in Savannah can also be assessed. Cities that have conducted economic studies identify economic analysis reports as a turning point in achieving support for the industry.

Action 4: Explore Sources of Funding to Support the Social Economy and the Office of Nightlife

Management of the nighttime social economy requires commitment and resource investment from multiple stakeholders, especially city government departments. The status quo has been to carve out resources from already strapped departments or to rely on voluntary overtime. A better alternative would be to identify a steady source of funding to supplement department resources. Among the funding sources to explore are the drink tax and the hotel penny tax.

ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY (Part 1): Public Safety



Action 1: Deploy a Multi-Disciplinary Team to Manage Nighttime Social Activity

Various departments, not just the police, should deploy staff during the times when social venues operate—at night. Expanding city staff beyond police to a multi-disciplinary approach including Fire, Sanitation Services, Parking Services and Code Compliance departments will enhance the management and safety of Savannah's social economy. This will enable the police to be more proactive. *Note: There was past precedent for a multi-disciplinary approach to nighttime management in 2010s.*

Action 2: Create a Dedicated Downtown Nightlife Police Unit

The scope of nighttime social activity located in the Downtown Historic District warrants the creation of a dedicated downtown nightlife police unit. This unit should be deployed in a roving manner to provide coverage of the district's social venues and parking areas, have specialized training requirements, and be hand-picked for ideal temperament traits of a high-intensity environment. A dedicated patrol ensures equitable distribution of safety resources throughout the downtown historic district and more efficient response time.

Action 3: Explore Improvements and Alternatives to Off-Duty Officers System

In the short term, identify ways to improve the current concerns with the off-duty officer system by creating minimum standards and guidelines for secondary employment in social venues. For example, requiring they stay 30 minutes after closing time to help with closing time dispersal. In the long-term, phase out the reliance upon off-duty officers by replacing the requirement for off-duty officers with private security; development of standards for venue security staff and operations, as well as review and vetting of current firms that provide private security.

ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY (Part 2): Venue Safety



Action 4: Host Educational Forums Between Venues and Safety Agencies

Host bi-annual educational forums between social venues and representatives of all agencies that regulate them—police, fire, Department of Revenue, code compliance, etc. Forums will provide an opportunity for new and existing businesses to learn current and new rules and regulations. It will also be a way to facilitate open dialogue, with each able to ask questions and discuss mutual concerns. In preparation for forums, a presentation should be prepared outlining all the rules and regulations of various departments about the safety and operations of social venues that sell and serve alcohol.

Action 5: Develop an Accreditation Process for Server Training Programs

The creation of an accreditation process for server training programs will ensure consistency and quality of curricula. Servers play a critical role in prevention of underage access to alcohol and intoxication of on-premise alcohol consumers. Investment in confirming minimum educational standards are met will create safer environments for social venues and potentially help reduce harm in the public realm. Support from management is also critical to the successful implementation of responsible beverage service concepts.

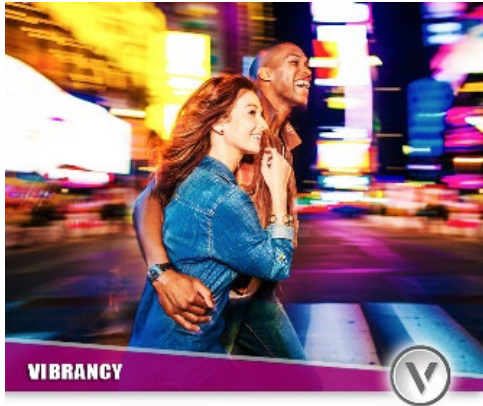
Action 6: Reinstate a Server Registry

Create a central database of servers with verified information on servers' status of compliance with the accredited server training program. The database should indicate whether their education credential is current or lapsed, as well as whether they have had violations for service to minors. This will help venues make more informed decisions about the staff they hire as servers.

Action 7: Create A Sexual Violence Prevention Program for Social Venues

Venue safety stakeholders can adopt and customize a sexual violence prevention campaign by reviewing existing options implemented worldwide. Staff training on how to identify potential signs of predatory behavior and procedures for how to intervene, coupled with social marketing and education of the public, will facilitate a safer environment for all to socialize, especially women and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

ACTIONS TO ENHANCE VIBRANCY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY



Action 1: Revive and Sustain a Savannah Nightlife Association

There is momentum to revive the now defunct Licensed Beverage Association. Initial steps are already underway to collect contact information for venue owners and managers, many of whom are in the Facebook messenger group for venues. There is interest in hiring a lobbyist at the city and state level to advocate on behalf of industry priorities determined by the association. The association can organize group attendance at relevant Council meetings and determine priority “requests” such as monthly reports of Drink Tax funds. Long-term steps may include an operations guide and organized training. Formalizing a group will also help provide a way for the city to coordinate with the industry on new initiatives and services to benefit the industry.

Action 2: Create Nighttime Recreational Opportunities for Youth

Youth (under 21) are too young to enter licensed premises, but they too deserve access to age-appropriate social options. Featuring guest speakers who are influencers in film, sports, and gaming, as well as dance-a-thons, movie nights, etc. are ideas for evening recreation. If not feasible as a year-round business model, then events, pop-ups and temporary activations may be a more viable route. Investing in this population—especially youth of color from neighborhoods with limited resources—will pay dividends for the future of the city of Savannah and add another layer of safety to the social economy.

Action 3: Activate Public Spaces with Public Art

Public art can activate public spaces in strategic locations, especially at night. Whether temporary pop-ups or permanent displays of art, there is an opportunity to display 2D art, and sculpture and use light as art. Squares and empty/vacant spaces such as parking lots can be used. The formation of an Arts Committee can help organize the effort and ensure diverse members of the community are included. Live art classes in the park can also provide a nighttime recreation activity for youth and their families.

ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: (Part 1)



Action 1: Improve the 311 System as a Resource for Residents, Not Tourists

The 311 system needs more operators, after-hours service, and separation from visitor-related information. Doubling the number of operators and providing after-hours service (e.g. until 10 or 11 pm) with a live operator are among the chief requests by residents living downtown and outside downtown. Providing an alternative phone number for visitors seeking tourism-related information is also a critical step to improving timely access.

Action 2: Revive an Ambassador Program

Ambassadors on the street can provide more eyes on the street with a friendly, customer service oriented presence. They can play a critical role in monitoring quality-of-life issues and potential public safety risks before they escalate. Knowledgeable about the city, they can be a beneficial resource for visitors and tourists, provide a layer of accountability and oversight over trash and litter, and connect people to services.

Action 3: Address Impacts from STVRs

Dedicated staffing and nighttime enforcement by the Code Compliance department is needed to curb impacts from short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) to residents, including disorderly parties, sound disturbances, and parking from multiple cars. Applying lessons learned from other cities will be critical to ensure a higher quality of life for residents. There is also a need to anticipate potential conversion of long-term housing in neighborhoods near social clusters like EnMarket arena.

Action 4: Improve Notification Systems to Residents About New Venues

Systems exist for the city to notify the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) about new social venues with alcohol licenses. But these systems can be upgraded with more information that residents need to make informed decisions. Residents request that the city report on whether the business is new or expanding, changing ownership, or changing names; business plan; what type of alcohol license.

Action 5: Conduct a Lighting Assessment of Social Clusters

Conduct a lighting assessment of commercial corridors in multiple phases. The goal is to address inconsistent lighting downtown to increase pedestrian safety and reduce opportunity for crime. Striking a balance between safety agencies' preference for more light with historic preservation standards will be a challenge to overcome in accomplishing this action.

ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: (Part 2)



Action 6: Connect Visitors and Venues with Social Service Resources

The Give Change that Counts campaign will launch in late 2022/early 2023 to redirect donations toward social services. But there is need to incorporate social venues and visitors in outreach efforts to expand awareness and participation. Educating visitors on how to redirect their donations to social services can make a long-lasting change that can potentially help deter panhandlers from coming downtown.

Action 7: Expand Mobility Service to/from Downtown to the Arena

Expand the 7C bus route to provide service between downtown and the EnMarket arena. Collaboration between event organizers and Chatham Area Transit (CAT) can ensure bus service matches the arrival and departure needs for events. Concerts, which end later than other events, may need coordination of overtime opportunities for drivers and/or chartering other services such as trolleys.

Action 8: Empower Parking Services to Authorize Towing

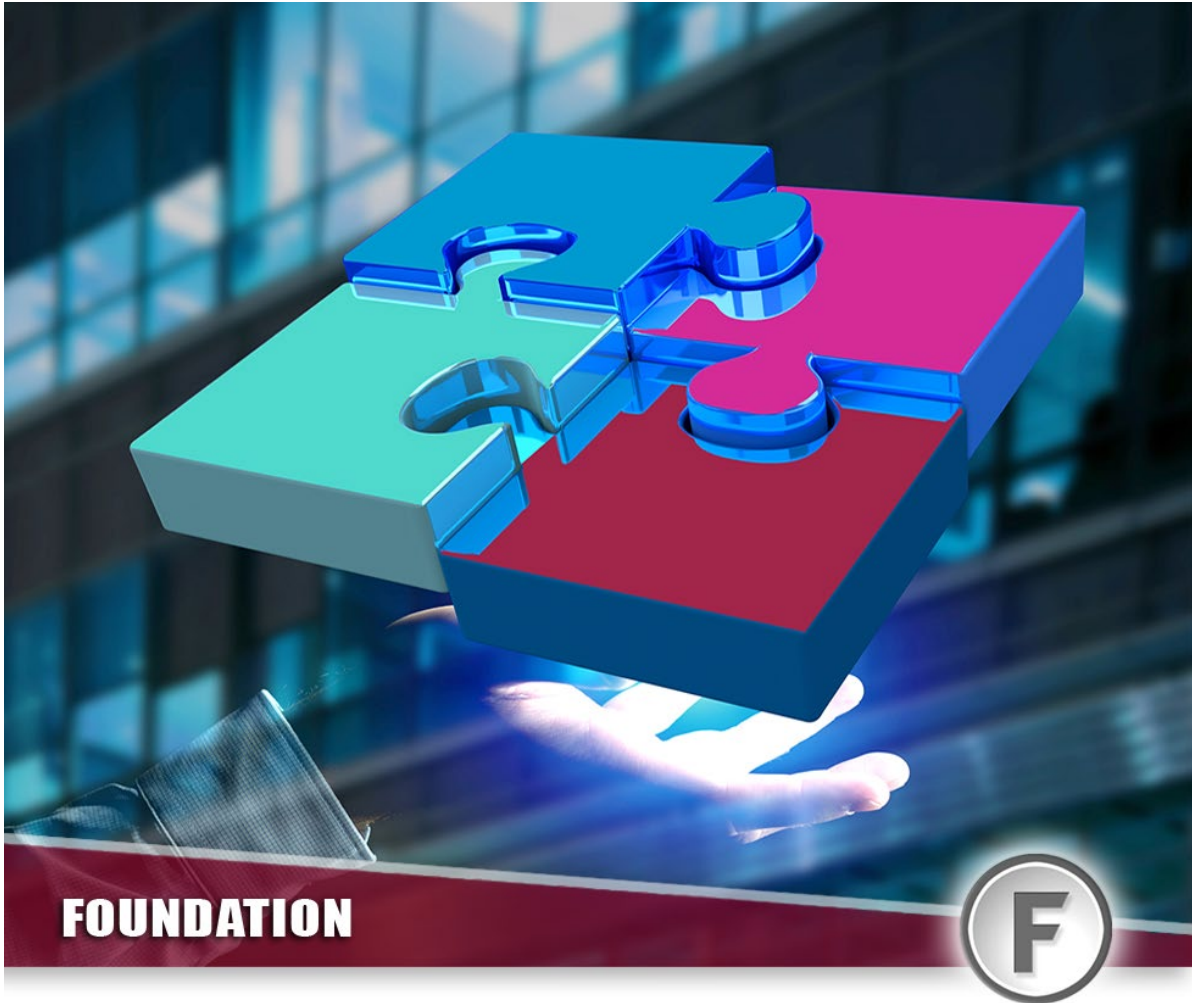
Examine and update the ordinance “Article P – Wrecker Services” to empower the Parking Services department to authorize a summary tow of a vehicle. Clarify whether other on-police enforcement entities can authorize a tow. Initiate nighttime deployment of Parking Services staff in alignment with signage creation, an education plan and finally, enforcement.

Action 9: Improve Communication on Street Closures for Events

Mobility service providers would benefit from one month’s notice on planned street closures for events, parades, and film shoots. Coupled with a weekly notification system on that week’s street closures will assist service providers in planning for alternate routes and adjusting driver schedules. This will help facilitate more coordinated mobility of the many transportation service providers in the city that are impacted by street closures, including buses, trolleys, and quadricycles.

Action 10: Create A Rideshare Hub for Closing Time Pick-Up

Designating locations for rideshare pick-up can help ensure orderly dispersal at closing time. Goals also include improving pedestrian safety and reductions in traffic congestion and impaired driving.



**ACTIONS TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR A
SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ECONOMY**

ACTION 1: LAUNCH THE SAVANNAH OFFICE OF NIGHTLIFE

This action is based on best practices collected by RHI.

OVERVIEW

The creation of an Office of Nightlife with dedicated staff will be central to the city’s commitment to sustaining a safe, vibrant, and well managed social economy. The Office will serve as a liaison between government and nightlife venue operators to help disseminate educational resources, advocate for industry needs, and to help rebuild trust and open communication. Luckily, there is recognition among city administrators of the value of transitioning to a proactive nighttime governance approach. Buy-in has already been achieved for the establishment of an Office of Nightlife, and plans are underway to move forward.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Nighttime sociability is a major driver of the local economy and of tourism, yet coordination among government agencies is limited to help this key industry segment succeed and stay in compliance. There is minimal communication between venues and government compliance agencies outside of a “gotcha” mentality for violations.

GOALS

- ☐ **Serve as a liaison between** government and venue operators to convey new rules, and procedures.
- ☐ **Act as a communication hub** between government agencies.
- ☐ **Develop and disseminate** educational resources.
- ☐ **Mediate disputes between** residents and venue operators.
- ☐ **Establish transparency and consistency** in interactions with key stakeholders: venues, residents, etc.

BARRIERS

- ☐ **Strained relationship between government and the nightlife industry.** Trust-building will be necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION

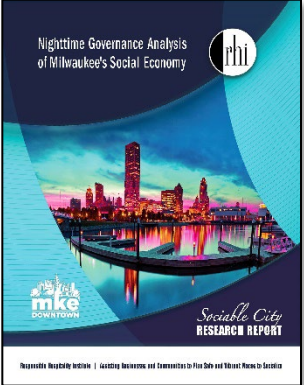


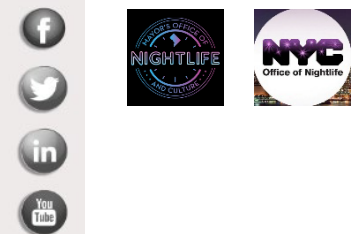
Using this RHI report as a blueprint for the Office of Nightlife’s work plan, additional short-term and long-term tasks are outlined below:

SHORT-TERM TASKS	
Task	Steps
Set up an E-Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Compile contact information for venue staff (owners, managers, servers). ☐ Subscribe to an e-blast system like Constant Contact or MailChimp to track click-thru rates. ☐ Prepare content for the e-newsletter to promote education, notification of new rules/policies, and resources available. ☐ Include monthly reports of money generated by the Drink Tax (data to be requested from the Department of Revenue). Venue operators requested this information to enhance transparency between government and the hospitality industry.
Establish the Glass House as a Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Announce the role of the Glass House (in City Market) as a central meeting location during the evenings. Set up recording equipment in the Glass House to serve as ABC Unit’s new interview room.
Set up Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify relevant training topics e.g. Active shooter response, procedures for addressing an overdose, and use of Narcan. ☐ Schedule and promote training.
Develop Resources for Hospitality Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Develop “how-to” guides based on topics that are the highest priorities for venue operators.

Facilitate Monthly Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Facilitate meetings on a monthly (then later, quarterly) basis among: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nightlife venue operators (to discuss concerns, and challenges). Venue operators would benefit from being able to ask questions about how police are deployed now. ○ Government agencies e.g. police, fire, EMS, code compliance, ABC unit, Dept of Revenue (to discuss shared challenges, venues on the radar)
Schedule Town Halls	▣ Schedule occasional educational forums (“Town Hall”) among nightlife venue operators and government agencies to discuss policy updates, etc.
Begin Small Policy Changes	▣ Identify small policy changes e.g. translate application forms into multiple languages.

LONG-TERM TASKS	
Task	Steps
Create a Nightlife Awards Program	▣ Develop a Nightlife Awards (“Niteys”) program to positively recognize the cultural contributions of the local nightlife industry. (Similar to the existing Tourism Leadership Council (TLC) Awards).
Improve Mobility Options for Employees	▣ Initiate reforms to transportation options for nighttime hospitality workers and patrons.
Facilitate Nighttime Deployment of Non-Police Agencies	▣ Make the case for non-police city agencies (e.g., code compliance, parking authority) to deploy resources at night (after 5 pm).
Advocate for an Economic Impact Study	▣ Make the case and secure funds for an economic impact study.
Advocate for Changes in Business Licensing	▣ Work on streamlining business licensing procedures.
Advocate for Changes in Alcohol Licensing Policy	▣ Advocate for changes in alcohol licensing policy. Once an Office of the Nighttime Economy becomes more established (5 years or longer) they are able to advocate for the passage of policies that support hospitality and nightlife and have gained more awareness and trust with stakeholders and the public at large.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Nighttime Governance Analysis Report by RHI</p> 	<p>A report generated by RHI, funded by Milwaukee Downtown BID21, provides an analysis of what makes a successful nighttime governance system.</p> <p>The research was conducted of four case study cities: San Francisco, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; New York, NY; and Washington, DC. These cities have a combination of staff positions, Offices of Nightlife, and/or Advisory Boards.</p> <p>The report includes the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Impetus for establishing a nighttime governance system ▣ Methodology for establishing different organizational structures ▣ Sample job descriptions ▣ Staff background and job duties ▣ Samples of enabling legislation ▣ Success metrics for the short-term and long-term <p>https://sociablecity.info/services/milwaukee/rhi_milwaukee_2022_report_final.pdf</p>
<p>RHI's Sociable City Summit & Academy Series</p> 	<p>RHI's annual Sociable City Summit series is a networking event where tools and promising practices are showcased on nighttime management. Current and aspiring Night Managers attend this event to connect in person to share strategies.</p> <p>RHI's Sociable City Academy (available as a pre-Summit event and state events) is North America's leading professional training academy for nighttime management professionals.</p>
<p>NITECAP Alliance</p> 	<p>The NITECAP Alliance is a network of professionals responsible for nighttime economy advocacy, planning, and management in US cities to share experience, policies, and practices; raise awareness about nighttime economy and culture across disciplines; and highlight the value and importance of this role within city government.</p> <p>They connect with related professionals and other nighttime economy champions to build broader alliances that support the development of a vibrant nighttime economy and culture.</p> <p>Webpage: https://www.nite-cap.org/</p>
<p>Dave Moon Moon Marketing & Advertising, Inc</p>	<p>Can assist with video production and/or event production related to the Nitey Awards.</p>
<p>Social Media</p> 	<p>Models for How to Disseminate Nightlife Updates</p> <p>San Francisco Entertainment Commission Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SFEntertainmentCommission Twitter: @SFEC</p> <p>NYC Office of Nightlife on Twitter: @nycnightlifegov</p> <p>DC Mayor's Office of Nightlife & Culture on Twitter: @dcmonc</p> <p>Newsletter subscriptions are also available.</p>

ACTION 2: FORM A SOCIAL ECONOMY ADVISORY BOARD

This action is based on best practices collected by RHI.

OVERVIEW

Advisory Boards or “Commissions” are a critical organizational structure to represent broad stakeholder interests and provide oversight to drive an Office of Nightlife’s priorities and policy direction. They provide a level of oversight to the activities of an Office of Nightlife. Note: the make-up of these bodies and the appointments can be somewhat politicized, so it’s important to consider this when creating an oversight body.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Savannah does not currently have an organized body that represents different stakeholder perspectives to examine the unique challenges and needs of a safe, vibrant social economy.

GOALS

- Set priorities for the Office of Nightlife.
- Determine policy direction.


BARRIERS

- Political hesitation to create more oversight bodies.

STAKEHOLDERS

- Office of Special Events, Film & Tourism
- See the graphic below for suggested stakeholder perspectives

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps																																							
Formalize the Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore how to formalize the Social Economy Advisory Board through either legislation, commission appointments, or as an advisory group. 																																							
Determine Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the number of people to be appointed to the Advisory Board, by whom, and what perspectives they should represent. Usually a combination of the mayor and City Council identifies the perspectives. <input type="checkbox"/> RHI suggests a total of 13 members with 2 stakeholders representing 6 perspectives with an additional member as a tiebreaker: <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>ROLE</th> <th>NAME</th> <th>ORGANIZATION</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>SAFETY: Licensing</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>SAFETY: Compliance</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>HOSPITALITY: Dining</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>HOSPITALITY: Tourism</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>DATA: Economic</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>DATA: Safety</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>CULTURE: Music</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>CULTURE: Performance</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>COMMUNITY: Residents</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>COMMUNITY: Advocates</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>DEVELOPMENT: Planning</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>DEVELOPMENT: Mobility</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	ROLE	NAME	ORGANIZATION	SAFETY: Licensing			SAFETY: Compliance			HOSPITALITY: Dining			HOSPITALITY: Tourism			DATA: Economic			DATA: Safety			CULTURE: Music			CULTURE: Performance			COMMUNITY: Residents			COMMUNITY: Advocates			DEVELOPMENT: Planning			DEVELOPMENT: Mobility		
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Determine Term Limits and Meeting Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify term limits and whether members will receive some form of compensation. <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the # meetings that will need to be held in one year and whether they will be public (with documentation). 																																							

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Nighttime Governance Analysis Report by RHI</p>	<p>Descriptions Below Excerpted from Full Report Accessible here: https://sociablecity.info/services/milwaukee/rhi_milwaukee_2022_report_final.pdf</p>
<p>San Francisco's Entertainment Commission</p>	<p>In San Francisco, because of the regulatory nature of the work, the Entertainment Commission meets on a regular, bi-monthly basis to deliberate publicly on each entertainment permit and its conditions before it is issued. This includes all fixed-place entertainment permits, late-night eating establishments, and outdoor amplified sound permits requesting to go past 10 pm. These are public hearings that are recorded and shown online, require public input or testimony depending upon the item, use Roberts Rules of Order, and are much like a council meeting.</p> <p>San Francisco Commissioners are compensated at \$50 per meeting and given healthcare benefits. There are 7 seats, appointed by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors, and each seat represents stakeholders in the nightlife arena. They include 2 industries, 2 residents, 1 public safety, 1 public health, and 1 urban planning. The Director of the office reports to the City Administrator but is confirmed by the Commission.</p>
<p>Washington, D.C.'s Commission</p>	<p>In Washington D.C., the Commission must meet once every 3 months, meetings must be open to the public, and a quorum is required. However, deliberations are not around anything regulatory, but advise the Mayor and Council on current issues. More importantly, the Commission gives policy direction to be taken by the office.</p> <p>Commissioners are unpaid, and the mayor chooses the Chair. It is comprised of 15 seats total, with 8 “ex-officio” seats, which primarily mean city department heads and outside tourism agencies, as well as 7 additional appointed seats that represent the nightlife industry, musicians, artists, BIDs, and harm reduction specialty. The head of the Office of Nightlife and Culture in D.C. spoke very highly of this group during RHI’s research interview. It was clear that she takes their input and direction through her daily work. The Director reports to the Department of Community Affairs but is given some direction by the Commission.</p>
<p>New York City's Advisory Board</p>	<p>In New York City, the Advisory Board functions quite independently from the Office of Nightlife. The Director “may” attend the Board meetings, which implies a different relationship than the other cities. The enabling legislation created this body intending to obtain a comprehensive report on the state of nightlife for elected officials.</p> <p>Within 18 months of the effective date of the legislation, the nightlife advisory board was required to submit recommendations to the mayor and the council. Those recommendations were made in 2021, later than the deadline, due to the pandemic. It should also be noted that the Board and the Office have a good working relationship, but certainly an unofficial one. The Advisory Board may put forth more recommendations but is not required to.</p>

ACTION 3: CONDUCT AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

This action is based on best practices collected by RHI.

OVERVIEW

Conducting an economic analysis can achieve heightened recognition and legitimacy for the social economy. Compiling and analyzing information about the fiscal, economic, and employment impacts of the social economy can establish a baseline measure for the industry. Patterns of growth, decline, and renewal in Savannah can also be assessed. Cities that have conducted economic studies identify economic analysis reports as a turning point in achieving industry support.

NEEDS STATEMENT

The value of Savannah’s social economy has not been quantified, therefore opportunities may not be fully developed or supported with sufficient resources.

GOALS

The goals of an economic study pertain to potential applications of results, which may include:

- ❑ **Identify appropriate allocation of resources** and public safety services to better manage social activity as a continued source of economic vitality.
- ❑ **Raise public awareness** about nightlife and the social economy as a legitimate economic sector and viable economic engine by promoting their fiscal, economic, and employment contributions.
- ❑ **Elevate the professional status** and communication of social venues.
- ❑ **Propel greater coordination** between government and nightlife representatives to collaborate on sustaining vitality, while also reducing safety and quality of life impacts.
- ❑ **Track industry growth and change** by conducting assessments regularly.

BARRIERS

- ❑ **Cost of hiring a consultant** to conduct a study.
- ❑ **Gaining political will** to conduct a study.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ❑ Visit Savannah
- ❑ Chamber of Commerce & Greater Savannah Black Chamber of Commerce
- ❑ Nightlife venues and music advocates

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Determine focus, objectives, and scope of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Create an advisory group to determine the project scope. ❑ Among the focus areas to consider are arts, culture, music, tourism, and food and beverage.
Determine study design based on objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Determine the following: geography, industry focus, and time parameters. ❑ Identify data sources and available data.
Determine budget and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Identify potential funding sources.
Start data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assign roles; create a work plan. ❑ Collect data from 3rd party data, business surveys, and visitor surveys.
Conduct data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Analyze various components of the study.
Create a user-friendly report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Explain the methodology for analyzing data. ❑ Explain how to communicate findings and list target audiences. ❑ Launch a marketing campaign to unveil findings to the public.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

Compilation of Sample Economic Studies of Music and Nightlife



RHI has compiled nearly twenty different examples of economic studies of music and nightlife from a variety of cities.

Quantifying the value of the music and nightlife industries is a new specialization in the field of economic impact studies. Studies conducted to date have provided clear insights into music and nightlife as legitimate economic industries by illuminating the number of businesses, employees, and economic contributions generated.

Access studies from the following cities: Washington, DC; New York; Austin; London; San Francisco; Nashville; Chicago; Seattle; and more.

<https://www.sociablecity.org/media/resources/economic-studies>

Best Practices for Economic Studies of Nightlife



In partnership with RHI, Jon Stover & Associates (JS&A) summarized best practices for conducting a nighttime economy impact study and sources of data.

This assessment reviewed seven existing studies across North America, Europe, and Australia (NYC, San Francisco, DC, Edmonton, London, Sydney, and Colchester) to better understand what previous researchers have done to measure the impact of this particular type of activity.

<https://www.sociablecity.org/sociable-city-resources/best-practices-for-economic-studies-of-nightlife-2018>

ACTION 4: EXPLORE SOURCES OF FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE SOCIAL ECONOMY AND THE OFFICE OF NIGHTLIFE

OVERVIEW

Management of the nighttime social economy requires commitment and resource investment from multiple stakeholders, especially city government departments. The status quo has been to carve out resources from already strapped departments or to rely on voluntary overtime. A better alternative would be to identify a steady source of funding to supplement department resources. Among the funding sources to explore are the drink tax and the hotel penny tax.

Needs Statement

The social economy is a major economic driver and an important amenity for both residents and visitors. But the management of this economy requires staffing and financial resources. Savannah has recognized the value of the social economy by its commitment to creating an Office of Nightlife to act as a liaison between private and public sector stakeholders. However, the sustainability of this new office, as well as the resources it has to implement the changes outlined in this report will rest on the resources available. Public safety presence (police and other agencies), cleaning crews, customer-service-oriented ambassadors, etc. are all ways of ensuring the safety and vibrancy of the social economy, especially one heavily marketed to visitors.

Bars and restaurants currently pay a “Drink Tax” (Liquor by the Drink Excise Tax), where monthly, they must pay 3% of gross sales for each mixed drink containing liquor. Between January-October 2022, \$2.56 million was generated (per Department of Revenue data). The drink tax funds go directly into the general fund and, while controversial, some way to earmark funds to support the social economy through the Office of Nightlife and possibly support dedicated nighttime public safety staffing would create a stable environment to make a change.

Goals

- Identify new potential systems of funding** for nighttime management services.
- Explore redirection of existing funding** for nighttime management services.

BARRIERS

- Limited resources and under-staffing are prevalent** in key departments (police, fire, etc.)
- Many city agencies (aside from police) are not accustomed to deploying staff resources at night;** even if funding were made available, it would require a culture shift.

STAKEHOLDERS

- City Manager
- Office of Nightlife
- Savannah Police and other public safety departments
- Sanitation
- Ambassador Program

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

- Policies in place regarding the use of General Fund

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Explore Drink Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="570 306 1458 394">▣ Explore how a portion or percentage of the Drink Tax can be earmarked for a program, initiative, etc. that is a priority for safety and vibrancy in the social economy.
Explore Penny Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="570 405 1458 464">▣ Explore how a portion of the penny tax (to be added to the hotel tax) could be used for the social economy. <li data-bbox="570 464 1458 579">▣ Per state rules, the funds generated must be used for tourism-oriented services. An ambassador service may qualify (providing eyes and ears on the street, addressing low-level quality of life issues, and answering tourist questions).



ACTIONS TO ASSURE SAFETY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

ACTION 1: DEPLOY A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM TO MANAGE NIGHTTIME SOCIAL ACTIVITY

This action emerged from the Public Safety roundtable and RHI best practice.

OVERVIEW

Safe, Well-Managed Social Economies Require a Coordinated, Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Various departments, not just the police, should deploy staff during the times when social venues operate—at night. Expanding city staff beyond the police to a multi-disciplinary approach including the Fire Department, Sanitation Services, Parking Services, and Code Compliance Department will enhance the management and safety of Savannah’s social economy. This will enable police to be more proactive and focus on policing duties, rather than roles outside their purview.

Past Precedent for a Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Nighttime Management in the 2010s

Police worked with Parking Services to designate pick-up locations for taxis and rideshares. Sanitation Services picked up trash on weekends; their trucks blocked access to alleyways by foot and car, reducing access to potentially unsafe areas. The Citizens Office addressed litter and cleanliness after-hours by having cleanliness crews empty receptacles. It’s time to return to an all-hands-on-deck approach to nighttime management.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Police are the only agency that consistently deploys staff at night. Therefore, they have become the catch-all for both public safety and quality of life issues at night due to the gap in nighttime deployment by other city agencies.

City Departments that Need to Deploy Staff at Night

The following departments are not deploying staff at night, despite formal requests made by the police department:

- ☐ **Code compliance** (in charge of sound compliance, illegal food vending)
- ☐ **Parking Services** (in charge of ticketing and should be in charge of towing¹ vehicles)
- ☐ **311 phone operators** (infrastructure outages)

Quality of Life Impacts on the Social Economy Due to Lack of Nighttime Deployment

Sound, parking and trash management may be considered low-priority concerns. But quality of life issues can contribute to an escalation of risks and the perception of a disorderly, permissive environment where unruly patron behavior is tolerated and venues can operate with impunity. Specific impacts include the following:

- ☐ **Without sound compliance**, venues are playing music far above limits set by the sound ordinance from internal sound systems and Bluetooth speakers stationed outside, disturbing neighbors. (Any sound heard across property lines is a violation of the sound ordinance.)
- ☐ **Without parking enforcement**, patrons and employees are parking illegally, obstructing emergency vehicle parking zones, and impeding residents’ access to their vehicles.
- ☐ **Without sanitation management**, trash is piling up and overflowing from receptacles at night. Homeless are attracted to leftover food and alcohol.

¹ See Planning for People Action 8: Empower Parking Services to Authorize Towing. Ordinance is currently interpreted that only police can authorize a tow.

Burden Shifted to the Police Department

The lack of nighttime deployment shifts the burden of responsibility on the police at night for tasks outside of their jurisdiction and purview, straining an already understaffed police department. Although technically empowered to conduct sound enforcement and parking enforcement, police officers prioritize public safety and calls for service. Therefore, other district management tasks are not happening as consistently as they should.

Critical Role of the Fire Department in the Nighttime Social economy

Savannah Fire Department conducts periodic life-safety checks for occupancy and fire exits. However, the desire for greater frequency and expanded scope beyond downtown is hindered by limited resources.

Without more frequent life safety checks at peak operation hours by the fire department, venues may exceed occupancy limits, which can lead to overcrowding and increased risk of harm from fire danger, stampedes, etc. There has been precedent for venues being so overcrowded that fire and police have had difficulty accessing people in need of aid and administration of NARCAN (Naloxone) to reverse an opioid overdose.

GOALS

- ▣ Broaden nighttime deployment of city staff beyond the police.
- ▣ **Achieve greater consistency** of compliance checks from multiple departments.
- ▣ Relieve police of non-police duties being performed at night for which other agencies are accountable (e.g. towing).
- ▣ **Address quality of life** issues and violations to help mitigate public safety risks before they escalate.
- ▣ **Increase venue compliance** with rules and regulations.

BARRIERS

- ▣ **Police and fire departments** are under-staffed with a greater work load, in part due to safety needs for events and nightlife.
- ▣ **Towing:** Only police are empowered to request a tow through dispatch, per the current ordinance. Parking Services is not able to do this. Different contracts dictate how towing companies can provide services.
- ▣ **Trash pick-up:** Sanitation services does not have enough trucks; can barely provide trash service for daytime residences (there is \$ for paying salaries, but hiring has been difficult).
- ▣ **Lack of desire, motivation, or a top-down mandate** to work at night or on weekends (except for police).
- ▣ **Concern for the safety** of non-police city government employees to work at night.

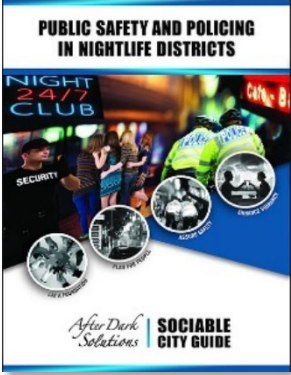


STAKEHOLDERS


- ▣ Police department
- ▣ ABC Unit
- ▣ Fire Department
- ▣ Code Compliance Department
- ▣ Sanitation services
- ▣ Parking Services

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Request Approval for Multi-Disciplinary Nighttime Deployment by Various Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Initiate a request to department heads to request a change of resources (either a redeployment, rescheduling, or request for additional resources) to deploy staff at night, even if the frequency gradually increases. ▣ Fire Department requests the hiring of 10 more fire marshals to cover current and anticipated staff needs (e.g. construction inspections, film events, nightlife). ▣ A general request for training of staff to be deployed at night and body armor. ▣ Negotiate with relevant unions to request approval.
Facilitate Communication Among Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Discuss staff resource requests. ▣ Police meet with various departments to identify high-intensity nights (holidays, special events e.g. Halloween/Pride weekend, Saturday nights) to begin targeted deployment. ▣ Review high-priority violations for each department to address. ▣ Address concerns regarding the safety of department staff (e.g. fire, code compliance) by exploring how the police (e.g. Downtown Directed Patrol) could be redeployed as escorts. ▣ Identify training that staff deployed at night should undergo e.g. situational awareness to protect their personal safety when going into crowded venues. Some may opt to wear body armor if available.
Notify Venues and Host an Educational Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Before commencing enforcement, host an educational forum on the rules and regulations that will be enforced and how to stay in compliance. (See 6: Host Educational Forums Between Venues and Safety Agencies)
Commence Inspections/Compliance Checks of Social Venues at Night	<p>Ideal Deployment Plan Per Roundtable Participants Short-term: Every other weekend, provide staff on Saturdays 12 am-3 am. Long-term: Every weekend, provide staff on Saturdays 12 am-3 am.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Fire Department: Deploy a team of 1-2 on the night shift. ▣ Code compliance: Deploy a team of 1-2 on the night shift. ▣ Sanitation services: Deploy staff to focus on emptying trash cans in alleys. ▣ Parking Services: Deploy staff for parking enforcement.
Create a Central Database Hub for Venue Compliance Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Centralize data from multiple agencies to track whether a venue is receiving violations from multiple different venues, as this may trigger an educational visit/intervention organized by the Office of Nightlife to help the venue operate in compliance. ▣ Determine whether a certain # of tickets (after intervention attempts) should trigger a show-cause hearing.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p style="text-align: center;">RHI's Public Safety and Policing Guide</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Excerpt from Chapter, <i>Public Safety Teams</i></p> <p><i>(With) a Public Safety Team, responsibility for a...nightlife district...includes a much more diverse cast that results in...shared resources and coordinated response.</i></p> <p>Public Safety Teams include representatives from police, fire, code enforcement, parking enforcement, health department, planning, transportation, ABC, and legal. Some cities also include staff from the Mayor's Office, Night Managers, and elected officials.</p> <p>The purpose of the team is to work collectively to address issues or concerns that are identified by formal complaints from citizens or other business owners, staff observations, or official interventions requiring enforcement response.</p> <p>The goal of the team is to first work with business owners and operators in partnership to gain voluntary compliance and remedy the concern. They also try to proactively resolve concerns before enforcement.</p> <p>About the Guide: https://www.sociablecity.org/sociable-city-resources/public-safety-and-policing-in-nightlife-districts-2018</p> <p>Access Guide: https://sociablecity.info/cms/resources/publications/rhi_originals/rhi_nightlife_policing_safety_guide.pdf</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Chicago, IL</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Entertainment Venue Team</p> <p>Chicago has an “Entertainment Venue Team” that includes police, fire, alcohol licensing, and building code. The primary goal is early intervention with social venues operating out of compliance, identified by calls for service and other evidence-based data. Monthly meetings are held between the Public Safety Team and venue operators to discuss concerns and answer questions. The team arranges for peer mentors to meet with at-risk businesses and also conducts periodic joint inspections.</p> <p>Although the team’s inception was initially driven by the police, the creation of the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection helped transition the role of coordination of key agencies and departments under one umbrella.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sacramento, CA</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Dedicated Safety Team for Entertainment Districts</p> <p>Sacramento deploys a nighttime team including 4-6 police officers, 4-5 code enforcement officers, and 2 fire inspectors. Their proactive contacts with venue operators and staff help to ensure compliance with city codes and operating conditions.</p> <p>The team also supports venues with quarterly Pubs, Clubs, and Bars meetings and on-demand training on topics such as active shooters, security, and the use of ID checking technology. The team works actively with the city’s new Nighttime Economy Manager.</p>

<p>Edmonton, Alberta</p> 	<p>Hospitality Venue Team</p> <p>Edmonton’s Hospitality Venue Team is composed of police, fire, bylaw enforcement (code compliance), alcohol regulation, and health department staff. There is formal training for “Hospitality Officers” who work at night. The team coordinator is in charge of breaking down inter-departmental silos and sustaining team engagement. Weekly meetings are held to identify concerns, monitor progress and determine priorities. The goal is education and voluntary compliance through prevention-oriented programs before enforcement. In-person meetings are held with venues with violations.</p>
<p>Seattle, WA</p> 	<p>Joint Enforcement Team (JET)</p> <p>“The Joint Enforcement Team (JET) conducts inspections of nightclubs, bars, restaurants, and other businesses (adult entertainment, massage parlors, mobile food vendors, special events) at peak times to help them maintain a safe environment for patrons and the community. JET also checks for compliance with regulatory and license codes.</p> <p>Team members include the Police Department, Fire Department, Finance & Administrative Services, Department of Transportation, Department of Construction and Inspections, and Washington State Liquor & Cannabis Board.</p> <p>An average outing will be five to seven people. Typically, between one to two members of each department listed above attend each outing. Each department has multiple staff members trained to perform Joint Enforcement Team (JET) outings.</p> <p>Quarterly training for nightclub staff and security is held by Seattle Police, Seattle Fire, and the State Liquor & Cannabis Board. These training sessions cover a variety of topics from how to spot fake IDs, fire safety and prevention, and the responsibilities of serving alcohol” (City of Seattle, 2022).</p> <p>More information: https://www.seattle.gov/business-regulations/joint-enforcement-team</p>
<p>Milwaukee, WI</p> 	<p>New Business Orientation and CPTED Review</p> <p>Once an alcohol license is applied for, a variety of stakeholders provide an informal orientation. The community prosecutor (assistant district attorney) and police department’s community liaison officer conduct an informal meeting to orient the business operator to the downtown environment, how to keep their employees safe, and even conduct a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) review of the interior and exterior (e.g. lighting, parking) of the business to provide suggestions. BID staff also conducts an application review with the community liaison officer to orient operators to their neighborhood.</p>

Washington, DC



Multi-Agency “Public Safety Go Teams” for Nightlife Safety Impetus and Goals of the Program: June 2022

DC police and other district agencies launched “Public Safety Go Teams” in the summer of 2022 to focus on curbing violence in three corridors with active nightlife: Connecticut Avenue Northwest, H Street Northeast, and U Street Northwest (Sanchez-Cruz, 2022).

“The working group will address ongoing issues like enforcing traffic and parking regulations like idling cars, dispersing people who are loitering, and making sure businesses in the corridors are not overserving alcohol; all factors that contribute to the violent activity.” (Sanchez-Cruz, 2022).

“Members break up gatherings in alleys and stop in at bars to make sure they haven’t over-served anyone, besides regular patrolling” (Cirruzzo, 2023).

“ ‘Our public safety Go Teams will be engaging residents in areas where we expect larger gatherings to happen. Our Go Teams are made up of nonlaw enforcement partners like credible messengers and violence interrupters,’ said Mayor Bowser during a Thursday press conference about public safety” (Sanchez-Cruz, 2022).

Deployment and Members

“The squad is comprised of approximately 40 people – police but also personnel from the city’s Department of Transportation and fire and emergency services, as well as alcohol regulators – who monitor the corridors on foot and from cars” (Cirruzzo, 2023).

Success Metrics Analysis (6 months later): January 2023

Reduction in Crime (Cirruzzo, 2023)

- ▣ **The U Street corridor saw a 64% decrease in violent crime** when the squad was working on weekend nights between June and December 2022 compared to the same period in 2021, per MPD data.
- ▣ **The H Street area saw a 56% decrease in violent crime**, but an 8% jump in overall crime.
- ▣ **Violent crime in Dupont’s nightlife corridor dropped 50%.**
- ▣ **MPD says the task force seized 96 guns and five ATVs** in its first six months of operating.

The chief of police is considering adopting the policing model to other parts of the city.

Video: DC Police deploy new nightlife taskforce to curb violence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0xNVioMHhg>

D.C.’s nightlife police task force is getting results

<https://www.axios.com/local/washington-dc/2023/01/05/dc-police-nightlife-task-force-results>

ACTION 2: CREATE A DEDICATED DOWNTOWN NIGHTLIFE POLICE UNIT

OVERVIEW

The scope of nighttime social activity located in the Downtown Historic District (and the importance of nightlife to Savannah's economy) warrants the creation of a dedicated downtown nightlife police unit. This unit should be deployed in a roving manner to provide coverage of the district's social venues and parking areas, have specialized training requirements, and be hand-picked for ideal temperament traits of a high-intensity environment. A dedicated patrol ensures equitable distribution of safety resources throughout the downtown historic district (i.e. not just based on where venues have hired off-duty officers) and more efficient response time.

"Many departments managing nightlife districts have learned through experience that the optimum deployment strategy involves dedicated nightlife policing teams. It has been validated in various cities that dedicated nightlife policing teams that deploy officers who are consistently assigned to nightlife districts as part of a dedicated unit as their regular shift have greater opportunities to build needed trust with community members and establish relationships with business owners, managers, and their staff. Nightlife districts also present high-risk situations that require specialized training and expertise. Deployment of specially trained nightlife district teams is by far the most effective way to manage nightlife districts and is a strategy used by cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Edmonton, Raleigh, Sacramento, Virginia Beach, Washington, DC, Charleston, and others" (RHI's 2018 *Sociable City Guide*).

NEEDS STATEMENT

There is recognition that the Downtown Historic District is resource intensive on weekend nights and requires distinct police duties to ensure the safety of nightlife patrons. Six of the eight officers assigned to the Northwest precinct² are stationed at City Market to help facilitate traffic control to block roads and thereby curb cruising, as well as clear the district of pedestrians (i.e. crowd control) at closing time.

Yet Northwest Precinct officers are also responsible for answering calls for service throughout the precinct where the historic district is located. This task is unfeasible with the current staffing. Therefore six additional officers—two pulled from each of three other precincts—are regularly re-assigned to route calls for service in the Northwest precinct.

The current police deployment and scheduling model for the Northwest Precinct is not ideal for an active nighttime social district. It also perpetuates the use of the off-duty officer system (see next action). Venue operators and police representatives who participated in this process expressed a preference for a dedicated team of officers vs. the current system of using off-duty officers hired by venues due to clearer allegiances and improved deployment methodology (i.e. roving vs. being stationed in front of one business).

Note: There is also a need for safety coverage of social clusters located outside the downtown historic core. See Safety Action 3: Explore Improvements and Alternatives to Off-Duty Officers System for suggestions on how private security can be expanded.

GOALS

- ▣ **Separate policing duties specific to the Downtown Historic Core** from the Northwest precinct commander's purview. (i.e. remove responsibility for calls for service that are unrelated to the nighttime social economy).
- ▣ Engage in community-oriented policing methodology.
- ▣ **Provide consistency in officers**, which supports trust and relationship building between police and venues.
- ▣ **Provide equitable coverage** throughout the downtown historic district.

² The eight officers assigned to the Northwest precinct between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. are charged with seven beats: 21-27. Beat 26 is the downtown entertainment area, but it also includes residential and non-alcohol licensed businesses).

BARRIERS

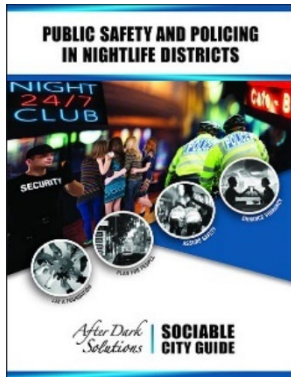
- ▣ Re-allocating/re-orienting limited funds in the police department.
- ▣ Current precedence of reliance upon off-duty police system (see Safety Action 3 for challenges with this system). Stakeholders
- ▣ Police

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
<p>Create a Dedicated Downtown Nightlife Police Unit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Establish a separate commander for Dining, Entertainment, and Nightlife. ▣ Recruit a team of 7 people: 6 officers and a sergeant or lieutenant as a supervisor to monitor the patrol. ▣ Shift: 8:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. ▣ 4 (10s): Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat then off Sun, Mon, Tuesday ▣ Scope: MLK to Whittaker then Broughton to Bay Street
<p>Develop Officer Selection Criteria</p>	<p>Selection of officers for entertainment districts should be based on a specific interview and evaluation of character traits and experience levels that create the capacity for seamless interactions with nightlife patrons, hospitality businesses, community members, and government agencies.</p> <p>It is critical that the officers who work in nightlife teams are interested and enthusiastic about being assigned to entertainment districts. An arbitrary or forced assignment to the nightlife district is not recommended and has the potential to create detrimental results and negative outcomes for the officer, department, and community.</p>
<p>Create a Training Curriculum for Officers Assigned to the Unit</p>	<p>Specialized and comprehensive training should be required for nightlife district officers beyond what is provided during the regular academy and in-service classes. Edmonton has a 3-day training, some of which takes place inside a nightlife venue. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol Regulations and Licensing Fire Safety and Occupancy Noise and Conflict Resolution Responsible Beverage Service Code Enforcement Response to Drugs, Gangs and Motorcycle Gangs Active Shooter Scenario Inside a Nightclub Defensive Tactics Communication and De-Escalation Ethics Fair and Impartial Policing Cultural Awareness Crisis Intervention Training Courtroom Testimony Crowd Management at Closing Time Crime Scene and Major Incident Scenarios E.G. Medical Emergencies, Active Shooters, Acts of Terrorism, Gang Member Eviction, Large Physical Altercations

MODELS AND RESOURCES

RHI's Public Safety and Policing Guide



Excerpt: *Ten-Point Approach to Nighttime Public Safety*

Select appropriate officers based on experience and character traits.

This begins by understanding the characteristics and traits necessary to operate in this challenging environment. This criterion serves as the foundation for any selection process used to identify and select officers for this specialized assignment.

Offer incentives to recruit officers who want to work in a nightlife district.

Nightlife district assignments should be considered a “special assignment” within the department’s policy and procedures. This designation and the additional opportunities for leadership development, career enhancement, and training offer the opportunity to expand the pool of candidates.

Deploy dedicated officers to build trust and promote consistency.

A consensus among nightlife practitioners, business operators, and research surrounding network governance indicates the ideal strategy is the use of a dedicated unit. This method provides consistency, supports trust and relationship building, aids in problem-solving, and creates skills and competencies necessary to optimize results.

While there is agreement that this strategy is optimal, there are environmental factors including budget shortfalls and staffing challenges within police agencies that threaten this concept.

Agencies in the U.S. and abroad have recognized this challenge and are speaking out to their elected officials and sounding warnings about how this factor may affect nightlife policing. Several cities interviewed for this project indicated they are currently using hybrid models to address this challenge, which includes a small number of dedicated officers who are supplemented during peak hours with either on- duty or overtime resources.

Provide specialized training on a variety of relevant topics including alcohol regulations, crisis intervention, etc.

Even though there is recognition that nightlife policing requires a specific skill set, very few agencies provide formalized training to either new or incumbent members. However, several departments contacted for this project have implemented training processes designed specifically for officers working in nightlife districts. These processes include a myriad of topics associated with regulatory knowledge, communication skills, drug and gang awareness, ethics, crisis intervention training, and more.

About the Guide: <https://www.sociablecity.org/sociable-city-resources/public-safety-and-policing-in-nightlife-districts-2018>

Access Guide:

https://sociablecity.info/cms/resources/publications/rhi_originals/rhi_nightlife_policing_safety_guide.pdf

**Athens-Clarke County, GA
Police Department**



Model for Community Oriented Policing of Nightlife District

Anecdotal reports from venue operators participating in the process described the following approach:

In the fall and spring season, the downtown police captain introduces themselves at night so they're on a first name basis with people who work the door at bars and clubs. They also introduce themselves to venue managers. They give out their cell phone number for venue staff to call them directly when challenges arise.

**College Station, TX
Police Department**



Tourism-Oriented Policing Paradigm

(Description based on a June 2016 webinar hosted by RHI)

Tourism & Entertainment Policing Unit

District Profile

Home of Texas A&M University (60,800+ students), college football games (100k fans), George Bush Presidential Library visits, and a 100,050+ permanent population. Northgate Entertainment District: 25+ bars in a 6-block area.

College Station Tourism & Entertainment Policing Unit (CST&P)

9 officers total (bike unit): 7 officers, 1 corporal, 1 sergeant. It's considered an honor to be on this unit. Officers represent a cross-section of expertise, including bike mechanics and mental health crises. Different languages are represented (Spanish, French, Arabic).

Candidate Qualifications: Candidates must apply for the unit and be interviewed for temperament. If selected, they do a 1 week-long training course, including tourism policing concepts.

All bar patrons (even students, and permanent residents) are considered "tourists." Education through enforcement mindset. They're just there to have fun and take risks that they wouldn't normally take.

Trust-Building: "It started out adversarial, where you only had a relationship or contact when there was a problem or when you were doing something wrong....now there is much more trust." (Bar owner describes the new police unit.)



To view a 2016 webinar on this approach:

https://rhiwebinar.org/2016/6_28_16_police/archive.mp4

Milwaukee, WI
Police Department



Code RED (“Responsible Entertainment Deployment)

A hospitality district-focused police deployment strategy, was established to coordinate the deployment, scheduling, and training of police officers who work in the entertainment district. The program provided a consistent police presence on the street to deescalate and resolve issues. In the late 2010s, the typical deployment was 12–14-foot officers with about 3–4 mounted officers.

Outcomes include a 58% decline in violent crime downtown in 2013 and a positive working relationship between police and venue operators. The positive legacy of Code RED remains today through increased communication between police and venue operators through regular meetings, shared decision making, and exchange of cell phone numbers.

The community prosecutor reviews Code RED analytics reports to review data and identify businesses that may need intervention and assistance with compliance. Support to businesses with violations or safety issues is provided in the form of education by the community prosecutor, community liaison officer, and BID staff. The venue is given an opportunity for voluntary compliance.

(Established as part of RHI’s Hospitality Zone Assessment work in Milwaukee, WI between 2008-2017)

2021 Challenges Impacting the Program

Department Understaffing

The police department overall is understaffed. During the height of anti-social behavior in the summer of 2021, Code RED deployed more officers to Water Street, but there was less officer deployment in general throughout the city.

Overtime Officers

Originally, the majority of Code RED officers were on-duty and augmented by overtime officers. Now, one-half to two-thirds of Code RED officers are overtime (working after their regular 8-hour shift). Officer burnout is becoming commonplace after large events like the Bucks playoffs. It is becoming difficult to find OT officers willing to work for Code RED.

National Trend of Hostility and Antagonism Toward Police

Officers report fears of starting a riot for enforcement of minor infractions (e.g. loitering, public drinking). The lack of public cooperation when attempting enforcement action made it difficult to address quality-of-life issues. In fact, crowds actually tried to prevent officers from taking enforcement action by filming interactions and pulling officers off of perpetrators.

ACTION 3: EXPLORE IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OFF-DUTY EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

This action was developed in the Public Safety roundtable. Four out of six roundtable groups identified challenges with and desired changes to the current system of off-duty officers in social venues and events.

OVERVIEW

Short-Term Improvements

In the short-term, identify ways to improve the current concerns with the off-duty officer system by creating minimum standards and guidelines for secondary employment in social venues. Updates have already been made by requiring officers to remain outside venues (instead of allowing them to work inside). Additional updates may include a requirement that they stay 30 minutes after closing time to help with closing time dispersal. Explore how to establish consistency in pay rates and the number of officers required.

Long-Term Plan for Phasing Out Use

In the long-term, the city can work to phase out the reliance upon off-duty officers by replacing the requirement for off-duty officers with private security; developing standards for venue security staff and operations, as well as review and vetting current firms that provide private security.

Note: Accomplishment of Safety Action 2 will also help reduce the perceived need for off-duty officers by creating a roving patrol dedicated to downtown's social economy.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Use of Off-Duty Officers is the Norm for Social Venues and Events

The use of off-duty officers as private security is even mandated by the Department of Revenue for certain alcohol licensees and events. The prevalent use of off-duty officers hired by venues underpins and reveals a multitude of systemic challenges that are impeding the enhancement of safety in Savannah's social economy.

Role Limitations and a Stop Gap in Lieu of a Better System

Some venues hire off-duty officers to provide a visible safety presence and serve as a stop-gap due to the lack of dedicated nightlife police patrol and professional venue security, but it is not an ideal model. Off-duty officers are limited in role and scope—they must remain within a certain proximity to the business that hired them. They neither fulfill the needs of professional door security (checking IDs, wandering, crowd control, etc.) nor meet the ideal standards for nightlife police deployment—interactive, roving presence monitoring safety throughout a district.

Venue operators who choose (or are required) to hire off-duty officers feel hiring off-duty police is the only way to ensure police presence in the district (due to the lack of a dedicated downtown nightlife unit). Further, they believe hiring off-duty officers ensures a faster response time compared to calling dispatch for service, which may take hours. However, this system is less than ideal.

Challenges with Relying on a Volunteer-Based System

Off-duty assignments are voluntary and based on the discretion of officers. This can lead to several challenges:

- ▣ **If one or more off-duty officer doesn't show up, a venue** (if required to have a certain number of off-duty officers) is out of compliance, despite having requested to hire an off-duty officer.
- ▣ **If not enough off-duty officers sign-up to work an event, the City is forced to draft officers to fill gaps for events.** This shifts payment from the event organizer to the City. This also results in officers being pulled off of neighborhood precincts, so coverage is minimal during peak events. Calls for service during events will face significant delays.

Sources of Frustration Identified by Venue Owners and Event Planners

- ❑ **Inconsistency in # required:** A minimum of 2 off-duty officers are required when hired by a bar. The increased number of officers is discretionary (e.g. 4-6 officers for larger venues). But, there is no specific ratio of off-duty officers based on patron capacity or past violations.
- ❑ **Inconsistency in pay rates.** Event organizers and venue operators shared that they must offer a competitive rate (above the minimum base rate for off-duty officers) to incentivize officers to want to work for them. Also, “higher quality” officers supposedly charge more, so there’s a perception that you have to pay more to get better service.
- ❑ **Off-duty officers become “on-duty officers” to make an arrest when an incident occurs in the vicinity.** Frustration was expressed by venue operators who pay for off-duty officers, who then leave to address an issue nearby.

Gaps in the Current Off-Duty Officer System

- ❑ **No supervision of off-duty officers:** They are independent contractors hired by each venue.
- ❑ **No current rules or guidelines** for the off-duty officer role when working at social venues. (Note: There was a past requirement that they had to stay 30 minutes past closing time to help with closing time egress.)
- ❑ **Current payment system:** They are paid in cash by venues and are 1099’d via the venue. This is a system noted for potential conflict of interest and unclear allegiances on duties.
- ❑ **Lack of equitable safety presence citywide:** only businesses that pay for off-duty officers have access to police response. Social clusters and districts outside of downtown report they have difficulty hiring off-duty officers.

Lack of Private Security Perpetuates Use of Off-Duty Officers

However, the lack of viable alternatives (i.e. private security firms that specialize in bar security) perpetuates the use of off-duty officers in these settings. Neither city nor state guidelines exist for the security of social venues, which could mobilize change. It is unfeasible to rely solely on off-duty police officers to provide security in licensed establishments.

Prevalent Use of Off-Duty Officers Shifts Responsibility for ID Checking (and Underage Access Prevention) on to the Server

In Georgia, the responsibility for checking IDs (and consequences for service to minors) is on the server. This is in part because there is no local or state requirement for checking IDs at the door.

In many other cities and states (as well as per venue safety best practices), door security is responsible for checking IDs. In some cases, ID scanner devices are required by door security to verify age and confirm the ID is not fraudulent before the patron is allowed to enter the premises. Servers may also check IDs when a drink is ordered. It is a violation of the license, and therefore the owner, if someone underage is served, and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure minors are not allowed on the premise of a 21 and up establishment.

In Savannah, off-duty officers, often used in place of private security at the door, are not allowed to check IDs. Thus, the sole responsibility for preventing underage access falls to the server.

Difficult Questions Raised by Off-Duty Officer System

- ❑ **Should venue owners** be paying for police presence? If so, should only businesses that can afford to, or are required to, hire off-duty officers be the only ones who get to benefit from police presence?
- ❑ **Is off-duty officer deployment (stationed at one business)** the most effective way to ensure public safety of a social district?

GOALS

- ❑ **Short-term goal:** Improve the off-duty officer system by addressing the chief concerns when working for social venues and events.
- ❑ **Long-term goal:** Transition away from the practice of off-duty officers working in bars and restaurants altogether. Savannah’s nightlife should strive to align with national hospitality industry standards (defined by RHI’s network of nightlife industry professionals and public safety stakeholders) of a combination of a dedicated police unit (see Safety Action 2) combined with trained private security as door security personnel.

BARRIERS

Barriers to Changing the Off-Duty Officer System

The following are barriers to changing the system with off-duty officers.

- ❑ **Pay Incentive:** Off-duty pay is higher than on-duty rates (\$25/hr). Off-duty officers can also set higher rates (above the minimum off-duty base of \$35/hr).
- ❑ **Insufficient dedicated police presence** in social districts so off-duty officers are among the only safety presence.
- ❑ **No city or state law prohibiting the use of off-duty officers** in alcohol licensed venues. In fact, the Department of Revenue mandates the use of a certain number of off-duty officers for certain venues.
- ❑ **Reliance by social venues on off-duty officers as private security** because no viable alternatives.

Barriers to Switching Over to Private Security

The following are barriers to expanding the use of private security in alcohol licensed establishments.

- ❑ **No city or state requirement for private security** in licensed venues or which firms qualify for working in nightlife settings.
- ❑ **No registry of accredited, vetted private security companies** to confirm they have registered with the Secretary of State's office and that staff is current with state-dictated training. (Not all venue operators will do their due diligence to confirm the company is licensed).
- ❑ **Limited supply of private security companies and staff.** Georgia does not have a precedent for setting training guidelines for private security in nightlife venues, so few private companies exist to fill this need. There is concern about the liability of private security companies providing security for bars.
- ❑ **Gap in familiarity among venue operators** re: the value of trained private security instead of off-duty police in bar settings.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ❑ Police
- ❑ Private security firms
- ❑ Venue owners

IMPLEMENTATION

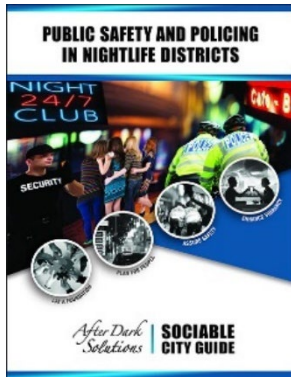
Short-Term	
Task	Steps
Improve the Current Off-Duty System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Identify minimum standards and guidelines for off-duty officers who work in social venues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must stay 30 minutes after closing time to help with crowd dispersal. ○ Remind venues to close their windows and doors to keep sound in. ❑ Explore how to create consistency in pay rates and numbers of officers required through a ratio of off-duty officers to capacity or history of violations. ❑ Establish a communication system between the off-duty police scheduler and the Office of Film, Events, & Tourism if an event organizer's requests for off-duty police are not being met.
Long-Term	
Task	Steps
Phase Out Off-Duty Officer System and Use Private Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Replace the requirement for off-duty officers in social venues and events with private security. ❑ Develop city standards and guidelines for private security staff and venue standards. E.g. Private security at the door should be responsible for checking IDs to verify whether someone is of legal age to enter. ❑ Review and vet private security firms.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

Best practice research among police organizations indicates that secondary employment for police is not ideal in three types of establishments: gambling, alcohol licenses (i.e. bars), and strip clubs. Many cities and states prohibit off-duty officers from moonlighting as security officers in bars due to potential conflicts of interest.

<p>California Security Guard Licensing Law</p> 	<p>Registration and Training Requirements for In-House Security</p> <p>Security Guard (“Guard Card”) registration information, which is managed through the CA Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Security And Investigative Services: https://www.bsis.ca.gov/</p> <p>“As of January 1, 2011, every ‘In House’ security guard was required to be licensed in the State of California.</p> <p>This new security guard license consists of two distinct parts. Part one is an individual’s “registration” and part two is their “training”. The registration portion has two parts as well. Part one is a live scan criminal background check through the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) AND a registration fee to the State of California Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS). Once an individual is trained and registered, they are considered a Proprietary Private Security Officer or a PSO.”</p> <p>Training curriculum for bar and club security guards includes the following topics: Conflict Resolution and Force, Powers to Arrest and Citizen’s Detention, Alcohol Rules and Regulations, Alcohol Liabilities, Recognition of Fake and Borrowed Identification, Recognition of Club Drugs and Narcotics, and Terrorism and Disaster Awareness (Smith, 2013).</p>
<p>NY Times Article</p> <p><i>Police Leaders Say Officers Shouldn't Moonlight at Bars</i></p>	<p>2003 Debate About Lifting the Ban in NY Prohibiting Police from Working Off-Duty in Bars</p> <p>“There are unequivocal reasons why this bill must be rejected...Off-duty employment at a bar places the officer in unnecessary danger, exposes the officer to increased corruption hazard, and creates the risk of extensive potential liability for the city,” said Deputy Chief Edwin Young (McIntire, 2003).</p> <p>https://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/11/nyregion/police-leaders-say-officers-shouldn-t-moonlight-at-bars.html</p>

RHI's Public Safety and Policing Guide



Excerpt: *Transition from Secondary Employment*

There are a variety of risks and potential conflicts of interest when cities use secondary employment and overtime officers as the primary staffing strategy for nightlife districts. Officers who work secondary employment at nightlife venues, are hired directly by business operators, and are paid in cash (a practice that is prohibited in several jurisdictions) may have questionable allegiances.

These uniformed officers are dedicated to a single location and are generally assigned to a fixed, stationary post in front of venues as a “visual deterrent” and do not participate in proactive, roving deployment. Additionally, this exterior presence does not provide for internal security and may lead nightlife venues to be less inclined to properly train their own security staff.

These actions can lead to the public questioning the effectiveness of the secondary employment officers, which can actually tarnish the reputation of the police department. Alternatively, more structured secondary employment systems using departmental resources or independent and accountable organizations such as business district management groups to schedule and compensate officers can provide added police presence, with supervision, and more strategically address high-risk periods that regular patrols may not have resources to manage, such as large events or closing time crowds on busy nights.

In either case, an important consideration when using secondary employment officers is the fatigue factor. Research has concluded that officers who suffer from sleep deprivation by working extended timeframes without adequate rest periods are susceptible to physical and mental fatigue that can have a negative impact on decision-making ability, problem-solving, attention, reaction time, and emotional control, which affects tolerance levels when dealing with difficult individuals.

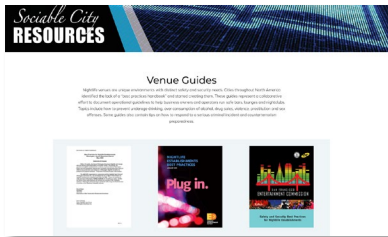
This is a critical factor when working in a nightlife district that requires officers to manage and control difficult encounters with intoxicated individuals through interpersonal communication while maintaining a friendly, professional demeanor. Departments using secondary employment officers in nightlife districts should implement maximum allowable secondary employment hours to minimize the negative effects of the fatigue factor.

About the Guide: <https://www.sociablecity.org/sociable-city-resources/public-safety-and-policing-in-nightlife-districts-2018>

Access Guide:

https://sociablecity.info/cms/resources/publications/rhi_originals/rhi_nightlife_policing_safety_guide.pdf

Nightlife Venue Best Practice Guides



RHI's Compilation of Model Practices

Nightlife venues are unique environments with distinct safety and security needs. Cities throughout North America identified the lack of a “best practices handbook” and started creating them. These guides represent a collaborative effort to document operational guidelines to help business owners and operators run safe bars, lounges, and nightclubs.

Topics include how to prevent underage drinking, over consumption of alcohol, drug sales, violence, prostitution, and sex offenses. Some guides also contain tips on how to respond to a serious criminal incident and counterterrorism preparedness.

RHI has compiled nearly a dozen examples from cities including New York City, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, DC, Boston, and Providence.

<https://www.sociablecity.org/media/resources/venue-guides>

Best Practices for Nightlife Establishments (NYC)



New York City: Best Practices for Nightlife Establishments, 3rd Edition (2018)

This 3rd Edition of Best Practices for Nightlife Establishments, published in March 2018, reflects an effort by the New York City Hospitality Alliance and the New York City Police Department to continue the tradition of working collaboratively to improve the safety and security of New York City's famous nightlife. Many jurisdictions have chosen to use this guide as a basis for their own. This 3rd Edition adds new materials to this volume which reflect the newest developments in the nightlife industry.

Topics include:

- Security
- Intoxication
- Sexual Assaults
- Employees
- Age Verification
- Promoters
- Club Policies
- Police – Community Relations
- Social Media
- Response to Serious Criminal Incidents - The Crime Scene, Pre-Incident, Post-Incident
- Relevant New York State Penal Law Sections
- Counterterrorism Best Practices and Recommendations

Guide:

https://sociablecity.info/cms/resources/venue_guides/venue_guide_nyc_2018.pdf

Note: This is one of many guides available on RHI's Resource section for Venue Guides: <https://www.sociablecity.org/media/resources/venue-guides>

ACTION 4: HOST EDUCATIONAL FORUMS BETWEEN VENUES AND SAFETY AGENCIES

This action is based on RHI best practice and is suggested based on the challenges identified in the following Listening Session groups: Public Safety, Venue Safety, and Social Venues.

OVERVIEW

Host bi-annual educational forums between social venues and representatives of all agencies that regulate them—police, fire, Department of Revenue, code compliance, etc. Forums will provide an opportunity for new and existing businesses to learn current and new rules and regulations. It will also be a way to facilitate open dialogue, with each able to ask questions and discuss mutual concerns. In preparation for forums, a presentation should be prepared outlining all the rules and regulations of various departments pertaining to the safety and operations of social venues that sell and serve alcohol. This can set the stage for collaboration on the development of a city procedural guide for the social economy on various emergency scenarios e.g. terrorism, active shooters, etc.

The Department of Revenue already has plans to host a similar forum for their department's rules. This forum can be modeled after that but expanded to convene a wider pool of relevant agencies.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Venue operators want to better understand the various rules and regulations they must abide by. Venues say there is no central location to access all the rules and regulations pertaining to their industry (you have to go to various department websites, which may or may not be updated). When rules change, they may not be aware of or may not understand the new rules. They would also like input on making new policy changes.

Enforcement officers want venues to achieve higher rates of compliance with rules. The top venue violations identified by enforcement agencies include overcrowding, underage service violations, and amplified sound from inside venues and from portable speakers set up outside).

There have also been incidents where enforcement agents were unfamiliar with current rules e.g. keeping Bar Cards on file. This process will create a way to ensure all stakeholders are on the same page about rules and regulations.

There is a desire to better communicate with the nightlife industry, but no easy way to do it. There is no organized nightlife association with direct contact to distribute new information to venues. (See Vibrancy Action 1: Revive and Sustain a Savannah Nightlife Association.). Note: An Office of Nightlife will also help with this.

An Office of Nightlife with staff will be critical to compiling this information and organizing forums to help improve public safety and increase trust between venues and government.

GOALS

- Increase trust and collaboration** between venues and government
- Increase understanding and compliance** with rules and regulations

BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

- Distrust** between venues and government
- No precedent** for communication and collaboration.


STAKEHOLDERS

- Office of Nightlife
- Venue operators
- Department of Revenue
- Police Department; ABC unit
- Fire Department
- Code Compliance Department
- Planning and Zoning Department

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Compile All Rules, Regulations Related to Social Venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Consolidate information from various departments and compile a guide of all city rules and regulations in plain English pertaining to social venues and nightlife. ▣ Topics may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Off-duty officer policies ○ To-go zone boundaries and rules ○ Bar Card rules for servers ○ Sound ordinances ▣ A written rulebook should be also prepared as a PowerPoint presentation with the goal of how to operate in compliance and how to avoid violations.
Compile Contact Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Create a “Who To Call When Guide” for venue operators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include the non-emergency number for the police. ○ Include procedures for who to call re: homeless, mental health, overdose, etc.
Develop a Bi-Annual Schedule of Educational Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Organize departments’ information ▣ Secure department representatives’ participation. ▣ Schedule meetings with venue owners, operators
Distribution of Invitations to Venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Distribute invitations to venues

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>San Francisco, CA</p>  <p>The logo for the San Francisco Nightlife and Entertainment Summit 2022 features the words 'SAN FRANCISCO' at the top, a large stylized 'N' and 'E' in blue and purple, and '2022' in the center. Below this, it reads 'NIGHTLIFE AND ENTERTAINMENT SUMMIT' in blue capital letters.</p>	<h3>Nightlife and Entertainment Summit</h3> <p>An annual event organized by the San Francisco Entertainment Commission, the SF Nightlife & Entertainment Summit convenes city officials, community leaders, and industry peers. The Summit is an opportunity to come together to address the current issues facing the industry and discuss ways the industry and the City can continue working together.</p> <p>The goal of the Nightlife and Entertainment Summit is to promote and enhance safety, encourage responsible outdoor entertainment, and support healthy nightlife commerce to make the experience of going out in San Francisco both safe and enjoyable.</p> <p>Speakers have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ SF Police Department: Chief of Police, Tactical Sergeant ▣ Directors of multiple city agencies ▣ Local and State level elected officials (Mayor, Board of Supervisors, State Senators, etc) ▣ State Alcohol Beverage Officials ▣ Outdoor Event Promoters ▣ Safety and Security Experts <p>2022 Announcement: https://sf.gov/news/sf-nightlife-entertainment-summit-returns-june-7</p> <p>Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/events/the-independent/san-francisco-nightlife-and-entertainment-summit/136988497111408/</p>
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ACTION 5: DEVELOP AN ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOR SERVER TRAINING PROGRAMS

This action emerged from the Venue Safety Roundtable. The need for higher server training was also identified by the Social Venues roundtable. Note: This action should be developed in tandem with Action 7: Reinstate a Server Registry.

OVERVIEW

The creation of an accreditation process for server training programs will ensure consistency and quality of curricula. Servers play a critical role in the prevention of underage access to alcohol and the intoxication of on-premise alcohol consumers. Investment in confirming minimum educational standards are met will create safer environments for social venues and potentially help reduce harm in the public realm. Support from management is also critical to the successful implementation of responsible beverage service concepts.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Servers of beverage alcohol are required to have proof of completion of an educational program on server training, which is supposed to be completed every 2 years. There is no guidance for servers on which programs are ideal; some business owners choose the quickest, cheapest option for servers they hire, which may not provide sufficient information.

The quality, length, and curricula of current RBS programs for servers vary widely. There is no review or vetting process to ensure that minimum curricula are adhered to, similar to how the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has an approved list of approved online traffic school programs.

Public safety data indicates that over-service to intoxicated persons and service to minors is a prevalent issue in Savannah. In 2019 there were 89 citations of sales to minors. There were 88 cases of public drunkenness (Savannah Prevention Coalition & Beyond the Bell, 2020).

GOALS

- ☐ Ensure minimum standards are met for curricula of responsible beverage service (RBS) programs for server training.
- ☐ Provide servers with the educational tools they need to prevent over-service and service to minors.

BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

- ☐ **No city or state accreditation** for responsible beverage service programs.
- ☐ **Employers are responsible for paying for server training for staff.** Due to high staff turnover, there is an incentive to select the most cost-effective programs.
- ☐ Hospitality servers and staff feel unsupported by venue managers to cut off intoxicated patrons; they also report difficulty identifying fake IDs. “Normally it’s a real ID and it’s either expired or it’s clearly underage. A lot of people at the bars just check to see if it looks like a real ID.” (This insight was reported by Savannah Prevention Coalition and Beyond the Bell’s 2020 Alcohol Awareness Program Proposal.)

STAKEHOLDERS


Proposed Review Committee Members:



- ☐ Tourism Leadership Council
- ☐ Legal representation (lawyers)
- ☐ Health Department
- ☐ Business owners/operators/staff
- ☐ Server training providers
- ☐ Health department
- ☐ Savannah Prevention Coalition and Beyond the Bell
- ☐ Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Create a Review Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Create a Review Committee to set standards for the minimum curricula for a responsible beverage service (RBS) program.
Establish a Vetting Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Establish a Vetting Process for RBS programs with a list of approved programs for servers in Savannah.
Provide Educational/Marketing Collateral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Provide educational posters for venue operators to post for both patrons and servers. See marketing collateral already developed by Savannah Prevention Coalition and Beyond the Bell (2020).
Develop Compliance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Develop a compliance plan. Ideally, compliance would be monitored by the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) unit of the Savannah Police Department.
Consider the development of a Management Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Consider developing a Management Training program in addition to a server training program.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>CA Alcoholic Beverage Control</p>  <p>CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF Alcoholic Beverage Control</p>	<h3>Curriculum for Approved Server Training Providers</h3> <p>California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) requires that approved server training providers meet the requirements outlined in the California Code of Regulations Title 4 §§162-166.</p> <p><i>(Anecdotally, RHI's network of national server training providers concur that California has one of the best models for server training curriculum.)</i></p> <p>Content Required in the Curriculum Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▣ Social impact of alcohol (positive and negative impacts on the community)▣ Physiological impacts of alcohol on the body and signs of impairment▣ State laws and regulations relating to alcoholic beverage control and DUI▣ Intervention techniques to prevent the service or sale to underage persons or intoxicated persons▣ Management policies that support the prevention of service or sale to underage persons or intoxicated persons <p>Sections §167 and 168 outline how training providers can submit an accreditation application for approval by the department.</p> <p>Full Curriculum Link: https://www.abc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/RBS-Text-of-Approved-Regulations.pdf</p> <p>Downloadable List of Approved Providers: https://abcbiz.abc.ca.gov/trainingProviders</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Lincoln, NE</p> 	<p>Research: Server Training Most Effective when Supported by Management Training</p> <p>While server training is commonplace, a mandate for bar management training is not. Lincoln became the first city in the U.S. to require bar managers to be trained, based on research that suggested servers were more likely to apply intervention strategies if they were supported by managers.</p> <p>Mandatory Management Training Program: All bar managers are required to complete a training co-taught by law enforcement. The program helps build relationships with new venues and also fosters communication of community standards. (Curricula developed by RHI founder, Jim Peters, in the 1980s).</p> <p><i>Excerpt from the original research report below:</i></p> <p>Research Report: Server intervention to reduce alcohol-involved traffic crashes</p> <p>Research indicates that servers who have undergone server training are more likely to intervene when supported by management, who have also undergone management training,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Intervention training is directed at employees who serve alcohol. Nevertheless, the support of alcohol-service management, through its written and unwritten policies, is vital to responsible alcohol service. Unfortunately, server training is often viewed as a way of transferring responsibility from management to servers. This trend is reinforced by laws that limit management's liability for the consequences of irresponsible service if servers have been trained (McKnight, 1996).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CA Alcoholic Beverage Control</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Responsible Beverage Service Training Act</p>	<p>Alcohol Servers and Managers are Both Required to Get Certified</p> <p>Assembly Bill 1221 (2017) created the Responsible Beverage Service Training Program Act intending to reduce alcohol-related harm to local communities. The bill required the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to create the Responsible Beverage Service Training Program (RBSTP) to ensure on-premises alcohol servers and their managers are educated on the dangers of serving alcohol to minors and over-serving patrons.</p> <p>To meet the new training requirement, any on-premises alcohol server or manager must register in the RBS Portal, take training from an authorized RBS Training Provider, and pass the ABC Alcohol Server Certification exam within 30 days of completing the training. Servers and managers must be certified within 60 days of their first date of employment.</p> <p>ABC: https://www.abc.ca.gov/education/rbs/</p> <p>Assembly Bill 1221 (2017): https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1221</p> <p>Took Effect July 2022. Article on roll-out: https://sf.eater.com/2022/6/16/23171381/california-mandatory-alcohol-server-training-deadline</p>

ACTION 6: REINSTATE A SERVER REGISTRY

This action emerged from the Venue Safety Roundtable. Note: This action should be developed in tandem with Action 6: Develop an Accreditation Process for Server Training Programs

OVERVIEW

Create a central database of servers with verified information on servers' status of compliance with the accredited server training program. The database should indicate whether their education credential is current or lapsed, as well as whether they have had violations for service to minors. This will help venues make more informed decisions about the staff they hire as servers.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Venue operators have no way to access information on the history of a server – whether they have multiple violations for service to minors. If a server has been cited for a compliance violation, they may quit (or be fired) from one venue, only to be hired by another.

GOALS

- ☐ Help venue operators make informed decisions about hiring servers.
- ☐ **Identify the small percentage of people** who are chronically cited for over-service and/or service to minors.

BARRIERS

- ☐ Restaurant Association lobbied against the Bar Card system because it was the financial responsibility of the venue to pay the fee for servers' bar cards (\$25/person) to the Department of Revenue.
- ☐ **The Bar Card system** was overturned due to confusion and lack of consistency in compliance and enforcement.



STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ Restaurant Association
- ☐ Venue operators
- ☐ Server training providers
- ☐ Savannah Prevention Coalition
- ☐ Savannah Police's ABC unit

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Revisit Bar Card	☐ Revisit and update the previous Bar Card database system.
Determine Payment	☐ Shift responsibility for payment of a server training program from the venue to the server.
Identify Requirements	☐ TBD: whether a server should be required to have a criminal background check.
Determine Consequences	☐ Determine consequences for venues that hire staff who are not verified through the registry as being current and up-to-date with their RBS education requirement.
Create a Database	☐ Create a central database/registry of servers with the current status of their server training certification (current vs. expired) and whether any citations have been made for service to minors.
Re-examine consequences for server violations	☐ Re-examine appropriate consequences for the loss of a Bar Card (e.g. after a certain number of infractions).
Supplement Bar Card with venue procedures	☐ Good practice for venues may be to have servers sign a sheet of paper stating that they understand the city's rules and consequences for serving an underage person or over-serving a patron.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p style="text-align: center;">Lincoln, NE</p> 	<p>Research: Server Training Most Effective when Supported by Management Training</p> <p>While server training is commonplace, a mandate for bar management training is not. Lincoln became the first city in the U.S. to require bar managers to be trained, based on research that suggested servers were more likely to apply intervention strategies if they were supported by managers.</p> <p>Mandatory Management Training Program: All bar managers are required to complete a training co-taught by law enforcement. The program helps build relationships with new venues and also fosters communication of community standards. (Curricula developed by RHI founder, Jim Peters, in the 1980s).</p> <p><i>Excerpt from the original research report below:</i></p> <p>Research Report: Server intervention to reduce alcohol-involved traffic crashes</p> <p>Research indicates that servers who have undergone server training are more likely to intervene when supported by management, who have also undergone management training,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Intervention training is directed at employees who serve alcohol. Nevertheless, the support of alcohol-service management, through its written and unwritten policies, is vital to responsible alcohol service. Unfortunately, server training is often viewed as a way of transferring responsibility from management to servers. This trend is reinforced by laws that limit management's liability for the consequences of irresponsible service if servers have been trained (McKnight, 1996).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CA Alcoholic Beverage Control</p> 	<p>Alcohol Servers and Managers Register through an RBS Portal</p> <p>Any on-premises alcohol server or manager must register in the Responsible Beverage Server (RBS) Portal, take training from an authorized RBS Training Provider, and pass the ABC Alcohol Server Certification exam within 30 days of completing the training. Servers and managers must be certified within 60 days of their first date of employment.</p> <p>ABC: https://www.abc.ca.gov/education/rbs/</p> <p>Assembly Bill 1221 (2017): https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1221</p>

ACTION 7: CREATE A SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL VENUES

This action is based on RHI's best practice and in response to the challenge that surfaced in the women's focus group that there is no organized campaign to address sexual assault prevention in the social economy.

OVERVIEW

National and global campaigns already exist for sexual violence prevention in nightlife venues. A coalition of stakeholders in Savannah can adopt, customize and implement the campaigns that are deemed most effective for the local environment. Staff training on how to identify potential signs of predatory behavior and procedures for how to intervene, coupled with social marketing and education of the public, are key aspects of sexual violence prevention in nighttime social settings. Education on the concepts of consent and bystander intervention ensures a safer environment for all to socialize, especially women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other vulnerable populations.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Women ages 18-24 who are enrolled in college are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual violence (RAINN, 2022). Alcohol can be a significant contributing factor to sexual aggression and assault. Therefore, nightlife venues are ideal settings for prevention programs (Maryland Collaborative, 2016).

Drug-assisted sexual assault, more commonly known as “drink spiking” or “roofie-ing” is a significant nightlife safety concern, especially for female patrons and employees. Date rape drugs such as Gamma Hydroxy Butyrate (GHB), Rohypnol, and ketamine are depressants that have no color, odor, or taste, and can therefore be added to drinks without the knowledge of the victim. Side effects include sleepiness, forgetfulness, and amnesia (Casarella & WebMD, 2022).

In 2021, momentum galvanized in Savannah on sexual assault prevention in colleges and universities, including Savannah State University, Savannah College of Art and Design, and Georgia Southern University (Statesboro). Alderman Kurtis Purtee clearly established alcohol and sexual violence: “ ‘We know that at least 47 percent of college students’ sexual assaults are associated with alcohol use,’ Purtee said. ‘We know that there are several institutions of higher education within our community and we know that Savannah is a city that is abundant with alcohol.’” (Rea, 2021).

While the concerted effort to prevent sexual violence of students is an important first step, there is a broader need for protecting all patrons of social venues—including, but not limited to the student population.

Savannah’s social economy is lacking in an organized approach to preventing sexual violence. While a bathroom poster on “angel shots” was observed in one venue’s bathroom, it did not appear that the campaign was prevalent in all nighttime social venues. Participants of a women’s focus group were aware of no staff training programs, educational campaigns, or marketing for social venues on the topic of preventing sexual violence.

A formalized Savannah Nightlife Association can help facilitate standardized training for servers to identify potential sexual predators and a corresponding educational and marketing campaign to move forward with this approach (See Vibrancy Action 1: Revive and Sustain a Savannah Nightlife Association).

GOALS

- Raise public awareness of the need for sexual violence prevention** in nightlife environments.
- Educate venue ownership, management, and staff** about how to prevent sexual violence.
- Educate bystanders on how to intervene** in situations of sexual violence in social venues.
- Change social norms around** sexual violence in nightlife settings.

BARRIERS

- Gap in standards for security training programs’ curricula**
- Gap in collaboration of social venues in an association**
- Accurate data is difficult to obtain** as many incidents of sexual violence are not reported. Thus analysis of a campaign’s efficacy is difficult to prove.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ❑ Savannah nightlife venues
- ❑ **Kombative Academy of Traditional Martial Arts:** Offers women’s self-defense classes. Featured on bar poster (see below)
- ❑ **Mary’s Place: Advocacy, Prevention, and Sexual Assault Center of the Coastal Empire**
- ❑ **United Way’s Rape Crisis Center:** Crisis intervention programs include SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) and SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners)

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Form an Advisory Group on Sexual Violence Prevention in Social Venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Identify and engage relevant stakeholders representing women’s health, sexual assault response, crisis advocacy, universities, and downtown. ❑ Discuss the goals of the project. ❑ Gather baseline data for if/when sexual violence has been reported associated with a social venue.
Review Educational Training and Campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Review existing campaigns in Des Moines that can be customized for nightlife environments. ❑ Review global models for campaigns on sexual violence in social venues.
Develop Messaging and Graphic Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Engage the target audience (young adults 18-24) in crafting messaging and imagery that resonates with them. ❑ <i>See below for suggestions for an effective campaign.</i>
Roll Out Marketing and Education Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develop and distribute educational materials for social venues to post in key locations e.g. bathrooms, dance floors ❑ Develop and launch social media messaging campaign with handles, hashtags, etc.
Track Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Analyze metrics of how widely shared social media messaging is. ❑ Review hospital admissions data. ❑ Gather anecdotal reports from patrons.

Bathroom Poster Observed in Savannah



Suggestions for an Effective Campaign on Sexual Violence Prevention

- ▣ **Messages are short, simple, and direct.** They use the language that your target age group uses and imagery that will resonate with them.
- ▣ **Don't focus on how and what women need to do to keep themselves safe.** This can be interpreted as victim blaming. Besides, studies show that this traditional approach to sexual assault messaging doesn't work.
- ▣ **Shift the focus to educate the perpetrator and the entire community about consent** and establish new social norms regarding sexual behavior.
- ▣ **Educate bystanders** (peers, friends, strangers) on what they can do if they see sexual aggression taking place and establish intervention as a new social norm.
- ▣ **Offer tips and training to nightlife venues** about how they can play an active role in monitoring for and proactively addressing sexual assault in their establishment to provide a safe space for their patrons.
- ▣ **Engage the entire community of stakeholders as partners and advocates.** This can include college students, women's health and rape crisis centers, police, and owners/managers of nightlife venues.



MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Sociable City Guide for College Communities</p> 	<p>This Sociable City Guide for College Communities is an interactive e-learning curriculum with case studies, news reports, and innovative strategies.</p> <p>Learn about cutting-edge Sexual Assault Prevention Campaigns from around the world to train staff, encourage and empower bystanders to intervene with predators, and ultimately help change social norms for appropriate behavior.</p> <p>About the Guide: https://www.sociablecity.org/sociable-city-resources/sociable-city-guide-for-college-communities-unique-challenges-in-nightlife</p> <p>Access E-Curriculum to view examples of Sexual Violence Campaigns for Nightlife: https://rise.articulate.com/share/oBK-S_00uFh4xd0n</p>
<p>Ask for Angela (Code Word Campaign)</p> 	<p>A UK-based consumer-facing campaign that allows people who feel like they are in an unsafe situation to ask for help using the “Angela” code word. This informs staff of their need for assistance and allows patrons to access discreet help. Bar staff may call a taxi or help to extract the patron out of their situation. Safer Sounds partners with the Metropolitan Police Service, the Mayor of London, the City of London Police, London Councils, and venues across London to help people enjoy safer nights out in public spaces.</p> <p>https://www.saferounds.org.uk/wave</p> <p>https://www.areyouok.co.uk/im-a-professional/campaign-materials/ask-for-angela/</p>
<p>Angel Shots (Code Word Campaign)</p> 	<p>A U.S.-based code word campaign that evolved out of the success of the UK’s Ask for Angela campaign.</p> <p>Angel Shot Straight Up/Neat is code for, “I need an escort to my car.”</p> <p>Angel Shot on Ice/on the Rocks is code for, “Please call a taxi/Uber/Lyft for me.”</p> <p>Angel Shot with a Twist/Lemon/Lime is code for, “I am in immediate danger. Please call the police.”</p> <p>https://www.webstaurantstore.com/blog/4096/what-is-an-angel-shot.html</p> <p>https://www.boredpanda.com/angel-shot-bartender-explanation/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic</p>
<p>Good Night Out (Poster and Training)</p> 	<p>The UK-based Good Night Out initiative provides a poster campaign and specialist training to nightlife venues after they have taken a pledge declaring their commitment to helping keep patrons safe. Venues must also dedicate part of their weekly staff meetings to discussing the initiative and any issues that have arisen. Participating venues are listed on the official website.</p> <p>https://goodnightoutcampaign.org/</p>
<p>Safe Bars</p> 	<p>Training and Certification</p> <p>Based in North America, Safe Bars trains and certifies bars, restaurants, breweries, and other alcohol-industry venues in sexual violence prevention. Safe Bars have certified more than 40 establishments in Washington, DC, and helped set up Safe Bars teams in 25 cities, towns, and counties (and several breweries). The curriculum includes the following: teaches bar staff how to recognize inappropriate sexual behavior; gives bar staff the skills to respond; and shares safety messages that encourage respect.</p>



ACTIONS TO ENHANCE VIBRANCY IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

ACTION 1: REVIVE AND SUSTAIN A SAVANNAH NIGHTLIFE ASSOCIATION

This action emerged from the Social Venues roundtable.

OVERVIEW

There is momentum to revive the now-defunct Licensed Beverage Association. Initial steps are already underway to collect contact information for venue owners and managers, many of whom are in the Facebook messenger group for venues. There is interest in hiring a lobbyist at the city and state levels to advocate on behalf of industry priorities determined by the association. The association can organize group attendance at relevant Council meetings and also determine priority “requests” such as monthly reports of Drink Tax funds. Long-term steps may include an operations guide and organized training. Formalizing a group will also help provide a way for the city to coordinate with the industry on new initiatives and services to benefit the industry.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Nighttime social venues are often independent entrepreneurs who may operate in isolation and rarely connect but share many of the same concerns and challenges. When safety incidents affect one venue, it negatively impacts all businesses. Venues “sink or swim” together and therefore need to formalize cooperation and collaboration.

Several different groups want to better connect with the hospitality industry but don’t know how given the lack of organization. The city and residents both find it difficult to communicate with members of the industry.

The past Licensed Beverage Association fell apart for a variety of reasons. Chief among them was volunteer burnout, frustration over some businesses participating but not all, etc. There is currently a Facebook messenger group that connects venue staff in multiple locations (downtown, Starland, etc.) to alert other venue staff about compliance inspections and safety incidents.

Past Attempts

There was a past organization called the Licensed Beverage Association (operated between approx. 1990s-early 2000s) and a second iteration more recently, but neither effort was sustained.

GOALS

- ▣ **Raise awareness of the social, cultural, and economic contributions** of nightlife and the social economy to counter the existing perception that businesses are more nuisance than an asset.
- ▣ **High standards for venue operation** and safety of both employees and patrons.
- ▣ A unified voice to advocate for changes in policy and compliance.
- ▣ Self-regulation, peer mentorship, and education before enforcement action.
- ▣ **Coordination and cooperation** of general managers and security staff.
- ▣ Sharing of resources.
- ▣ Increase professionalization of the industry.

BARRIERS

- ▣ **Lack of organization:** Gathering contact information for nightlife venue operators can be difficult.
- ▣ **Crisis-orientation:** Nightlife associations typically are most active during a crisis, then dissolve after.
- ▣ **Burnout and exhaustion** due to lack of dedicated staff.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ▣ Current venue operators in different districts.

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Compile Stakeholders to Invite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify and compile contact info for venue operators (owners, managers). <i>Note: Already underway per meeting on 10/25/2022</i> ☐ Develop an excel with contacts.
Update Facebook Messenger Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Confirm invitees are included in the existing Facebook Messenger group.
Formalize the Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Revisit the past association, Licensed Beverage Association, to update vs. recreate the wheel. ☐ Develop a charter. ☐ Identify leadership: president, secretary, board of directors, etc. ☐ Get established as a non-profit or trade association. ☐ Determine fees and collection mechanism.
Schedule Regular Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Schedule monthly or quarterly meetings to discuss common challenges and concerns and for police to explain the current deployment model. Initiate exchange of cell phone numbers between venue security and police officers deployed downtown at night.
Hire a Lobbyist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify and hire a lobbyist at the city and state levels to advocate on behalf of industry priorities determined by the nightlife association. ☐ Venue operators shared a cost estimate of \$75,000/year retainer for local and state representation. This position can be modeled after the city's restaurant association lobbyist, who attends all city council meetings.
Attend Key Council Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Attend key council meetings as a group when issues are relevant to the industry.
Determine a List of Requests for the Lobbyist (and/or association to advocate for)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Ideas for "Asks" Include: ☐ A monthly report of money generated by the Drink Tax (3% sales tax on each drink containing beverage alcohol). It was also requested to receive a report on how the money is used (note: revenue currently goes into the general fund, so tracking may be difficult). ☐ Determine a specific request for a portion/percentage of the Drink Tax to be earmarked for a program, initiative, etc. that is a priority for safety and vibrancy in the social economy. ☐ Police dedicated to walking the beat in social districts.
Schedule Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Create a regular schedule for collaborative training. ☐ Active shooter training ☐ Overdose prevention (Use of Narcan to reverse an overdose by Fentanyl) ☐ Sexual violence prevention
Engage Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Create mechanisms to regularly meet with residents.
Create a best practices guide outlining self-regulation standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Review and adapt content already created on Nightlife Venue Best Practice Guides.

Stakeholders

- ☐ Office of Nightlife
- ☐ Venue operators (owners)
- ☐ Past president of GA Craft Brewers Association (volunteered to share strategies)
- ☐ Savannah Riverfront Association

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>New York City Hospitality Association</p> 	<p>“The New York City Hospitality Alliance (The Alliance) is a not-for-profit association founded in 2012 to represent and serve restaurant and nightlife establishments throughout the five boroughs. Home to more than 24,000 eating and drinking establishments, and employing more than a quarter of a million people, our industry is vital to the economic foundation and social fabric of New York City.</p> <p>The Alliance bridges the gap between the hospitality industry, the government, and the press. We advocate for a fair and equitable regulatory environment that removes barriers to entrepreneurship and job creation. We seek to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens, streamline the permit and licensing process, cut the red tape, and represent the industry’s perspective on proposed laws, regulations, trends, and other matters impacting restaurant and nightlife establishments.</p> <p>Members of The Alliance gain exclusive access to operational guidance; up-to-date information on the ever-changing regulations and trends; invites to industry-only training, educational and social events; and a suite of customized services to help their businesses save time and money.</p> <p>Restaurant and nightlife establishments that join the New York City Hospitality Alliance become part of our tight-knit community and ensure our industry is represented and served.”</p> <p>https://www.thenycalliance.org/</p>
<p>Nightlife Venue Best Practice Guides</p> 	<p>RHI’s Compilation of Model Practices</p> <p>Nightlife venues are unique environments with distinct safety and security needs. Cities throughout North America identified the lack of a “best practices handbook” and started creating them. These guides represent a collaborative effort to document operational guidelines to help business owners and operators run safe bars, lounges, and nightclubs.</p> <p>Topics include how to prevent underage drinking, over consumption of alcohol, drug sales, violence, prostitution, and sex offenses. Some guides also contain tips on how to respond to a serious criminal incident and counterterrorism preparedness.</p> <p>RHI has compiled nearly a dozen examples from cities including New York City, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, DC, Boston, and Providence.</p> <p>https://www.sociablecity.org/media/resources/venue-guides</p>

ACTION 2: CREATE NIGHTTIME RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

This action emerged from meetings with neighborhood activists and leaders, especially those located outside of downtown. The challenge of the presence of youth downtown who engage in delinquent behavior was identified in multiple different stakeholder groups, including venue operators, public safety, etc.

OVERVIEW

Youth (under 21) are too young to enter licensed premises but are driven by the biological need to socialize. They too deserve access to age-appropriate opportunities to connect with friends and peers and to learn how to do so safely. Featuring guest speakers who are influencers in film, sports, and gaming, as well as dance-a-thons, movie nights, etc. are ways to attract youth. Ideally, youth will be involved in the planning and marketing of events oriented to them to ensure ownership.

If not feasible as a year-round business model, then events, pop-ups, and temporary activations may be a more viable route. Ignoring this population will only perpetuate negative impacts on the social economy, where they hang out—and in some cases, act up and commit crimes—in public space downtown. Instead of trying to enforce curfews or create barriers to their presence, provide healthy alternatives. Investing in this population—especially youth of color from neighborhoods with limited resources—will pay dividends for the future of the city of Savannah and add another layer of safety to the social economy.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Youth congregating downtown to socialize at night, attracted by the lively street party atmosphere. Few alternatives exist for nighttime socializing. Swimming pools were closed in the summer of 2021 due to a lack of lifeguards; past options like roller skate parks, basketball, etc. no longer exist. Past models from the 1990s and early 2000s for teen socializing in the evenings e.g. dance nights, bowling, etc. no longer exist.

So, they create their own social gatherings in the public squares downtown. Some are drinking in public and most alarmingly, engaging in delinquent behavior downtown (e.g. car break-ins of social venue staff). Although they are not able to enter licensed premises, they are having a direct impact on the social economy and taking up police resources.

Some youths have brought guns downtown, which has had a direct impact on the social economy. On two consecutive weekends around the Fourth of July 2022, a 14 and 15-year-old had an altercation in Ellis Square, resulting in shots fired. This resulted in a lockdown and evacuation of social venue patronage.

A curfew exists for anyone 16 and under 11 pm on weekdays and midnight on weekends (Davis, 2016). However, compliance does not seem to be prevalent downtown. Youth cannot be “policed out”—there aren’t enough officers, nor are there adequate facilities to hold them if picked up. As Alderman Julian Miller explained in 2016:

“ ‘We don’t have a place to take juveniles who are found violating the law at this point,’ explained Alderman Julian Miller. ‘So instead we are creating havoc for everyone involved by making an officer ride around the entire city with a juvenile they cant unload or take someplace for guidance.’ ”

A lot of the crimes we are seeing now are being committed by teenagers.... ‘It’s not simply an enforcement situation, it’s a situation where we will need to help guide our future population and we have a lot of people who need that guidance.’ ” (Davis, 2016).

Ignoring this population is no longer an option.

In a 2018 study titled, *Boredom and Social Deviant Behavior: An Empirical Study*, individuals with a “propensity for boredom... could degenerate into social isolation activities and deviance activities” (Malizia, 2018). Providing youth with stimulating, age-appropriate alternatives is a way to curb boredom, therefore reducing the propensity for anti-social, deviant, and potentially criminal activities.

A total of 233 arrests were made downtown in 2021 and 2022 for juveniles between 9 and 18 years old, with the most common ages between 15-18. The most common incident type included larceny (entering auto), auto theft, and disorderly conduct. (See raw data in Appendix VI: Juvenile Arrests in the Northwest Precinct).

GOALS

- ❑ **Provide age-appropriate opportunities** that are appealing to youth for recreation and socializing. (Parks and Recreation programs are perceived to be boring.)
- ❑ **Reduce the incidence of youth** involved in crime downtown, especially past curfew.
- ❑ **Better promote existing options to a broader network of neighborhoods**

Barriers

- ❑ **Gap in current social options for youth.** (In the 2000s, options existed like Teen dance nights, bowling, skating rink, billiards, etc.). Downtown used to be 18 to go in, 21 to drink.
- ❑ **Information on current social options for youth** (e.g. Movie Nights) is not reaching a widespread audience.
- ❑ **Even if social options are activated,** availability and cost of transportation will be a factor in access.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ❑ **City's DEI Director**
- ❑ **Department of Neighborhood Services'** neighborhood coordinators should take the lead.
- ❑ **Once Program**
- ❑ **Savannah Impact:** reintegrates incarcerated people into the community.
- ❑ **Pals Program:** Youth football league for high-risk youth.
- ❑ **100 Black Men (mentors)**
- ❑ **Savannah Youth Council** and Ambassadors.
- ❑ **Parent University**
- ❑ **First Center Pride Center** (for connecting LGBTQ+ youth)
- ❑ **Boys and Girls Club**
- ❑ **Jack and Jill**

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Better Outreach about Existing Opportunities for Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Provide a calendar of upcoming events to distribute to neighborhoods. ❑ Better marketing and outreach to neighborhoods of social options. Make announcements through social media platforms the intended audience uses- Tik Tok, and Instagram. Connect with neighborhood presidents.
Organize Youth to Ask Them What they Want	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Go directly to the target market – youth – to find out what they're interested in. ❑ Involve youth in design and planning. Involve them in promotional materials and social media marketing.
Create new Opportunities for Youth Socializing	<p>Ideas include (for pop-ups, events, temporary activations, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Youth dance night at the Civic Center. (Community centers may be too small.) ❑ Movie nights. ❑ Roller skating at MLK arena. ❑ Guest speakers on influencers whom youth are interested in e.g. rap musicians who can educate youth on the business side of music. ❑ Twitch seminar on how to start your own Twitch channel ❑ Gaming seminar on how to become a pro-gamer ❑ Pro-basektball player ❑ Film industry education ❑ Dance-a-thons
Include Youth Recreation Opportunities as part of negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Include a requirement for say, EnMarket Center, to teach youth lessons e.g. ice skating

ACTION 3: ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES WITH PUBLIC ART

This action emerged from the Public Space roundtable.

OVERVIEW

Public art can activate public spaces in strategic locations, especially at night. Whether temporary pop-ups or permanent displays of art, there is an opportunity to display 2D art, and sculpture and use light as art. Squares and empty/vacant spaces such as parking lots can be used. The formation of an Arts Committee can help organize the effort and ensure diverse members of the community are included. Live art classes in the park can also provide a nighttime recreation activity for youth and their families.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Public spaces are lacking in public art. Art is important to the local culture and community, given the presence of numerous local artists. The presence of Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) is an under-utilized resource.

Public art has typically been done by private individuals who are passionate about art, not because of government coordination, approval, or support.

There is precedent during Book Fest for books to be out in a tent with an officer monitoring the display.

GOALS

- ☐ Use public art to activate public spaces
- ☐ Enhance perceptions of safety at night by lighting up public art in strategic locations.
- ☐ Change negative perceptions of certain squares.
- ☐ Engage youth and diverse communities through art.

BARRIERS

- ☐ Historic preservation approval for mural art on walls or buildings is difficult. Plus, there is limited space to put murals on.
- ☐ No central government department is oriented to art in the city.
- ☐ Concern about vandalism and protection of installations at night.



STAKEHOLDERS

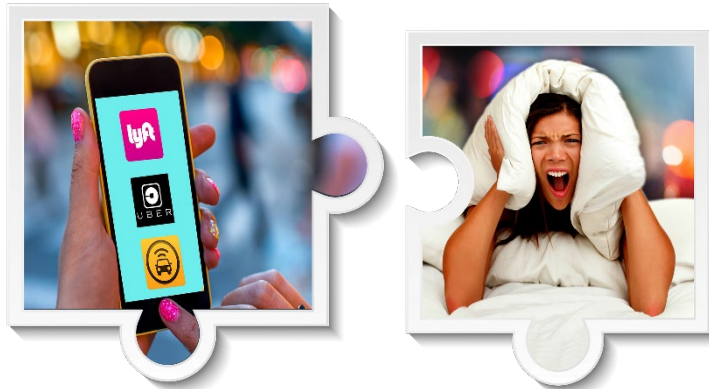
- ☐ Friends of African American Arts (FAAA)
- ☐ SCAD
- ☐ Cultural Arts Center
- ☐ Gretch
- ☐ Resident groups

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Form an Art and Music Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Engage city officials with a vision, then form an Arts and Culture Committee ☐ Identify stakeholders and the artist community. ☐ Meet with SCAD and other arts organizations.
Identify Funding Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Research whether city funds exist in the city budget for art. ☐ Do fundraising to compensate artists.
Identify locations	<p>Potential options discussed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Eastern Wharf green space ☐ Orleans Square ☐ Pulaski Square ☐ Ellis Square (pro: public bathrooms available; security guard hours will be extended) ☐ Forsyth Park (the north side is the darkest) ☐ Empty parking lots set for development
Identify types of art installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify whether art would be permanent or pop-ups. ☐ Forms of art: sculptures, light as art, 2D art (paintings, murals)
Identify opportunities to engage youth and diverse artists in making art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Explore art classes in the park to get parents and kids to do art together. ☐ Art could serve as a diversionary evening option for youth.
Identify ways to safeguard public art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Explore ideas on how to protect art from vandalism e.g. barriers, security guards, lights, SCAD security team, etc.
Tap into Starland's Art Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Tap into Starland's Art Walk (recently revived) by featuring art at Forsyth Park, where the art walk begins. Explore whether the art walk could be expanded to other parts of the city.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Savannah, GA Eastern Wharf</p> 	<p>Art To Be Included in the 2023 Budget</p> <p>Art will reportedly be added to the budget for the Savannah Stopover Festival on the river.</p> <p>https://easternwharfsavannah.com/</p>
<p>Savannah, GA Office of Arts and Culture</p>  <p>ARTS & CULTURAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM</p>	<p>Art Initiatives</p> <p>The Arts and Culture Enrichment program (ACE) is intended to integrate arts, culture, heritage, design, and other creative disciplines as strategies that strengthen the City of Savannah's economic, physical, and social vitality. Arts and Culture are important contributors to the vibrancy of Savannah's neighborhoods, and the City of Savannah supports opportunities for art and culture to enhance and enrich the quality of life for Savannah residents and guests.</p> <p>https://www.savannahga.gov/2720/Arts-Culture-Enrichment-Program</p>



ACTIONS TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

ACTION 1: IMPROVE THE 311 SYSTEM AS A RESOURCE FOR RESIDENTS, NOT TOURISTS

This action emerged from the Quality of Life roundtable and meetings with neighborhood association leaders and representatives.

OVERVIEW

The 311 system needs more operators, after-hours service, and separation from visitor-related information. This critical service, heralded as a major achievement for residents in 2020 when the app was released, requires upgrades to reflect current resident needs (Komanecy, 2020). Doubling the number of operators and providing after-hours service (at least until 10 or 11 pm) with a live operator are among the chief requests by residents both downtown and located outside downtown. Providing an alternative phone number for visitors seeking tourism-related information is also a critical step to improving access by residents.

NEEDS STATEMENT

City government vehicles promote the use of 311 to spread awareness of this service, but there is a perception that it does not deliver on the promise. For a population of 150,000 in the metro area plus tourists, there are only 4 operators. 311 operators are available just Mondays-Fridays from 8 am-5 pm.

After-hours calls or calls on weekends are directed to the “Pump room.” Calls are rerouted to someone in the station who is on call for things like sewage leaks and hydrants going off. There is only a recording after-hours with an occasional live operator for emergencies. There are multiple reasons that residents may want to log a sound complaint, or other disturbance during the evening hours, and this is not possible. Both the City and social venue operators would be greatly served by the information gathered by a 311 service, even if it’s not possible to respond in real-time.

There is a perception that some neighborhoods are prioritized for 311 service requests over others, with different response times. Downtown is perceived to be prioritized over other neighborhoods.

Follow-through: The 311 system works well for straight forward requests (e.g. potholes) but not for concerns during evening hours. More complicated issues take time to resolve. Residents are frustrated by the need to follow up on reference numbers versus an automated system to inform them of the status of their requests.

This typically resident amenity is being overtaken by tourists seeking information. Tourists are using the 311 system for visitor information and thereby delaying residents’ access to live operators. Project participants reported that tourists call 311 because it is promoted as an “information line” about how to get places and where to go. Some operators, embodying southern hospitality, may spend 10 to 15 minutes on the phone directing visitors on how to get to attractions. However, 311 should be primarily used by residents to report issues with city service or concerns regarding businesses in the city limits.

GOALS

- ▣ **Achieve timelier response** for city service delivery to residents
- ▣ **Address gaps in accessibility of city departments** after hours (after 5:00 p.m.)
- ▣ **Separate tourism duties from 311** to free up calls and better serve residents.
- ▣ **Educate tourists and residents** about what 311 should be used for.

BARRIERS

- ▣ **Limited staff with limited (daytime) hours**
- ▣ **No after-hours service:** goes to the Pump room.



STAKEHOLDERS

- ▣ 311 Department
- ▣ Office of Film, Events Tourism
- ▣ All city departments that conduct service delivery to citizens (to train 311 operators)

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Request Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Initiate a service enhancement request to the general fund for additional operators and after-service hours.
Request Enhanced Training for Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Facilitate training of operators on how to politely disengage people they're not supposed to be helping e.g. redirect visitors to a visitor information line. □ All city departments that conduct any type of service delivery to citizens should provide information on services provided for 311 operators to be better prepared to answer citizen questions.
Compile Data on the Current 311 System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Data is needed to analyze the current use of the 311 system and potentially dispel (or potentially, confirm) misperceptions. □ Ask 311 operators to compile data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The types of calls they receive. ○ How many / what % of calls are from visitors seeking visitor info? ○ What's the turnaround time? Is there variation by neighborhood? □ Clarify the methodology for assigning service requests.
Update educational materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Upgrade educational materials to help direct residents to the appropriate department for different types of service requests (e.g. tree down, potholes, etc.) □ A webpage already exists, which can be updated: https://www.savannahga.gov/3039/311
Identify and Promote Alternative Information Sources for Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Explore the creation of a mobile app for Visit Savannah □ Create an alternative phone number (a "visitor information line") for tourists seeking visitor information with a live operator. Determine who would staff this phone line. □ Create a QR code for visitors on flyers and hotel information. <p><i>Note: the accomplishment of Planning for People Action 2: Revive an Ambassador Program can also assist with providing in-person wayfinding help to visitors.</i></p>

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>San Francisco, CA</p> 	<p>311 System</p> <p>The City of San Francisco has a robust 311 system that operates with staff and uses automated systems that allow residents to make a request and track progress via a service request number. The system can be used by city agencies to request reports regularly. Agencies can also receive data regarding how many cases were assigned to an agency, how long they have been open, and how quickly they are resolved. There is also a desktop and mobile app that allows users to add photographs, etc.</p> <p>https://sf311.org/</p>
<p>Los Angeles, CA</p> 	<p>My311</p> <p>Similar to San Francisco, Los Angeles' 311 system serves millions of people with over 1,500 types of city service information. They also have a useful mobile app and a reputation for a quick turn-around of service requests.</p> <p>https://lacity.gov/myla311</p>

ACTION 2: REVIVE AN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

This action emerged from a special Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) session held for RHI staff, a meeting with the mayor's chief of staff, as well as the Quality of Life Roundtable.

OVERVIEW

The time is ripe to revive an ambassador program³. Ambassadors on the street can provide more eyes on the street with a friendly, customer service-oriented presence. They can play a critical role in monitoring quality-of-life issues and potential public safety risks before they escalate. Knowledgeable about the city and where to access various services and amenities, they can be a beneficial resource for visitors and tourists. They can also assist police in proactive monitoring, as well as provide a layer of accountability and oversight over trash and litter, as well as communicate guidelines to the unsheltered, and help connect individuals with mental illness with resources. Ambassadors could also potentially serve as a neutral entity to initiate calls for service on venues' behalf related to unsheltered in the vicinity. The consistent presence of ambassadors can restore a sense of order and counter perceptions of a permissive environment downtown.

NEEDS STATEMENT

There are not enough police to provide the level of proactive monitoring needed for Savannah's downtown economy, especially at night. Further, quality of life issues (that can escalate or contribute to an unsafe environment) doesn't strictly fall under the purview of the police. Ambassadors can provide a friendly alternative—a civilian safety presence.

Venue operators expressed concern about calling the police about issues on the street (e.g. unsheltered, transients, mental health issues, disorderly conduct) because of fears that the call will count against their record at license renewal.

Issues of mental illness and substance use associated with the unsheltered and transient communities was a chief concern expressed by many participants in this process. Yet there is no after-hours (i.e. after 5:00 p.m.) contact for social services available unless they are having a medical emergency. Ambassadors can help connect calls to appropriate services.

GOALS

- **Provide a friendly, customer service presence** in key social clusters.
- **Serve as an extra set of eyes and ears** for public safety departments to alleviate the burden on police.
- **De-escalate situations** before the need for public safety assistance.
- **Connect visitors** with the information they seek.
- **Provide another layer of accountability and oversight** for quality-of-life challenges.

BARRIERS

- **The past Office of Tourism and Ambassadorship** was dismantled in a previous administration.
- **No Business Improvement District** in the city (the typical funding source for Clean and Safe Teams, which provide ambassador services).
- **Funding source** for ambassadors and more 311 operators to handle an anticipated increase in reports from ambassadors

STAKEHOLDERS

- Office of Tourism and Events
- Savannah Downtown Business Association
- Savannah Downtown Neighbors Association (DNA)

³ Previously housed within the city's Tourism and Ambassadorship Department, a pilot ran between 2016-2017.

IMPLEMENTATION

(See Appendix VIII: Ambassador Program Revival Guidelines for detailed suggestions submitted by a participant of this process and a former Savannah ambassador.)

Task	Steps
Re-initiate a Pilot Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Find a new home for a revived ambassador program. ▣ Explore a sustainable funding source e.g. a half-cent (\$0.005) sales tax increase; reapportion part of the hotel/motel tax for visitor services
Identify Staffing and Shifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Request a team of 6-8 people so ambassadors can work in pairs. ▣ Hire a trainer/supervisor to be part of the ambassador team. ▣ Shift schedule: Wed-Sun 10 am-7 pm (or later). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefing from police ○ The last hour should be dedicated to a summary write-up. ▣ Identify a central location for a locker, training, and breaks. ▣ Create a uniform with a new logo.
Develop Training and Guidelines for Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Develop a guideline for duties regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact 311 regarding stormwater, property maintenance, etc. ○ Visitors needing help ○ Coordinate with Sanitation Services to notify them of trash receptacles that need to be emptied. ○ Collaborate with Social Services to connect the unsheltered with resources. ▣ Host workshops and training for skill sets.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

Ambassadors are typically integrated into a Clean and Safe Team funded by Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). They are often considered a critical component for monitoring downtown social clusters.

<p style="text-align: center;">Bloomington, IN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Charles Culp After Hours Ambassador City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources Department</p>	<p>Charles Culp: After Hours Ambassador</p> <p>Downtown Kirkwood is the main entertainment destination in the City of Bloomington.</p> <p>He is the eyes and ears of downtown at night to monitor the quality of life and public safety. On Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, he works 4:00 p.m. to midnight (Sept-May, when college is in session) and 2:30-10:30 p.m. (June-August, when college is out). He documents quality-of-life issues such as overflowing trash cans, uneven pavement, etc., and sends fix-it requests to the appropriate department. He checks in with nightlife venue staff to see how things are going and helps to remind nightlife patrons (mostly college students) to be respectful e.g. don't litter your e-scooter on the sidewalk.</p> <p>He serves as a liaison between government departments and hospitality businesses and other stakeholders downtown. He works 9 am-5 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the office to assist with department projects and help connect the department with key stakeholders downtown (e.g. he helped liaise with food truck operators for a food truck event). He also attends community networking meetings.</p> <p>Communication, de-escalation, and providing a friendly, customer service-oriented approach are key to his position. He helps to deescalate conflicts with verbal communication when he encounters conflicts on the street. Key to his role is that he is not a sworn officer; instead, his role is that of conveying resources to diverse populations. His education background helps him share resources and teach in the "classroom of life" – out on the street.</p> <p>He has gained the trust of police and hospitality business operators alike. One of his first tasks was to hand out his business card to all venue security and staff. He has a direct line of communication with the police's night lieutenant for non-emergency questions. He initiates calls to police dispatch in the event of a medical emergency.</p> <p>About 50% of his role is dedicated to helping to make connections with unsheltered and transient populations. He helps distribute a social services resource guide and facilitates mediation of disputes between unsheltered and downtown businesses.</p> <p>Success has been measured by a reduction in calls for police service, as well as anecdotal reports of trust from the business community. After a one-year pilot of his position, the department plans to hire two additional staff members to comprise a team of three.</p>
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Milwaukee, WI



Public Service Ambassadors

Milwaukee Downtown BID 21 runs a program for Public Service Ambassadors (PSAs). Their goal is “to keep downtown Milwaukee clean, safe, and friendly.” They serve as an “extra set of eyes and ears for Milwaukee’s police and fire departments.” As of December 2022, about 21 ambassadors work 580 hours per week. They operate from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm on weekdays and 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekends.

“Weather permitting, Milwaukee Downtown also employs a PSA bike patrol to heighten visibility. On top of contributing to safety, this amiable crew is on the front lines welcoming visitors daily. Need suggestions on things to do? How about where to stay or where to dine? Just track down a PSA. Equipped with informational brochures and a world of downtown knowledge, the PSAs always have a pulse on what’s happening.”

<https://www.milwaukeedowntown.com/bid-basics/core-programs/public-service-ambassadors>

Atlanta, GA



Ambassador Program

The Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID) runs an ambassador program, which is intended to enhance the public safety environment Downtown by monitoring streets and common areas in the ADID’s 220 blocks.

Ambassadors also monitor the Downtown surveillance cameras.

Off-duty Atlanta Police are hired to assist the Ambassadors with their duties and provide additional selective enforcement on a 24-hour basis. The Ambassador Force also provides a cleaning component to the program, keeping the sidewalks and trash containers clean and free of trash and debris. Patrol hours are currently 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. Monday – Sunday.

<https://www.atlantadowntown.com/adid/areas-of-focus/ambassador-force>

Reno, NV



Ambassador Program

The Downtown Reno Partnership contacts Streetplus to deploy Ambassadors throughout the downtown area. They patrol in blue and black uniforms, some on Segways and bikes. “Their job is to create a cleaner, safer, friendlier environment for visitors and residents.” They are charged with four main tasks:

“Hospitality: The Ambassadors engage with visitors and tourists who need help finding activities, directions, or information about downtown Reno. They will also add an additional layer of help during large downtown events.

Social Outreach: Ambassadors help direct people to supportive services, while also engaging with those chronically sleeping on private property.

Safety: Ambassadors patrol the district and communicate with police to help triage situations to reduce nuisance calls so police can focus on larger issues. Ambassadors offer personal escorts for people who feel uncomfortable walking from place to place.

Cleaning: Ambassadors work with City of Reno Code Enforcement and Public Works to clean up graffiti, litter, weeds, and snow.”

<https://downtownreno.org/our-mission/ambassadors/>

ACTION 3: ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS

This action emerged from both the Quality of Life roundtable and a special Downtown Neighborhood Association session held for RHI staff.

OVERVIEW

Short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) through companies like Airbnb and VRBO provide a popular alternative to hotels for visitors, families, and groups (e.g. bachelorette parties). Dedicated staffing and nighttime enforcement by the Code Compliance department is needed to curb impacts to residents, including disorderly parties, sound disturbances, and parking from multiple cars. Applying lessons learned from other cities with strict guidelines for STVR operation will be critical to ensure a higher quality of life for residents. There is also a need to anticipate the potential conversion of long-term housing in neighborhoods located near EnMarket Arena and other emerging social clusters to preserve these neighborhoods and their sense of community.

Rules In Place Working Well

Owner-occupied parcels are exempt from the 20% cap in the Downtown and Victorian districts. In Starland, there are fewer STVRs because the owner must occupy the unit and have extra space to rent (e.g. Additional dwelling unit or a top/bottom duplex). (City of Savannah, 2023, STVR).

NEEDS STATEMENT

Impacts

Pre-partying and after-partying activities may take place in STVRs before, after, or instead of going out to social venues. STVRs can generate negative impacts on residents, including disorderly parties, sound disturbances, and parking from multiple cars that take up limited parking in residential neighborhoods. This means some residents are kept up at night, especially in historic homes without double or triple-paned windows, and cannot park near their homes. STVR occupants also make noise as they return on foot from a night out; some urinate in neighborhoods.

The trend also contributes to rental stock displacement, with long-term housing being converted into STVRs, thereby leading to a loss of permanent “neighbors” and a sense of community.

Rules Not Being Enforced

Rules exist (e.g. if an STVR owner receives three write-ups, they lose their license), but there is not consistent enforcement at the time when issues are taking place—primarily at night. Thus, write-ups are not happening, leaving residents with few tools in the toolbox for recourse.

Some STVRs have been listed illegally (without registering with the city for a permit). Residents have a parking permit program (with stickers), but cars without stickers are not being enforced. So people can park illegally and not get cited.

Supply of Airbnbs Downtown Past the Max

A 20% cap was put in place for the Downtown and Victorian districts. But STVRs that had been applied for before September 28, 2017, were grandfathered in and can be renewed (City of Savannah, 2023, STVR). Thus, downtown likely already exceeds the 20% caps, though the extent is unknown.

Grandfathered STVRs do not require a dedicated parking spot, but new STVRs (non-grandfathered) do require a parking provision.

Anticipation of Airbnb Demand in Neighborhoods with Emerging Social Clusters

Neighborhoods that are located near the EnMarket Arena (e.g. Cloverdale, Filer Park) may be the next hotspot for STVRs. Although rules exist about where STVRs can locate, enforcement is already lacking on existing rental units. There is a need to anticipate the potential conversion of long-term housing in these neighborhoods (e.g. investors who buy-out homes to cater to tourists) before they erode the number of permanent residents who are invested in their community.

GOALS

- ▣ Identify illegal STVRs.
- ▣ Improve compliance with rules and guidelines, especially at night.
- ▣ Halt disorderly parties while they are occurring to give relief to nearby residents impacted by sound disturbances.

BARRIERS

- ▣ Perception that Code Compliance considers airbnbs as difficult to enforce.
- ▣ Staffing for compliance
- ▣ Absentee STVR owners



STAKEHOLDERS

- ▣ Office of Planning and Urban Design (issues permits)
- ▣ Code Compliance (enforcement)
- ▣ Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA)
- ▣ All neighborhood organizations that have STVRs

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Request staffing and after-hours enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Request staff dedicated to STVR enforcement, with some staff charged with nighttime enforcement checks. ▣ Consider increasing fees for STVR licenses. It is relatively inexpensive compared to other cities. (Funds can be used for compliance). ▣ Request that some of the money collected by STVRs and given to the city as a lump sum be used for compliance/enforcement. This is usually similar to the hotel Transient Occupancy Tax.
Update Rules and Guidelines for STVRs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Guidelines for: the number of guests, number of cars allowed per rental, strict sound guidelines, etc. are critical for a good STVR program. ▣ Create a code of conduct for guests and ensure that all guests have been advised of the rules (indoors and outdoors) ▣ Create a hotline for complaints that is manned and responsive.
Outline Duties of Code Compliance Dedicated to STVRs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Confirm STVRs listed on various websites have appropriate permits. ▣ Conduct investigations and write reports. ▣ Inspections pre and post-license application. ▣ Respond to complaints. ▣ Issue warnings and citations.
Apply lessons learned from other cities with STVR rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Consider making it so you can't list an STVR in Savannah unless you enter your permit #. (need to go through each company to make it a requirement on the listing webpage)

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Palm Springs, CA</p>  <p>A photograph of a large, white, three-dimensional sign that reads "PALM SPRINGS" in capital letters. The sign is set against a backdrop of palm trees and a clear blue sky. In the foreground, there are vibrant pink and red flowers.</p>	<p>Vacation Rentals</p> <p>In Palm Springs, 40% of homes are STVRs. They have some of the strictest rules on STVRs in the country.</p> <p>Palm Springs has enacted and modified its STVR Ordinance several times to respond to community needs. The rules are complex, but in short, require the owner of the property to obtain a permit after several inspections, and submit information to the city for each rental period with their TOT Tax submittals. These are audited by the city for accuracy. Fines, suspensions, and revocations are possible if owners don't follow the many rules. There is also an Appeals Board to which appeals for fines and revocations can be heard. Operating without a permit will result in a lifetime ban on the person obtaining a permit in the City, regardless of whether they purchase a new property.</p> <p>Overview: https://www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/special-program-compliance/vacation-rentals-1098</p>
<p>St. Augustine, FL</p>  <p>A photograph of a public square or park area in St. Augustine, Florida. In the center, there is a large, ornate fountain with water spraying upwards. The square is surrounded by lush green trees and a white building with a red roof in the background. People are seen walking and sitting on benches in the square.</p>	<p>Short-Term Rentals</p> <p>In St. Augustine, dedicated staff to STVR compliance includes one officer with the Code Compliance department and one fire inspector. They don't inspect at night, but the city requires a 24-hour phone number for a designated contact person. There is also a dedicated hotline for STVR complaints.</p> <p>STVR regulation began in 2019 and is limited to certain zoning areas. There are life safety inspections done after an owner completes registration and are done annually. There are parking and occupancy requirements, as well.</p> <p>Overview: https://www.citystaug.com/830/Short-Term-Rentals</p>

ACTION 4: IMPROVE NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS TO RESIDENTS ABOUT NEW VENUES

This action emerged from meetings with neighborhood leaders and associations.

OVERVIEW

Systems exist for the City to notify the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) about new social venues with alcohol licenses. But, these systems can be upgraded with more information that residents need to make informed decisions on how to weigh in. Residents request that the city expand the information to the following: whether the business is new or expanding, changing ownership or changing names; business plan; what type of alcohol license.

NEEDS STATEMENT

DNA members report that while the City’s notification system about new alcohol-licensed venues is excellent, the information provided about a new business is limited (just the name of the business, phone number, and address). This requires resident groups like DNA to do their due diligence and research the business. For example, they’re not sure if the business is new, changing ownership, or simply being renamed. Residents would like that information to make more informed decisions on how to weigh in.

Notices are received 30-40 days in advance before the license goes before Council. As much advance notice as possible is most beneficial to resident groups, as some only meet monthly. It is unclear whether similar systems exist throughout the city or just with DNA. Residents in other neighborhoods, such as Habersham Village, report that communication needs improvement with both the Habersham Village Association as well as resident groups about new bars and restaurants.

GOALS

- ☐ Provide residents with additional information about new social venues to obtain feedback and concerns.
- ☐ Provide an opportunity for residents to interact with new business owners before they are in operation. They will be their best customers.
- ☐ Provide an opportunity for the city council to hear from residents who may be impacted by a new business.

BARRIERS

- ☐ An additional outreach step such as this may slightly lengthen the process.
- ☐ City departments will need to change procedures to include more outreach.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ City Departments
- ☐ Neighborhood organizations
- ☐ City Council members

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Update notification systems to include more information about business applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Include the following additional information (not currently provided): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Existing license or business (just changing names) ○ Business plan ○ What type of alcohol license – full license with spirits or just beer and wine?
Require or suggest new applicants hold neighborhood meetings prior to approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Many cities ask or require new applicants to do neighborhood outreach via a meeting or door-to-door noticing and prove that this was done to licensing bodies.
Expand notification systems (if they don't exist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ To other neighborhoods ☐ Create a way for organizations to register with the city for notification on licenses and permits

ACTION 5: CONDUCT A LIGHTING ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL CLUSTERS

This action emerged from the Public Space roundtable.

OVERVIEW

Conduct a lighting assessment of commercial corridors (focused on areas with social venues) in multiple phases to accommodate social districts throughout the city. This initiative is intended to address the inconsistent lighting experience downtown to increase pedestrian safety and reduce the opportunity for crime. Creating an inventory of who owns the light fixture/pole and a tracking mechanism for monitoring progress can help ensure accountability. Striking a balance between safety agencies' preference for more light with historic preservation standards will be a challenge to overcome in accomplishing this action.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Many areas of Downtown Savannah are dimly lit. While several main thoroughfares have sufficient lighting, side streets and areas around squares do not. The lighting experience is inconsistent. Lighting reportedly ends at Forsyth Park, making it an uncomfortable walk in the dark to Starland.

Light is a key environmental strategy to reduce the incidence of crime. The greater the light, the less opportunity for crime. For women and residents in walking distance, well-lit areas enhance walkability and perception of safety.

Despite safety agencies' preference for more light, historic preservation standards dictate improvements and upgrades to lighting. Ghost tours in particular benefit from the low, eery lighting when walking through squares.

GOALS

- ☐ Enhance lighting in key areas e.g. frequently traveled side streets, main streets, and pathways to parking.
- ☐ Increase pedestrian safety
- ☐ Reduce opportunities for crime.

BARRIERS

- ☐ **Cost:** electric bill, installation, maintenance
- ☐ **Many different stakeholders** to coordinate
- ☐ **Anticipate the reaction to the action** e.g. may displace homeless, unsheltered to other parts of the city.


STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ Development Services
- ☐ Traffic Engineering
- ☐ Parking and mobility (if scope includes parking garage lighting)
- ☐ CPTED specialists
- ☐ Historic Preservation Board/Historic Review Board (would need to approve lighting fixtures, and lights)
- ☐ MPC to review design standards for anything new to be constructed
- ☐ Business community
- ☐ 311
- ☐ Chambers of Commerce
- ☐ Downtown business association
- ☐ Tourism Leadership Council
- ☐ Property owners

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Identify the scope of the lighting assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Confirm the location to include in the study. Proposed scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phase 1: Victory Street to River Street (Bull St as the spine). ○ Phase 2: East Broad St to Eastern Wharf ○ Phase 3: EnMarket Arena district ☐ Include common pathways to parking areas/parking garages.
Compile a list of owners of light fixtures/poles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Distinguish between whether the City of Savannah or Georgia Power and Lights (or private business owners) owns different light poles.
Engage Business Stakeholders (Day, Night, Property Owners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Engage nighttime businesses in identifying poorly lit places. ☐ Engage daytime businesses to educate them on the need to light up empty storefronts/vacant properties if contributing to dead zones.
Engage Stakeholders to Notify them of Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Engage stakeholders including Development Services, Traffic Engineering, Historic Preservation, MPC, etc. on the purpose of the study. ☐ Identify who to conduct the study.
Create an education campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Educate the public to call 311 about whether the light is out. ☐ Educate business owners to report lights out.
Conduct a check-in survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Review results to see if the lights have been fixed.
Create an incentives program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Incentivize lighting up streets and businesses.
Investigate Light Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Research cutting-edge lighting technology for historic areas.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p>Savannah, GA City Market</p> 	<p>Supplemental Lighting Added to Buildings</p> <p>City Market added LED lights on all buildings, which turn on via timer at 1:00 a.m. An additional light turns on at 2:00 a.m. to increase lighting. Because City Market Associates owns all the buildings in the area, they paid for the lighting program (about \$35,000).</p>
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ACTION 6: CONNECT VISITORS AND VENUES WITH SOCIAL SERVICE RESOURCES

This action emerged from the Public Space roundtable.

OVERVIEW

The Give Change that Counts campaign will launch in late 2022/early 2023 to redirect donations toward social services and resources like day centers. But, there is a need to incorporate social venues and visitors in outreach efforts to expand awareness and participation in the program. Educating visitors on how to redirect their donations to social services can make a long-lasting change that can potentially help deter panhandlers from coming downtown. There is also an opportunity to connect social venue staff with the Savannah Homeless Outreach Team (SHOT) to address unsheltered and transients.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Downtown Savannah has become a destination for unsheltered, transients and panhandlers. Their presence creates safety concerns for employees, students, and visitors. Although most are not aggressive, they contribute to negative perceptions of safety. Hospitality developments and efforts to address homeless encampments under the bridge and near hospitality areas have displaced this population to new parts of the city, including the south side.

Unsheltered, transients and panhandlers are part of distinct communities with unique needs. Panhandlers are not always homeless; some have chosen to panhandle instead of traditional work yet have homes. Many have substance abuse issues; others need transitional housing.

Impacts on the social economy include taking food from outdoor diners, stealing cash tips from street performers, and drinking from leftover to-go cups for remaining alcohol. The presence of homeless and panhandlers can be jarring for some visitors who are unaccustomed to seeing them; however, being homeless and panhandling are not crimes. Thus, police and homeless advocates have little capacity for addressing issues. When visitors give money to panhandlers, they continue a cycle of Savannah as a destination for begging.

GOALS

- Educate visitors not to give money to panhandlers and how to contribute to social services.
- Break the cycle of panhandling by addressing panhandlers' source of income: primarily visitor donations.

BARRIERS

- **Lack of awareness** among residents, businesses, and employees about local social services and initiatives to address homelessness, transients, and panhandlers.
- **Panhandlers are mistaken** for being homeless.
- **Visitors have compassion** for the homeless.
- **Concern over drawing visitor attention** to the challenge the city is trying to address.

STAKEHOLDERS

- City Manager
- Chatham County Homeless Authority and Savannah Homeless Outreach Team (SHOT)
- Visit Savannah
- Social Venues
- The Dive (a nonprofit that feeds the homeless, provides services like IDs, help to find jobs, etc.)
- Continuum of Care
- Police

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
<p>Create and Distribute Marketing Materials about the Give Change that Counts program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Create educational materials for visitors e.g. flyers that can be distributed at hotels, airbnbs, and bed and breakfasts to educate visitors that not all panhandlers are homeless. Give info on how to provide social services if they want to help. ▣ Place an ad in the Park Savannah app. ▣ Put an ad in the Connect Savannah magazine. ▣ Install signage downtown with information on how to donate to social services with the QR code.
<p>Partner with Visit Savannah</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Explore avenues to reach visitors.
<p>Partner with Hotels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Provide campaign information to hotels. ▣ Place an ad on hotel TVs about the program.
<p>Partner with Social Venues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Distribute marketing/educational messaging to social venues to post. ▣ Connect venue staff with the phone # for the outreach team.

ACTION 7: EXPAND MOBILITY SERVICE TO/FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE ARENA

This action emerged from the Mobility roundtable.

OVERVIEW

Expand the 7C bus route to provide service between downtown and the EnMarket arena. This route has already been expanded to provide service to residents of nearby neighborhoods, but it misses the opportunity to also provide service to the arena. There is a need for safe, efficient transportation other than personal vehicles for arena patrons. Collaboration between event organizers and Chatham Area Transit (CAT) can ensure bus service matches the arrival and departure needs for events. Concerts, which end later than other events, may need coordination of overtime opportunities for drivers and/or chartering other services such as trolleys.

BACKGROUND

Representatives of Chatham Area Transit (CAT) announced during RHI's mobility roundtable on Thursday, October 27, 2022, that three new routes will provide free bus service from neighborhoods to downtown (7C, 7D, and 7F) would begin 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. service on Monday, October 31, 2022. One route services neighborhoods near the EnMarket Arena area (but not the arena itself) i.e. Cloverdale and Carver Village.

There were plans for a 30-60 minute wait for the bus, but discussion with mobility stakeholders after the RHI roundtable garnered a commitment for more buses to service the route and thereby reduce wait times. There are also plans to go further west into the arena area to cover more neighborhoods.

NEEDS STATEMENT

There is a need to expand mobility services to social clusters located outside downtown. The Mobility Roundtable identified the EnMarket Arena as the priority for service expansion. EnMarket arena events are already taking place, but there isn't currently a transit option to get people to the arena from downtown (or other neighborhoods) and safely home. Arena patrons typically drive to the arena. Some are parking in the nearby neighborhoods, straining residents' access to parking and creating sound disturbances.

The CAT 7c bus route expansion (started October 31, 2022) already travels along the path to the arena but doesn't currently provide service to the arena itself.

The EnMarket Arena's proximity to the Cloverdale and Carver Village neighborhoods can serve as an impetus to not only provide service to arena patrons but also to residents of historically under-served neighborhoods.

GOALS

- **Provide mobility services** to transport patrons of social clusters outside downtown e.g. EnMarket Arena
- **Provide mobility services** to nearby residents to/from downtown.
- **Provide equitable mobility options** to neighborhoods located outside of downtown so workers and people who wish to socialize can access downtown and return home safely.
- **Move visitors efficiently** to/from events at EnMarket Arena.
- **Expand service** to/from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Long-term goal** is for residents who live outside downtown to have safe access to and from their neighborhoods to downtown.

BARRIERS

- **Insufficient number of vehicles.** Currently, two vehicles are servicing the new east-west routes, but there is a need for four vehicles given the demand.
- **Size of vehicles.** Right now, two of the smallest vehicles are running the #1 route.
- **Driver shortage makes it unfeasible to expand hours of service** without taking away service in another location.
- **Insufficient riders.** Success metrics are based on ridership. Before COVID, there were 15,000-20,000 riders a month. Now there are just 100 people/day.
- **Concerts at the EnMarket Arena** are difficult to provide CAT-run bus service to cover, because some end at midnight.
- **February through April** has the lowest capacity for bus service because of the need to provide daytime service for tourists.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ▣ Police traffic control
- ▣ Traffic engineering division
- ▣ CAT operations
- ▣ Parking services
- ▣ Office of Nightlife

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
<p>Conduct a full-service analysis of the west side</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Identify service expansion needs to/from EnMarket Arena and the surrounding neighborhood. ▣ Tie in information to the CAT master plan's long-term and short-term planning. The plan is set to be completed by June 2023.
<p>Provide service to EnMarket Arena on event days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Track when events are posted to provide mobility options. ▣ Identify key events for which service should be provided e.g. hockey matches with 5,000-6,000 people per match that are over by about 10:00 p.m. ▣ Allow drivers to service the arena based on overtime (voluntary). ▣ For concerts, provide CAT-bus drivers with overtime opportunities to provide coverage for concerts that end around midnight. ▣ Explore contracting with Old Town Trolley as a charter resource for servicing the arena.

ACTION 8: EMPOWER PARKING SERVICES TO AUTHORIZE TOWING

This action emerged from the Mobility Listening Session and Engagement meetings with Parking Services staff. This will also support the goal of alleviating the burden on police at night, as outlined in Safety Action 1: Deploy a Multi-Disciplinary Team to Manage Nighttime Social Activity.

OVERVIEW

Examine and update the ordinance “Article P – Wrecker Services” to empower the Parking Services department to authorize a summary tow of a vehicle. Clarify whether other enforcement entities can also authorize a tow. This will alleviate the sole burden of towing authorization on police and provide faster, more efficient service for residents who cannot access or leave their homes when blocked in by illegally parked cars. Initiate nighttime deployment of Parking Authority staff in alignment with signage creation, an education plan, and finally, enforcement through fines.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Drivers park their cars illegally without fear of reprisal. There is no signage indicating that cars will be towed in certain locations and at certain times.

Some illegally parked cars block driveways to residences and businesses. Response time is long, as residents must rely on police, who are over-burdened and under-staffed.

The parking enforcement ordinance is written so that only police can authorize vehicles to be towed (by calling dispatch). Police must be called and the person must be notified, which can take up to two hours. Parking Services is only able to issue parking citations and boot cars; the department is not authorized to perform a summary tow if, say, a vehicle is blocking a driveway.

There is interest from the department to take on responsibility for towing vehicles at night if the Wrecker Services ordinance can be changed.

GOALS

- ☐ **Expand other entities to authorize a summary tow**, thereby alleviating the burden on police.

BARRIERS

- ☐ **Signage needed to help authorize the tow** e.g. if you park here on Fri, Sat nights, you’ll get towed.
- ☐ **Safety Concerns for Parking Enforcement Officers:** Concerns about enforcing parking violations downtown if people are intoxicated at night.
- ☐ **Different contracts dictate** how towing companies can provide services.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ Parking Services Department
- ☐ Police

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Review and Update the Ordinance, Article P – Wrecker Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Examine the ordinance and make necessary updates to empower Parking Services to authorize a tow. ☐ Determine if additional entities e.g. deputized city marshal or code enforcement officer can also be empowered to authorize a summary tow.
Request staffing expansion in Parking Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Request staff expansion so Parking Services can be deployed at night. ☐ Explore how to address safety concerns.
Create Signage, begin education and enforcement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Post “no parking” signage in key areas. ☐ Initiate roll-out with education, courtesy notice/warnings, then fines. ☐ Sub-contract with a tow company to tow anyone parked in no parking areas.

ACTION 9: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION ON STREET CLOSURES FOR EVENTS

This action emerged from the Mobility Roundtable.

OVERVIEW

Mobility service providers would benefit from one month's notice on planned street closures for events, parades, and film shoots. Coupled with a weekly notification system on that week's street closures will assist service providers in planning for alternate routes and adjusting driver schedules. These actions will not only increase trust, transparency, and communication between government and mobility service providers but also help facilitate more coordinated mobility of the many transportation service providers in the city that are impacted by street closures, including buses, trolleys, and quadricycles.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Events, parades, and film shoots happen frequently and are a significant part of Savannah's economy. But, they can be disruptive to tourism-oriented mobility service providers and venue staff. Many events are planned far in advance; parade applications require 90 days advance notice. While a parade may be over in a few hours, a film shoot may close streets for a full week (between the hours of 9 am-4 pm).

Even when street closures are planned, they are not communicated to key mobility stakeholders e.g. buses, trolleys, quadricycles, etc. When streets are closed, they limit the operational area that mobility service providers have for tours.

Due to the limited communication (or short notice e.g. 3 days prior) about street closures, mobility companies cannot communicate to drivers about which streets will be closed and alternative routes that will need to be taken. Some vehicles that leave an enclosure/barricade are not able to return or are unable to access customers and/or vehicle storage locations. This creates an adversarial, frustrating relationship between mobility service providers and police enforcing traffic control.

GOALS

- ☐ **Increase trust, transparency, and communication** between government and mobility service providers.
- ☐ **De-silo information** to broadcast to the public.
- ☐ **Provide transparency in decision-making** about why certain events' requests for street closures are approved or denied.
- ☐ **Enable mobility service providers to better plan for street closures** and adjust their drivers' schedules based on street closures.

BARRIERS

- ☐ **Construction projects** are forcing event parades to take alternate routes.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ Events Review Committee
- ☐ Office of Film, Events and Tourism
- ☐ Traffic engineering
- ☐ Police traffic control
- ☐ Mobility service providers (buses, trolleys, quadricycles, etc.)

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Create a Notification System about Street Closures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Create a notification system one month in advance of planned events and parades.☐ Create a weekly notification/reminder system about each week's planned street closures.

ACTION 10: CREATE A RIDESHARE HUB FOR CLOSING-TIME PICK-UP

This action emerged from the Public Safety Roundtable.

OVERVIEW

Designating locations for rideshare pick-up can help ensure orderly dispersal at closing time. Goals also include improving pedestrian safety and reductions in traffic congestion and impaired driving.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Nighttime patrons arrive at a social district at different times throughout the evening, but those who stay until closing time, leave at the same time. The mass exodus of people seeking safe rides home can create a chaotic atmosphere where rideshare drivers try to access passengers as close as possible to their location. Without planned systems of order, anticipating the need for rideshare as bar close, there can be unnecessary traffic congestion, pedestrian safety risks, and confusion in trying to access rideshares.

GOALS

- ☐ **Increase the productivity** of ride-share drivers by reducing pick-up time.
- ☐ **Alleviate traffic congestion.**
- ☐ **Reduce impaired driving.**
- ☐ **Clear out the district faster at closing time**, thereby reducing the potential for fights and sound complaints.
- ☐ **Provide a reliable, safe way for women to access and return safely home** from social districts.

BARRIERS

- ☐ **Explaining to potentially intoxicated riders where to go to be picked up.** (This challenge can be alleviated through in-app wayfinding to the hub.)
- ☐ **City department services staffing** for management (e.g. Parking Services)

STAKEHOLDERS



- ☐ Parking Services
- ☐ Police department (to be included in decision-making)
- ☐ Mobility operators
- ☐ Visit Savannah
- ☐ Ride-share service companies

IMPLEMENTATION

Task	Steps
Create a working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify and invite key stakeholders.
Identify infrastructure needs, safety concerns, and users' preferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Discuss infrastructure needs e.g. curb cut, curb space that can be occupied on a short-term basis, and whether passengers prefer a right or left side load (right side is more common). ☐ Discuss users' preferences and barriers that would need to be overcome. e.g. Lighting the pathway to access the hub. ☐ Safety concerns: how will queues be managed? ☐ Determine hours of operation (i.e. at what time, and days will they operate?)
Identify 3-4 potential locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Present to the group multiple options for locations. Identify each location's unique needs and how to remove barriers to improve use. The first two were discussed during the mobility Roundtable (see screenshots). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ East side of Ellis Square on Barnard Street ○ Bull and St. Julien (where food trucks used to be). But, would need lighting.
Review city rules and request city approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify city rules that may be in place for identified location (i.e. will a code change be needed for current curb use? Change from a no parking area to a flexible use area?) ☐ Request Council approval if necessary.

Review and update signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Ensure signage does the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designate locations as rideshare hubs with hours of operation ○ Authorize rideshare vehicles to use the locations ○ Provide wayfinding to direct passengers to their locations ▣ Request sign fabrication.
Investigate Geo-Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Begin engagement with Uber and Lyft to discuss the process of updating their apps to direct passengers to be picked up and dropped off at the rideshare hub i.e. via geo-fencing.
Remove barriers to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Review and upgrade lighting for the rideshare locations' use at night.
Create a public education and marketing campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Create radio, newspaper, print, and social media ads ▣ Distribute materials to hospitality venues open at night ▣ Educate business operators and staff
Launch rideshare hubs and determine additional amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Determine public safety staffing needs to monitor the area. ▣ Determine if public restrooms can be provided/opened nearby.
Provide an education and notification period for violators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Notify Ubers, and Lyfts they must use the rideshare hubs. ▣ Notify illegally parked cars that they will be towed starting on a certain date.
Begin enforcement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Ticket rideshare vehicles that are operating in non-designated areas. ▣ Cite and or tow cars that are illegally parked in rideshare hub locations.

MODELS AND RESOURCES

<p style="text-align: center;">Orlando, FL</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Rideshare Hub Pilot Program for Safe Rides Home</p> <p>Downtown Orlando launched a Rideshare Hub Pilot program to coordinate safe rides home at closing time. Before the pilot, people wandered at closing time, unaware of where to best grab a late-night bite, where they could use the restroom, and where the best place was to pick-up their rideshare. Two rideshare hubs are now in operation on Fridays and Saturdays from midnight to 3:00 a.m. The six-month pilot program received a six-month extension, resulting in operation between May 2019 - May 2020.</p> <p>The hubs are strategically located and designed for easy ingress and egress of vehicles as well as walkable from anywhere downtown. The hubs not only centralize where nightlife patrons pick up their Lyft or Uber rides but also include food trucks, public restrooms, and dedicated security. The creation of the hubs has addressed closing-time issues like crowd surges, disorganization of various modes of transport, and pedestrian safety.</p> <p>Review RHI's full case study on Orlando's rideshare hubs. https://sociablecity.info/resources/case_studies/orlando_hub.pdf</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Washington, DC</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Pick-Up/Drop-Off (PUDO) Zones</p> <p>“Pick-Up/Drop-Off (PUDO) Zones are curbside locations that are dedicated full-time for passenger pick-up and drop-off and commercial loading. These zones enable passenger and commercial loading directly at the curb and out of travel lanes. Parking is not allowed at these locations at any time.” (Park DC, 2020)</p> <p>“As part of DC's Vision Zero program to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries, DC has launched 24-hour/day pick-up and drop-off zones, which are designated curbside spaces for taxis, ride-sharing services, and passenger vehicles. PUDO zones are designed to reduce the number of vehicles that stop in travel lanes, bike lanes, and crosswalks and reduce congestion in busy locations.” (DDOT Communications, 2021)</p> <p>Video on how PUDO zones work: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQSmHfQ3e1Y</p> <p>Nightlife to Network: Piloting “PUDO” Zones Presentation (PDF): Link embedded on: https://www.parkdc.com/pages/programs</p>

GOVERNANCE ANALYSIS: DETAILED SUMMARY

Overview

Business applicants are required to obtain a local alcohol license (an “alcohol business sale license”) before applying to the state of Georgia for a state alcohol license. Savannah’s Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance, amended in 2020, outlines the process in detail. It also outlines the basis on which the City Council is to decide on the license (to grant, renew, suspend, or revoke). The legal department is currently working on a revision to the alcohol ordinance. Anecdotal reports from current business owners indicate that many found the process to be difficult, confusing, and cumbersome.

Process of Opening a Business with an Alcohol Business Sales License

As part of this process, RHI staff attempted to uncover and document the process of opening a business with an alcohol business sales license.

Information presented here is based on RHI’s online research, review of license applications, the Alcohol Beverage Ordinance, interviews and meetings with key agencies (Department of Revenue; Police Department’s ABC Unit; and Planning, Zoning and Urban Design Department), and current business owners. Below is our understanding of the process for opening a business where alcohol is served for on-premise consumption. However, this outline has not been reviewed and vetted by the agencies referenced.

It is RHI’s observation that the process is complex, non-linear, and differs based on different perspectives. RHI hopes that this may serve as initial documentation that could be adapted into a user-friendly guide for new business applicants.

Current Process to Obtain a Local Alcohol License

Prerequisite Steps for Businesses in a New or Renovated Building

1. **Applicant obtains a Certificate of Occupancy** from the Fire Department.
2. **The applicant confirms proposed use is allowed by zoning laws.** Applicant must contact Planning, Zoning and Urban Design Department to determine if the zoning district requires a special use permit which must be considered by the Planning Commission (Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission) and City Council before the issuance of an alcohol license.

For Businesses in an Existing Building without Renovation

1. **Business Location Approval: With City Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design**
2. **ONCE You’ve identified your location, check your zoning. DEPENDING ON YOUR ADDRESS: HAVE TO GO TO MPC OR CITY PLANNING:**
 - a. **A zoning review is requested by the Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design Department** to determine if the proposed use is: permitted by right, requires a Special-Use approval or variance; is permitted as a non-conforming use; is permitted with conditions; or is not permitted. This will determine whether additional zoning hearings are required.
 - i. Applicants may be required to get a **building permit and business location approval.**
 - ii. **If an applicant’s location requires special review or a special-use permit**, the application handled by Dept of Revenue will stop until zoning processes are done.
 - iii. **Parking review** occurs at this stage, too, through the Building Permit process. (Additional zoning review is required to determine if additional parking is needed).
 - b. **Go to MPC: Just for re-zoning, text amendment, or ZBA for special use permit or variance. RHI Finding:** Interviews with existing business owners report that it’s best to go first to the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) once a location is found to get zoning approval for the location. Then, an alcohol license can be applied for. Department of Revenue reportedly informs business applicants that they can’t apply for their alcohol permit until they are “80% done with the project.” i.e. when the location has been approved, an applicant has 60 days to open.
3. **Applicant submits an initial application to the Department of Revenue with the following documents:**
 - a. **Proof of United States Citizenship** (Certified U.S. Birth Certificate, Certificate of Naturalization, U.S. Passport, Marriage License for female)
 - b. **Proof of Chatham County Residency** (Lease or Deed to resident and a Utility statement)

- c. **Authorization Release Form**
- d. **Food and Alcoholic Affidavit or Ancillary Package Store Affidavit**
- e. **Savannah Police Department Notification Slip** (from Forensic Dept. only)
- f. **Original Alcohol License**
- g. **Proof of ownership, purchase agreement, or sales contract**
- h. **Copy of the Public Safety Plan** (Operational Plans)
- i. **Proof of Dram Shop Insurance** (1 million dollars)/Proof of General Liability Insurance (1 million dollars)

(Note: If the applicant is not a Chatham County resident, the ABL Responsible Applicant must reside within a 50-mile radius of the establishment.)

4. **An interview is conducted with the Department of Revenue's Manager.**
5. **The applicant gets fingerprinted (to run a background check) at the SPD Forensic Unit** located at 78 Ross Rd.
6. **Applicant contacts Chatham County Health Department** at 1395 Eisenhower Dr. (912) 356-2160 before submittal of alcohol application.
7. **Applicant contacts Dept. of Agriculture** at (404) 586-1411 before submittal of alcohol application.
8. **An interview is conducted with Police Department's Alcohol Beverage Compliance (ABC) Unit** to review the applicant's background check, review the public safety plan, discuss policies and procedures, and what's allowed in the Alcohol Ordinance.
9. **A site visit is scheduled with ABC Unit** to take measurements for the plot map (e.g. distance from school, church) and to post public signage regarding the application.
10. **A site visit is scheduled with Code Compliance Department** to confirm site complies with code standards.
11. **Department of Human Services notifies the neighborhood.** The Revenue Department (sometimes) facilitates a meeting between the business applicant and neighborhood association, which may result in a Good Neighbor Agreement.
12. **Applicant acquires a Business Tax Certificate** from the Department of Revenue for any other business activity conducted in conjunction with their alcoholic beverage sales from that location.
13. **The applicant provides evidence of the Certificate of Occupancy.**
14. **Application is forwarded by the Department of Revenue to the Clerk of Council to schedule a hearing before City Council** (after the fully completed application with all required supporting documents, affidavits, and all required fees are received in the Revenue Department).
15. **Council and Mayor Review the Application.**
 - a. Note: Applicants who require further zoning review must go before City Council twice: once for zoning and once for alcohol.
16. **If approved by Council, the alcohol license is issued** when the applicant provides evidence of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Improvement Areas in the Licensing Process

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED	ACTION TO CONSIDER
<p>Confusion on where to start the process (i.e. with which department) and the appropriate order in which to contact Departments.</p> <p>Gap in a central point person within city government to help a business applicant navigate the business opening process. (You have to check in with various departments).</p>	<p>ACTION ALREADY IN PROGRESS:</p> <p>A Preliminary Approval Committee has been proposed to the City Manager. Key department representatives will meet with a business applicant in an initial meeting to discuss the project as a whole to discuss the next steps and guide them through city requirements. This will help un-silo departments and facilitate coordination to work together on the same goal: successful business opening. For the applicant, this process can help identify potential bottlenecks.</p> <p>RHI is fully supportive of this process.</p> <p>RHI SUGGESTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include the Office of Nightlife in this committee regularly. <input type="checkbox"/> (If not already included in the proposed committee), include the Fire Department, Code Compliance, and SPD. <p>SBA is another starting point.</p>
<p>Gap in the documentation of a comprehensive workflow showing the sequence of steps (across multiple departments) for opening a business.</p> <p>Some digital forms are not current or are incorrect. After a business applicant has filled them out and submitted them, some have had to resubmit the correct form.</p>	<p>Develop a workflow document outlining the sequence of steps and departments to engage in to open a new business.</p> <p>Ensure all digital forms are current and up-to-date.</p>
<p>Only a contractor has access to e-track for construction updates, not business owners. Delays can be lengthy trying to rely on a contractor for updates.</p>	
<p>Gap in advance notification by Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) about planning considerations for applicants e.g. trash management, parking, etc. Business owners report submitting an application, then having to re-submit when MPC informs them piecemeal about additional requirements to plan for.</p>	<p>Develop written documentation for planning (county and city) considerations for trash, parking, etc.</p>
<p>To fill out the application for location approval by planning agencies, you must have a signed lease agreement. But, some business applicants want to get all permits signed by Planning Commission before signing the lease.</p> <p>Note: It can be a potential hardship for a business to sign a lease without contingencies (like approvals) since they pay monthly regardless of whether the business is open yet or not.</p>	<p>A possible solution is for planning agencies to allow an application with a Letter of Intent from a landlord.</p>

<p>Staff from different departments are unaware of what other departments' status is for the same project. In part, this is due to different tech dashboards being used. Sometimes, conflicting information is given by different departments (e.g. city vs. county health).</p> <p>Gap in inter-departmental dashboard accessible by government departments and by applicants to review the status of a business application.</p> <p>Different departments use different software and data systems that don't "talk to each other." Each department's software is complex, with alcohol-licensed businesses a small component of the business types in the database. (SharePoint, Sage, Govern, and Energov are among the software used by different departments).</p> <p>No way to see in one place the history of a business license e.g. current vs. active, fees paid, and violations.</p> <p>Long process for government departments to contact other departments to find out about violations on record e.g. If the Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design Department needs to find out if there are code violations.</p>	<p>There is a benefit to both departments and the business applicant to have a more transparent digital system that tracks the progress of an application moving through a complicated system. A more centralized dashboard can inform the applicant about which departments have signed off and where delays are being encountered.</p> <p>Greater transparency of the process for business applicants can reduce staff time in answering inquiries by phone and email.</p> <p>It would be ideal for government departments to have access to other departments' records (even in a read-only capacity) to determine if violations exist (instead of having to wait for departments to check records).</p>
<p>Delays in alcohol application processing until zoning processes are completed.</p> <p>The applicant may have already acquired a location and begun paying rent on the space (without knowing if the use is permitted by zoning). This is particularly problematic for a recently acquired property that is just an "empty shell" that requires heavy renovation, therefore making it difficult to inspect.</p>	<p>Applicants should contact the Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design Department before applying with the Department of Revenue (and before signing a lease or purchasing a building).</p> <p>This will ensure that the proposed use is permitted and also to review parking requirements.</p>
<p>Parking requirements have become the litmus test of whether to approve or deny a proposed business with an alcohol license. The suburban parking code differs greatly from downtown, which has exemptions.</p>	<p>Change criteria for approval to be consistent and transparent</p>
<p>Delays in alcohol application processing until building permits and construction is complete (e.g. building permits, inspections).</p>	<p>Unfortunately, this is part of the process all applicants must engage in.</p>
<p>Two interviews are conducted: one with the Department of Revenue and one with the ABC Unit. Unclear whether the interviews are duplicative in the content reviewed.</p>	<p>TBD: Potentially combine the two interviews into one with both Department of Revenue and ABC Unit.</p>
<p>ABC Unit's Interview takes place in the police department's interview room (due to the recording feature). The room is typically used for criminal investigations and therefore has shackles. This creates an unsettling experience for business applicants.</p>	<p>Move interviews to a more neutral, friendly location such as the Glass House, which can be set up with recording equipment.</p>
<p>City Council may approve or deny an application, disregarding the staff work performed and subsequent recommendations for whether the business application should be approved. This can cause tension, perceptions of lack of transparency/consistency, and lead to the perception of an uneven playing field.</p>	<p>Changes to Council's ability to approve or deny are unlikely</p>

<p>An applicant who requires further zoning review has to go to the city council twice: once for zoning and once for alcohol. This lengthens the process.</p> <p>Background:</p> <p>There was a 2019 change to the zoning ordinance that changed local law to comply with State law, requiring all special use permitting to move from the Planning Commission to the Mayor and Council. (Previously, the process only required the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve a special use permit.</p>	<p>Coordinate these two processes so applicants only have to go to the city council once. This will help City Council see the whole package in total and consider determinations more comprehensively.</p>
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Obtaining a State Alcohol License

Once an applicant receives their local alcohol license, they can then start the process for a state license. The Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) handles state alcohol licenses (and tobacco licenses). There are 4 different areas of alcohol licenses from DOR:

- Manufacturers (Brokers, Brewery, Brewpub, Distillery, Farm Winery, Importers, Non-Beverage Manufacturers/Importer, Wine Manufacturers, Wine Special Order Shipping)
- Wholesale Distributors
- Retailers (Consumption on Premises, Hotel In-Room, Limousine Carriers Permit, Retail Dealer, Retail Package)
- Special Events (For Profit, Non-Profit, Use, Wine Auction)

Data on Licensed Venues

As part of this project, RHI requested data on the total number of businesses with alcohol business sales licenses to understand the scope of businesses that can serve alcohol for on-premise consumption. While this data is accessible, it does not translate into the same system of enforcement and compliance data in a centralized database. Each department has its own database organized in its own way.

In 2022, businesses licensed to sell alcohol represent 650 (7.74%) of the 8,400 total business licenses in the city.

Enforcement and Compliance

The SPD’s ABC unit has primary responsibility for the enforcement of licensing conditions. ABC unit holds administrative meetings to keep venues in compliance (i.e. three strikes before a show cause hearing).

Venues are disincentivized from calling the police regarding incidents in/around their establishment because of fear of being penalized. Calls for service logged at their location place an unfair stigma on businesses, as it counts against them during show-cause hearings.

ABC unit reports that in 2016 they did 450 inspections (new, renewals, complaints) of licensed locations. As of 2022, there are now 650 alcohol licensed businesses. The city used to do 2 inspections per year, but now only can do one. Personnel shortages make it difficult to conduct regular inspections.

The fire marshal conducts life safety checks every other weekend to ensure the business is operating within capacity limits and to check exits have signage and lighting.



Alcohol Ordinance Proposal

Published October 2022, to be heard at Council early November 2022

[Alcohol Application Pre- Approval Committee \(savannahga.gov\)](https://www.savannahga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/25215/Alcohol-Presentation-100522) Here is a link to the presentation:
<https://www.savannahga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/25215/Alcohol-Presentation-100522>

Change to Local Ordinance Section 6-1234 to be amended to establish an **Alcohol Review Committee (ARC)** to collaborate with City staff and outside agencies involved in the alcohol licensure process to improve the efficiency of the application process. These steps include:

- 1) Streamline the process with City staff and outside agencies involved (don't know who this would be)
- 2) Ensure all regulatory requirements are met before consideration by City Council.
- 3) ABC Unit/Code Compliance/Clerk of Council/City Manager's Administrative Office/Department of Public Health/Department of Revenue/Human Services/Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design/Development Services

Change to Local Ordinance: Section 6-1233 to create Alcohol Beverage Compliance (ABC) Unit Mandatory Administrative Meetings

These meetings would require the appearance of the Alcohol Licensee or Responsible Party to discuss public safety plans along with policies and procedures **after one or more violations have occurred at the establishment against the current alcohol ordinance, including nuisance and public safety violations.**

An Administrative Meeting would be held to establish a corrective action plan with the Licensee and/or Responsible Party to seek compliance with the alcohol ordinance. The Administrative Meeting has no bearing on court proceedings, however, attendance from the Licensee and/or Responsible Party is mandatory.

Failure to attend Administrative Meetings will result in a subpoena issued to appear in Recorder's Court.

Change to Local Ordinance Section 6-1235 to require all armed security guards working either directly for the alcohol establishment or contracted by the establishment to complete a background check through the SPD.

All private armed security businesses that furnish security services to establishments licensed to sell alcoholic beverages shall conduct a complete and thorough background investigation of all employees carrying weapons. For each such employee, the private security company shall maintain a copy of the background investigation, which shall be furnished to any representative of the SPD upon demand.

Licensee must inform the ABC Staff in writing within 30 days if any armed security guards of the licensee or establishment are convicted of a felony or any crime involving the illegal use, carrying, or possession of a dangerous weapon or any crime involving moral turpitude

Waiting Periods (Revocation) Proposed Revisions – Alcohol license determinations Waiting periods are played out with more clarity. The current language is too broad.

Waiting periods (Denials) Proposed New Language:

When a license is denied by the Mayor and Aldermen pursuant to the provisions of this Article, no license shall be issued to such ABL Applicant or Responsible ABL Applicant for the premises subject to the ABL denied application for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of denial. Waiting Periods (Surrender) Repeal and Replace Language:

For occasions on which the applicant, manager, or any person with a financial interest in the establishment has voluntarily surrendered an alcoholic beverage license issued by the city, no license shall be issued to such person at subject location for a period of twelve (12) months immediately following the surrender.

Creation of a brand new permit, Late Night Alcohol Permit, class K to permit restaurants to transition to bars after midnight to 2:55 am on m-Sat and 11 pm to 2 am Sunday

- Required for existing and new alcohol establishments seeking transition privileges.
- Any existing establishment operating without an Alcohol Transitional Permit will be cited under code section 6-1205(a). The following guidelines will be permitted during the transitional phase:
- Cease or modify food sales
- Entry fee
- Employment of Security Staff (armed/unarmed)
- Surveillance Cameras

The Late Night Alcohol Permit will require:

- No one under 21 years of age is allowed on the premise during transitional hours.
- Alcohol Transitional Permit Application along with payment of \$1,500 paid to the City's Revenue Department
- Only current ABL/Responsible ABL applicants can apply for Late Night Alcohol Permit
- Additional Public Safety Plan must be turned into the SPD's Alcohol Beverage Compliance (ABC) unit at the time of permit request

Under the heading of education and outreach, there is a proposal to convene quarterly meetings to assist new, existing, and future alcohol applicants understand the relevant rules and regulations pertaining to their business and alcohol. Also, meetings are planned to provide updates to the Alcohol Beverage Ordinance and current overlays, provide an opportunity to hear from the industry on concerns, host seminars on new trends, and discuss revisions to regulations and/or policies

Proposed dates: • January 2023 • March 2023 (St. Patrick's Day Coordination) • May 2023 (St. Patrick's Day Assessment) • October 2023

There are additional, less relevant changes to local ordinance sections regarding the definition of "take-out" alcohol with a meal, alcohol delivery, BYOB, selling thru windows, and onsite tastings at off sale retail locations.

THE TO-GO ZONE: DETAILED ANALYSIS

Savannah’s unique opportunity to take drinks to go was brought up numerous times during the RHI process. People seem to either love or hate it, although it is universally agreed that the to-go zone distinguishes Savannah from other destinations. The to-go zone is widely considered an advantage for tourism and contributes to the perception of vibrancy in public spaces. This analysis discusses the concerns and challenges associated with the policy.

Current Rules and Guidelines

Excluding St. Patrick’s Day*, the to-go zone rules are outlined by Savannah’s Code of Ordinances as follows:

Boundaries	City limit on the North, center line of the Talmadge Bridge and extended south on West Boundary Street to Jones Street on the west, Jones Street extended east to the railroad track on the South, and on the east by a line extending north along the centerline of the railroad track to the Savannah River to include all portions of Hutchinson Island within the city. <i>*Expanded scope during St. Patrick’s Day.</i>
Drink Size & Cup Materials	Aluminum, paper, or plastic cups are not to exceed 16 fluid ounces in size.
Cups Per Person	In practice, one person per container only (not in code).
Enforcement	Savannah Police and the Revenue Department, which handles liquor licenses.

The high number of outlets for the purchase and consumption of alcohol downtown is complicated by the to-go zone. Customers are allowed to leave venues with drinks in cups and mingle with other people who may not be venue customers, but who have brought alcohol from home or purchased it from container stores or other off-sale outlets. Residents and visitors who are underage may also be consuming alcohol publicly. The prevalence of participation in to-go cups and the limited number of compliance staff make enforcement and monitoring of rules a daunting task.

The oversight of responsible service and over-consumption is difficult, at best, to manage from a city perspective. If the best practice is to manage consumption in a safe space with watchful oversight from trained professionals, then adding the to-go zone relies almost exclusively on the good judgment of consumers and their understanding of how alcohol impacts the body and behavior.

The EnMarket Arena is also participating in the to-go zone concept. Arena attendees are allowed to leave with an open container. This seems to encourage either tailgating in the parking lot or driving with an open beverage (prohibited), thus potentially contributing to impaired driving.

There is a general perception that *Visit Savannah* messages the unique to-go opportunity too heavily to visitors, thus creating the perception that the city is just for partying. This message could be balanced by the other historic and art-driven opportunities available for visitors.

Debates are raging about whether to expand or restrict the to-go zone, as well as pedestrian-only areas (i.e. closed to car traffic). A careful balance will need to be achieved. While pedestrian safety can be improved by restricting car access, such no-car zones can also contribute to a “street party” atmosphere with greater opportunities for disorderly conduct.

Current venue operating procedures and to-go zone rules may be contributing to loitering. Last call is only 5 or 10 minutes before closing time (the industry standard is 30 minutes) and the allowance for to-go cups to be taken out at closing time may be exacerbating the challenge of lingering downtown after closing time. The longer crowds linger, the more opportunities for fights and sound disturbances to occur. Clearing the district quickly and efficiently will aid in both traffic congestion and public safety. Even if people wanted to go home quickly and efficiently, there are no designated spots for rideshare services to pick up passengers without contributing to existing traffic congestion.

Another complaint about the to-go zone is the litter generated by plastic cups. Downtown neighbors spend time and effort cleaning them up outside their homes and plastic is neither sustainable nor environmentally friendly.



The content summarized in this section reflects the views and opinions of the participants of six Listening Sessions and six Roundtables organized for each of RHI's Six Core Measures of Social Economy Management.

Content relevant to a particular topic may be reported here in the thematic section most applicable, even if it was introduced in a different session.

Similar findings may be reported in multiple sections, thereby representing areas of consensus from different stakeholder perspectives.





CONSENSUS ON CHALLENGES FROM PARTICIPANTS

Participants of Listening Sessions and Roundtables on the Six Core Measures identified many of the same challenges. Common challenges identified in multiple groups are listed as follows.

Listening Session & Roundtable	Lighting	Off-Duty officer system	Trash & Litter Management	Unsheltered, Transients	Overdose prevention	Response Times from 911	Youth at Night Downtown
Public Safety	X	X			X	X	
Venue Safety		X					
Social Venues	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Public Space	X	X	X	X		X	
Mobility	X						
Quality of Life	X		X	X	X	X	X
TOTAL	5/6	4/6	3/6	3/6	3/6	4/6	2/6

Points of View

Insights can be gained from the perspectives of different stakeholders involved in this process.

 <p>COMMUNITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ “We are a small-town masquerading as a big city.” ▣ “The city has broken so many promises to us.” ▣ “You don’t give our kids anything to do, then blame us when they get in trouble downtown at night.” ▣ “We need big ideas and big solutions instead of small attitudes and small solutions.”
 <p>SAFETY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Police: “We’re expected to solve all the problems at night.” ▣ “Off-duty officers is just a false sense of security for venues.” ▣ “Even if we deny an event, we’re told to make it happen.”
 <p>HOSPITALITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ “Do they even want us here? Why is it so hard to open a business here?” ▣ “If you’re not downtown, you’re on your own to deal with your own problems.”
 <p>ADMINISTRATION</p>	<p>Among government employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Government employees: “A culture of favoritism in this city makes us look bad.” ▣ “There’s special treatment for special people.” <p>Perceptions of Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ “Government changes its mind.” ▣ “It’s like the right-hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing.” ▣ “Departments don’t talk to each other to coordinate.”

CORE MEASURE 1: PUBLIC SAFETY



Environmental interventions have been deployed to enhance safety. Bright, temporary spotlights in Ellis Square after gun violence in July 2021 helped disincentivize criminal behavior. Police have the discretion to set up barricades and facilitate traffic control when streets are busy to curb cruising and facilitate pedestrian safety. The partnership between City Market (a private association representing businesses) and SPD has been praised for having venues move tables and chairs inside at 11 pm to discourage loitering, as well as a youth curfew.

Limited resources across departments lead to a generally reactionary, complaint-driven, and triage model for public safety at night. Compliance agencies primarily focus on downtown’s historic district due to the dense cluster of social venues, which are compounded by the to-go zone. Downtown has a higher rate of calls for service for intoxication, drug overdoses, and stabbing/shooting/penetrating trauma (see Appendix V: EMS data). Other parts of the city with nighttime social activity experience gaps in safety coverage with longer response times.

Savannah police have become the “catch-all” for issues at night. While technically empowered to handle sound enforcement, sound complaints are de-prioritized compared to safety emergencies. Police are also the only agency that can authorize towing of vehicles. Other agencies (Code Compliance, Parking Services) do not operate after 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday or on weekends, but their presence is needed to provide enforcement of sound, vending, parking, etc.

The current scheduling and deployment model for the Northwest Precinct has not yet been updated to reflect the unique, resource-intensive needs of the Downtown Historic District on weekend nights. Six of the eight officers* assigned to the precinct are stationed at City Market to help facilitate traffic control. To respond to calls for service throughout the precinct, six additional officers—two pulled from each of three other precincts—are assigned to route calls for service.

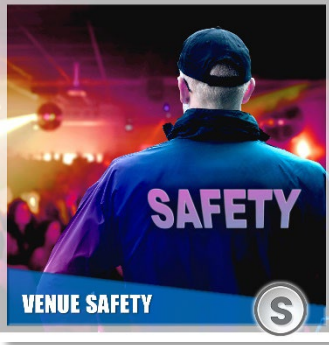
Communication is limited between safety agencies and venues. Education and support come as a follow-up to violations, rather than proactively. While safety departments communicate well (especially police on patrol, ABC unit, and fire marshals), there is a greater opportunity for early assistance and collaboration with venues.

Some venues hire off-duty officers to provide a visible safety presence and serve as a stop-gap due to the lack of both a dedicated nightlife unit and professional venue security, but it is not an ideal model. Off-duty officers are limited in role and scope—they must remain within a certain proximity to the business that hired them. They neither fulfill the needs of professional door security (checking IDs, wandng, crowd control, etc.) nor meet the ideal standards for nightlife police deployment—interactive, roving presence monitoring safety throughout a district. Further, there is waning interest in off-duty assignments nationwide. If no volunteers sign up, the venue is out of compliance if mandated to have officers.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES	
Patron Behavior	Disorderly conduct, gun violence, loitering with to-go cups after closing time, and cruising.
Off-Duty Officer System	A stop-gap practice in lieu of both a dedicated police unit and the use of private security.
Police the Catch-All Due to Gap in Nighttime Deployment	Code compliance, 311 phone operators, parking authority, mental health services, etc. do not operate at night or on weekends, causing strain on an already under-staffed police dept.
Environmental Barriers	Emergency vehicles are slow to access calls for service downtown due to traffic congestion.
Gap in Venue Communication	Need for trust-building and proactive communication, not just during enforcement.
Simultaneous events requiring off-duty officers for security	The city’s capacity to host multiple simultaneous events is being strained by reliance on an off-duty officer system. The city must weigh the cost of potential loss of revenue and tourism with the capacity to ensure the safety of event attendees while also monitoring social districts.

* The eight officers assigned to the Northwest precinct between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. are charged with seven beats (21-27; beat 26 is the downtown entertainment area, but also includes residential and non-alcohol licensed businesses), with 2 assigned to the northwest area.

CORE MEASURE 2: VENUE SAFETY



Strong comradery exists among service industry staff. A Facebook Messenger group connects 800+ social venue owners, managers, and staff to alert one another about compliance checks and problem patrons. Yet the relationship between city government and venues is adversarial, rife with mistrust due to limited proactive communication and lack of follow-through regarding past promises.

A variety of initiatives have been attempted and then abandoned. A Bar Card was rolled out to facilitate compliance with the city’s server training rules but then was revoked due to reportedly poor execution and confusion among venue operators. The “to-go” zone boundaries were changed without notice to venue operators.

Savannah Prevention Coalition and Beyond the Bell laid the groundwork in 2020 for elevating the professionalism of venue safety. The program achieved buy-in with

venue staff and introduced concepts of alcohol awareness education and harm reduction initiatives. Educational collateral was developed e.g. posters, window decals on BAC, sexual violence prevention, etc. But, changes in political administration led to a lack of follow-through.

Systems do exist for venue safety. A Security Plan (See Appendix VII) must be submitted to the police department’s ABC unit during the alcohol license application process. The plan requires documentation of a venue’s plans for crowd management, underage service prevention, and the use of security guards. Adherence to the plan is enforced by the ABC unit.

Top venue safety challenges cited by compliance officers include the following: over-service/service to intoxicated patrons, underage service, overcrowding, and amplified sound violations. The engagement work of Savannah Prevention Coalition and Beyond the Bell uncovered that venue staff, even if they were aware of safety best practices, did not feel supported in implementation by venue owners and managers.

It became evident during this process that venue safety standards and systems need enhancement. Server training programs exist, but they vary in length and content; there is no oversight to ensure quality. Without a Bar Card system, venue owners have no way to check that a server is current with training. The Security Plan submitted to ABC addresses many key safety topics, but city guidelines do not mandate certain procedures e.g. occupancy must be monitored with a clicker, venues must maintain a certain security-to-patron ratio, etc. The Plan instead requests documentation from the venue, which is expected to determine safety practices of their own accord, leading to inconsistency in safety practices.

Some challenges and venue violations can be attributed to systems that are the status quo in Savannah. Instead of using trained private security (considered global best practice), venues instead voluntarily or are mandated to hire off-duty officers. Although problematic, venue owners feel it is the only way to ensure a quick response time from the police due to the lack of a dedicated unit. Further, off-duty officers are not allowed to check IDs, transferring responsibility for ID checking to servers (standard practice is for door security to have this responsibility to prevent underage from entering the premises). Even when citations are issued, consequences do not flow to the venue owner for multiple violations.

Venues are stuck with few alternatives in a non-ideal system. Paradigm shifts are necessary for long-term change.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES	
Gap in a Formal Alliance of Venue Operators	A trade association would provide a mechanism for venue collaboration, improved communication with government through a central contact, and voluntary standards.
Gap in a Safety and Evacuation Plan	Procedures do not exist (vetted by city and venues) for scenarios like a patron drug overdose, active shooter, terrorism, or disturbance with an unsheltered person.
Venue Reliance on Off-Duty officers	The off-duty officer system creates inconsistent security presence downtown that does not compensate for the benefits of private security hired by venues and a dedicated police unit.
Gap in City-Defined Standards	Definitions of venue security for social venues do not exist (e.g. private security staff credentials, security to patron ratios, etc.).
Gap in Continuity of Consequences to Venue Owner	Citations are issued to the bar staff for serving underage or for over-service, without consequences to the venue owner or manager. Multiple citations do not trigger a review.

CORE MEASURE 3: SOCIAL VENUES



Savannah’s downtown social economy offers a multitude of experiences at different times of day and for different life stages. The city has been described as a melting pot, rich with history and diverse entertainment offerings, including “day life.”

Downtown business owners report that their businesses are inviting, informative for visitors, and also supportive of locals’ needs and community causes. Venue operators believe the to-go zone makes downtown safer and more social. They believe that employee retention is high and that staff connects with each other informally for the purpose of safety of patrons and workers.

However, the gap in proactive, educational communication between venue operators and city departments has fostered resentment and a lack of trust. When policies change that directly affect social venues’ operation, there isn’t a notification or input-generating

session. For example, when the boundaries of the to-go zone changed, social venues were not invited to provide input. They believe policies and procedures are confusing, especially relating to alcohol licensing. Expectations are not clear to them, then they are cited for non-compliance. Sanitation is not picked up consistently, so garbage is left inside businesses or near venues. The city then cites the business for non-compliance.

Mistrust between venue operators and police is in large part due to systemic disincentives to proactively engage the police. Currently, if venue staff have a problem and call the police to assist (as is expected), the police create a “call for service” record that is then used against a venue during license renewal. Along the same lines, if a venue calls for assistance with transients around their location (e.g. if a transient is defecating on their patio), or someone calls using their address, the venue is reported as the cause of the disturbance on record.

Venue operators and staff should feel ownership of their community and be proactive in identifying both qualities of life and safety issues. However, there is no non-emergency police number widely available to call for nonviolent issues nor is there an after-hours number for addressing the unsheltered or those with mental health or substance abuse issues.

The requirement that venues use “off-duty” police officers and pay them directly creates confusion around the obligation of these officers to act on behalf of the venue or public safety at large. Some venues choose to hire police, some do not, and others are forced to after an incident. This inconsistency among venues creates unneeded tension and uneven service provision

The city of Savannah currently charges a 3% drink tax that is passed through to consumers and paid by venues. This amounts to \$2+ million per year (See Appendix IV: Drink Tax Data), but venues feel they are only involved with the City departments when they are inspected or cited for wrongdoing. There is a great sense of powerlessness from venue operators, and also some anger at being blamed for events over which they have no control. There is no transparency regarding how this tax money is used, and whether it is used on behalf of the venues that collect it.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES	
Gap in Communication of New Policies, Procedures	Venues report that the city’s rules and expectations for safety are unclear, then they receive enforcement action for non-compliance. This fosters mistrust and resentment.
Disincentives from Calling the Police Add to Mistrust	Calls for service count against venues’ records at license renewal, even regarding transients and non-violent issues. This has eroded trust between government and venues.
Off-Duty Officer System	Uneven service provision; unclear allegiances; inconsistent rates charged.
Mobility and Public Space	Safe parking for staff; parking tickets for product unloading; youth loitering in public.
Businesses Cited for Trash Service Issues	Trash receptacles may be full or compactors have broken. Venue staff are unsure of where to put trash, then get cited for non-compliance.

CORE MEASURE 4: PUBLIC SPACE



Public green spaces are one of the greatest assets Savannah has to offer. Squares and Forsyth Park offer iconic, charming spaces to rest in shade with tree cover. Public spaces are used for exercise (e.g. running, yoga classes), art (e.g. painting, photography), and events. The Riverwalk offers waterfront views with entertainment programming on outdoor stages coordinated by Plant Riverside.

The to-go cup zone and temperate weather at night are a novelty deeply ingrained in the culture of Savannah. At night, squares are used to drink and socialize. This lends itself to a festive atmosphere both inside venues and on the street. The street has become a destination and spectacle in itself, where some come to people watch, cruise, and show off without ever stepping foot inside of a business. While vibrancy outdoors is valued,

there is a belief that a tipping point is being reached where festivities are becoming a street party.

Outdoor dining was already fairly prevalent in Savannah before the pandemic, but the emergency authorization from the governor allowed parklets and streeteries to also exist. There is a perception among business owners that this amenity was unfairly taken away, which will hopefully be addressed via the new parklet ordinance.

Lighting is inconsistent from street to street and in keeping with historic preservation standards, but it is rather dim for an active destination for socializing. Several lighting improvements are already underway, though. Ellis Square replaced temporary spotlights with brighter permanent lighting. Franklin Square will soon have better lighting and landscaping to cut down shrubbery and potential hiding places. Georgia Power is reported to be fairly responsive in responding to complaints via 311 regarding dark lighting.

Like many communities nationwide, Savannah struggles with the presence of unsheltered, panhandlers and transients. Each represent distinct populations (not homogenous): some struggle with mental health and substance abuse. There are several social service providers for food and shelter in the city, yet some choose not to partake. Public spaces are being used inappropriately e.g. some bathe in drinking fountains in squares. While mostly peaceful, there have been a few incidents involving verbal altercations with the public and even physical assaults with weapons against venue staff.

The public and venue operators are frustrated by the perceived lack of action with unsheltered and transients. But, they have rights too, and social services are limited in their response. Further, police can issue citations, but the county jail will not accept misdemeanors, so making an arrest would not lead to jail time. Police say that some unsheltered individuals push the limits, but their hands are tied.

The Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless (CSAH), the umbrella organization that coordinates social services countywide, plans to launch a multi-pronged campaign. The Give Change that Counts is an anti-panhandling campaign to educate the public to donate to social services instead of directly to panhandlers. Donations are used for current social service providers and towards the creation of a day center to facilitate access to services. An awareness-raising campaign has included presentations throughout the city, the distribution of QR codes, and display posters. Further, daytime outreach workers will soon operate from 9 am-5 pm so businesses can have a point of contact. Despite current efforts, awareness is limited among visitors and social venues, which may warrant targeted focus and outreach.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES	
Gap in Activation	Minimal activation or programming of art or activity in public spaces i.e. squares.
Unsheltered, Transients, and People with Mental Illness	Gap in after-hours services; limited awareness about existing initiatives e.g. Give Change that Counts campaign; limited understanding about what police and services can do.
Off-Duty Officer System for Venue and Event Security	Discrepancies in pay rate and the number of officers required for events; dissatisfaction with deployment strategy e.g. when they clump together instead of rove/ "walk the beat."
Trash Management	Trash cans overflowing; gap in the coordination of trash service providers.
Dim Lighting Impedes Pedestrian Safety	Dim lighting in certain pathways especially to hotels on side streets, and laneways used as venue entrances without additional lighting.

CORE MEASURE 5: QUALITY OF LIFE



Note: This project's assessment of the quality of life focused primarily on resident experiences in the downtown area closest to the highest density of social venues. However, it would be remiss not to note that residents who live outside of downtown face distinct challenges unrelated to the impacts generated by the social economy.

Quality of Life for Downtown Residents

The culture of the south and Savannah's mix of uses make it a fun place to live and socialize. The density of social venues in clusters and districts makes it convenient for downtown residents to access a multitude of social experiences on foot.

Residents who live within the Downtown district face coexistence challenges that stem from sharing their neighborhood with visitors and tourists, many of whom partake in the social economy. The close proximity of short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) to social venues makes them appealing to groups, who may party before or after going out. Sound disturbances emanate from a variety of sources, including people singing while walking back through neighborhoods, amplified sound from social venues and rooftop bars, car stereos, house parties, etc. People urinate in yards, peer in homes on ghost tours, and block sidewalks so residents can't walk their dogs. STVR renters may park several cars, making it hard for residents to park near homes.

Trash is overflowing throughout downtown. To-go cups, while recognized by many as an attraction to tourists and a social amenity, comprise the majority of the litter. There are concerns about public drunkenness, also in part perpetuated by the to-go drinking allowance. There is a large unsheltered population that congregates downtown in proximity to social services. The presence of this community with mental illness can be intimidating to some residents.

There is a push-and-pull dynamic to balance uses oriented to residents rather than just tourists and visitors. This dynamic grows increasingly urgent as more long-term housing is converted into STVRs. The rental stock displacement is driving the displacement of residents outside of downtown and is believed to contribute to the challenge of the unsheltered population. Rules are on the books for amplified sound from venues, STVRs, etc. but are not being enforced.

Significant growth, development, and construction/repair work is happening throughout the city. But, residents expressed a desire for greater communication and outreach with city government. There was a request to have the city take extra steps to communicate with residents about existing uses that cause negative impacts e.g. the college stadium and football games causing sound disturbances in the nearby neighborhoods.

Quality of Life of Residents Who Live in Neighborhoods Outside Downtown

There is a marked difference in the level of investment, availability of amenities, and access to services in neighborhoods located outside downtown compared to the downtown and Victorian districts. Residents of westside neighborhoods such as Cloverdale, Carver Village, and Feiler Park, with a predominant base of African American residents, face challenges with infrastructure and access to basic services they're entitled to. There is a perception that these neighborhoods are de-prioritized compared to downtown as the focal point for social and visitor activity.

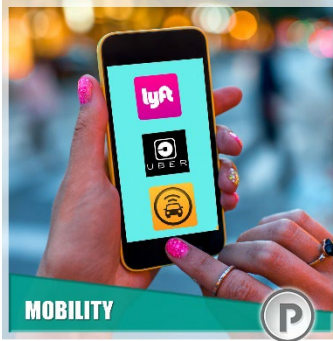
The notion of discussing impacts from recreational pursuits (i.e. nightlife) is far lower on the totem pole compared to the ability to have basic services like electricity, drainage, etc. Some residents report sleeping in cars on hot nights for the AC when electricity is out at home. They have trouble reversing out of flooded driveways to get to work. Bus service is inconsistent for workers and students, meaning they must drive personal vehicles.

They view the amenities downtown as unfair – free shuttles, social amenities, etc. are focused downtown or in major hospitality developments. Roads are newly paved up to the arena, but not in the nearby neighborhood. Residents expressed frustration when youth of color get in trouble downtown when they have no other safe, age-appropriate recreational alternatives in their own neighborhoods. Investment is needed in the future generations of Savannahians, especially those of color.

Several historically Black neighborhoods are located in proximity to anticipated areas for hospitality development. The EnMarket Arena is anticipated to grow with new bars and restaurants catering to stadium attendees. There is a need to apply lessons learned from Downtown to these neighborhoods to set these communities up for success.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES		
CHALLENGES FOR RESIDENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD	SHARED CHALLENGES	CHALLENGES FOR RESIDENTS IN OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS
Gap in Sound Enforcement at Night and After-Hours: Rooftop bars, short-term vacation rentals, tour services, etc.	Accessing 911 promptly for emergencies and to report the firing of gunshots.	Restoration of electricity during power outages, wind, and extreme weather.
Short-Term Vacation Rentals: Disorderly house parties, sound, parking.	Accessing 311 after-hours for non-emergency infrastructure service requests.	Drainage of flooded streets during heavy rains
Public Drunkenness People refill to-go cups with alcohol from trunks, then walk around with cups.	Gap in the accessibility of city departments on nights and weekends. It is not possible to access city departments for help.	Road Maintenance and Street Cleaning: Roads require re-paving, filling in potholes, and traffic calming devices e.g. roundabouts.
Litter Management Downtown Receptacles are full by Saturday night/Sunday morning. There is a need for weekend service. To-go cups are a major contributor.	Trash pick-up is insufficient. Neighborhoods outside downtown report that residential pick-up is irregular.	Consistency of Bus Service Before the recent route expansion (7c, 7d, 7f), bus service to these neighborhoods either didn't exist or had long waits.
Tourism Service Operators Tours that use loudspeakers generate sound impacts. Crowds of people block sidewalks. Overall etiquette needs improvement i.e. not peering into people's homes.	Gap in communication and outreach to residents about the impacts of new and existing projects Limited notification re: upcoming repair/construction projects and a gap in open dialogue to discuss impacts from existing projects e.g. sound impacts from the stadium.	Walkability and Interconnectedness: Streets in many neighborhoods outside of Downtown are not walkable to access social amenities.
Lack of availability of NARCAN to administer to the unsheltered Unsheltered, transients, etc. tend to congregate in squares downtown. Some have overdosed in public.	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Business Ownership: Perception that POC owners are being priced out of the market, with different standards being placed on them for opening a business.	Under-Resourced Community Centers and Schools: Enrichment programs that are of interest and engaging to youth is key for providing after-school activities.
Lighting on side streets and some main thoroughfares.	Displacement of unsheltered into residential neighborhoods.	

CORE MEASURE 6: MOBILITY



The physical layout of downtown is a key strength that encourages walkability. The city’s 18th century plan by founder James Edward Oglethorpe has a distinctive street network with repeating squares of residential blocks, commercial blocks, and small green parks (“squares”) that create integrated neighborhoods. Public squares offer green space for socializing and protection from the elements. Some streets still have historic cobblestone pathways and steep stairways leading to the river.

At night, walkability downtown, especially Congress Street, is impeded by dim lighting, sidewalk obstructions, and large crowds. Sidewalks are so narrow that pedestrians enter the street (and oncoming traffic) to gauge whether to cross the street instead of using designated crosswalks. Broughton Street’s streetscape construction has

dramatically reduced footfall, especially at night with low lighting.

Traffic congestion at night is growing due to competing uses: cruisers driving in a constant loop, people trying to find parking, and rideshare vehicles stopping in the middle of the street to pick up passengers. Response time by emergency vehicles (police, fire, EMS) is delayed due to difficulty traversing downtown. Police set up barricades to help reroute traffic and curb cruising, but some tourism mobility service providers get stuck and need to be allowed re-entry.

Debates about closing certain streets entirely to make them safer for pedestrians are being explored. It can be a difficult balance to ensure pedestrian safety while also not facilitating a street party atmosphere. The to-go cup zone already encourages loitering/socializing outside. One challenge may be addressed while others may be exacerbated.

While traffic congestion is undeniably a significant issue downtown, there are concerns about how to expand mobility options to outlying areas. The footprint of residences, visitor lodging, and even social venues is expanding outside the downtown core (e.g. Southside, Eastside, Pooler, Tybee island). Yet most mobility services (DOT, Downtowner) are downtown-centric. Chatham Area Transit (CAT) has a 50% driver shortage, leading to reduced routes and longer waits.

Impaired driving between 2020-2021 increased by 22%. Data from August 2022 indicates impaired driving continues to grow: DUIs were up 17% between 2019-2022. (Data cited by MADD representative at 8/23/22 RHI meeting.) A workforce of 9,000 is anticipated for the new Hyundai Plant in Bryan County. After work, they will likely come to Savannah to socialize. How will they get home safely?

Towing of vehicles has a continuum of barriers. Drivers park illegally without fear of reprisal. Some illegally parked cars block driveways to residences and businesses. Response time is long, as police are the only department authorized to request a summary tow. Parking Services is only able to issue parking citations and boot cars. There is no signage indicating that cars will be towed in certain locations and at certain times.

The safety of women employees and patrons is also a chief concern. Pathways from places of employment to parking garages are dark; some women have been assaulted and robbed inside garages. Some businesses have a policy of escorting female employees to cars and parking garages.

PRIORITY CHALLENGES	
Nighttime Walkability	Dim lighting, sidewalk obstructions, narrow sidewalks with large crowds.
Traffic Congestion Contributors	Cruising, people trying to park, rideshares picking up passengers in the middle of the street.
Gap in Coordination and Awareness of Services	Need for better coordination of multiple service providers along the same routes; some service industry members don’t know about downtown mobility options e.g. Downtowner.
Mobility Options Limited Outside the Downtown Core	Gap in mobility service options to residences and hotels outside the core leads to concerns about impaired driving.
Employee and Women’s Safety Accessing Parking	Women employees have expressed safety concerns in accessing dark parking garages after their shifts; the use of laneways as back-entrances is of concern due to predators.

APPENDIX I: PROJECT TIMELINE

Between May and October 2022, RHI conducted three site visits with a total of 30 meetings (20 in-person meetings and 10 virtual interviews/meetings). The RHI process featured 4 neighborhood engagement opportunities (2 in-person and 2 virtually) to meet with residents representing 7 neighborhoods citywide.

Observational tours were conducted on foot, in the car, and via trolley during the day and night, including a police ride-along. Late-night observation of downtown's social activity was conducted in July as well as on Friday, October 28, 2022, which intentionally coincided with the Pride festival and Halloween celebrations.

May-August, 2022 Virtual Interviews

- 8 virtual interviews were held with Transformation Team members and other key stakeholders.

July 8-12, 2022 On-Site Meetings

- Daytime tours: on foot, by car, and by trolley
- Nighttime ride-along with Savannah Police Department.
- Late-night observation of Savannah's nightlife in the downtown historic core.
- On-site meetings as follows:
 - City leadership (City manager, Downtown Council member, Chief Operating Officer)
 - Transformation Team
 - Department heads (parking, traffic engineering, tourism, etc.)
 - Public safety stakeholders
- Dinner meeting with key city administration: City Manager, Council member Detric Leggett, who represents downtown; and the Chief Operating Officer.

August 20-24, 2022 On-Site Meetings

- Three Listening Sessions: Safety, Vibrancy, Planning
- Women's focus group
- Meeting about licensing and data with the Revenue Department, Planning Dept, Police Dept, etc.
- Meeting with the Mayor and Chief of Staff.

October 24 and November 21, 2022, Virtual Engagement

- Two virtual meetings with neighborhood leaders.

October 25-29, 2022 On-Site Meetings: Roundtable Focus Groups and Stakeholder Meetings

- 6 roundtables on the core measures of a Sociable City: Public Safety, Venue Safety, Social Venues, Public Space, Mobility, and Quality of Life.
- Venue operators meeting with owners, operators, and managers of businesses located downtown and in Starland.
- Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) meeting with approx. 16 residents.
- Neighborhood presidents meeting representing Carver Village, Cloverdale, Ardsley Park, and Starland.
- Observation of Pride parade and festival and Halloween celebrations downtown.

Leadership Summit: TBD

- Summary findings will be presented to the Transformation Team and project participants, as well as potentially City Council.

APPENDIX II: PARTICIPANTS

A total of 98 people participated in the project (for whom contact info was collected). They represented 64 different organizations and companies.

Transformation Team Members: Marked with TT.

Formal Meetings Attended: Listening Session and/or Roundtable attendance if marked with one of the following codes: Public Safety, Venue Safety, Mobility, Quality of Life, Public Space, or Social Venues.

Special Interest Sessions held included: Women's Focus Group, Venue Operators Meeting, or Venue Interviews. *Note: approximately 16 residents attended the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) meeting; contact information was not received for them to be included in this directory.*

Representation included 8 city government (non-police) employees, 11 police department staff, and about 20 venue operators/staff, some of whom operate multiple venues, as well as 3 associations representing multiple social venues located in City Market, Plant Riverside, and Starland Yard. Residents and neighborhood leaders invited represented 7 neighborhoods: Downtown, Starland, Habersham Village, Feiler Park, Cloverdale, Carver Village, and Tatemville.

GREATER SAVANNAH BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Tomeca McPherson
Chair
TT, Public Space

BARRELHOUSE SOUTH / VICE / ROGUE

Newton Owens
Venue Operators Meeting

BIKE / WALK SAVANNAH

Caia Brown
Executive Director
Mobility, Women's Focus Group

BLACK RABBIT

Hayley Spaulding
General Manager
Social Venues

Patrick Zimmerman

Owner
Social Venues

BOOMYS

Keith Berger
Venue Operators Meeting

Michelle Methot

Venue Operators Meeting

CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT

Ashley Goodrich
Systems Planning Manager
Mobility

William Sedgwick

Systems Planning Manager
Mobility

CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE

Samantha Carlson

Officer
Women's Focus Group

CHATHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES (EMS)

Benji Cowart
Chief
Public Safety
Lydia McCrary
Deputy Chief
Women's Focus Group

CHATHAM SAVANNAH AUTHORITY FOR THE HOMELESS

Kamashia Nelson
Case Manager / Office Manager
Public Space

CHRISTIK TRAVEL

Christi Kempf
Owner
Women's Focus Group

CITY MARKET ASSOCIATES

Kimberly Phillips
Director
Public Space

CITY OF SAVANNAH

Administration

Christian Shellman
Asst. to Chief Operating Officer
Women's Focus Group

Development Services Department

Mike Rose
Development Services Liaison,
Public Safety

Mobility and Parking Services Department

Sean Brandon
Senior Director
Mobility

Office of Special Events, Film & Tourism

Nay Broome
Film Coordinator
Women's Focus Group

Planning And Urban Design Department

Bridget Lidy
Senior Director
Quality of Life

Risk Management Division

Roy Davis
Risk Management
Public Safety

Traffic Engineering Department

Stephen Henry
Senior Director
Mobility

Michele Stickland
Manager
Mobility

CLAVIN WAYNE PROPERTIES

Calvin Parker
Owner
Public Space

CLUB ONE

Travis Coles
Manager
TT, Venue Operators Meeting

CLOVERDALE NEIGHBORHOOD

Lynda Deloach
Resident
Quality of Life

Leonard Lawton
Resident
Quality of Life

COLLECTIVE MARKETING

Karen Guinn
Owner
TT

COLLIN'S QUARTER

Anthony Debreceny
Owner
Public Space

CONGRESS STREET SOCIAL CLUB

Gregg Dietrich
Venue Operators Meeting

CONNELL, THAW, AND RUBERTI LAW FIRM

Patrick Connell
Attorney

NANCY'S HEART INC

Shawn Christopher
Founder
TT, Quality of Life

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

ASSOCIATION
Marysue McCarthy
Resident
Quality of Life

ELAN / CRYPT / SADDLEBAGS / 51 DEGREES

Jay Trikha
Venue Operators Meeting

FIRST CITY PRIDE

Lawerence Appenzeller
Director
Women's Focus Group

GASLIGHT GROUP

Jake Brooks
Director of Operations
Quality of Life

HELLO NEIGHBOR SAVANNAH

Lavon Youins
Media Liaison
Venue Safety

LIVING INDEPENDENCE FOR EVERYONE, INC.

Neil Ligon
Exec. Director
Public Space

LONE WOLF LOUNGE

Tom Worley
Venue Operators Meeting

M.A.D.D.

Theresa Dewild
Program and Fund Development Manager
Mobility

MCDONOUGH'S

Joseph Lee
Owner
Social Venues

NO MORE OVERDOSES

Lesli Messinger
Director
Venue Safety

OCTANE / ECLIPSE

Chris Hughey
Venue Operators Meeting

ODYSSEY 2.0 REST. AND LOUNGE

Lillian Loretz
Owner
Social Venues

PLANT RIVERSIDE

Mark Castriota
General Manager
Social Venues

PROACTIVE CONTROL SYSTEMS

Jim Deal
Director/Trainer
Venue Safety

Dave Moon

Venue Safety

THE RAIL PUB

Melissa Swanson
Venue Operators Meeting

RESIDENTS

Jamie Lynn Failing
Women's Focus Group

Dani Jakubowski

Women's Focus Group

Carry Smith

Women's Focus Group

Beverlee Trotter

Community Activist
Women's Focus Group

Roe Zaplinski

Women's Focus Group

RUSTY RUDDERS / FROSTY FROG

Kyle Waddell
Venue Operators Meeting

SAVANNAH AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Tara Reese
Member Relations Manager
Women's Focus Group

Conni Reynolds

Small Business and Events Manager
Women's Focus Group

Erika Backus

Public Relations Director
TT

SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

John Buckavich
Vice President of Operations
Quality of Life

David Gay

Director of University Safety
TT, Public Safety

SAVANNAH FIRE DEPARTMENT

Thomas Simmons
Fire Marshal
Public Safety

Whitney Williams-Smith

Battalion Chief
Public Safety

SAVANNAH MASTER CALENDAR

Marianne Ganem Poppell
Women's Focus Group

SAVANNAH SMILES

Tripp Morales
Venue Operators Meeting

SAVANNAH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Shamonica Badie
Major
Public Safety

Brad Beddow

Evening Captain
Public Safety

Megan Edwards
Civilian Investigator, ABC Unit
Venue Safety

Torrance Garvin
Traffic Commander
Mobility

Ben Herron
Major
Public Safety

Robert Larry
Officer
Mobility

Barry Lewis
Neighborhood Risk Reduction
Public Safety

Mark Lupus
Sergeant, ABC Unit
Venue Safety

Mike McPhaul
Northwest Pct LT
Public Safety

Katrina Myers
Investigator, ABC Unit
Public Safety

Jason Pagliaro
Homeland Security
Public Safety

SAVANNAH PREVENTION COALITION

Lindsey Grovenstein
Community Advocate
TT, Venue Safety, Women's Focus
Group

SAVANNAH SLOW RIDE

Samantha Meier
Owner
TT, Mobility

Elizabeth Nelson
Operations Manager
Mobility

SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY

Rennie Walters

Police Chief, Police
Public Safety

LeAndrea Mikell
Exec. Dir. - Government Relations and
Community Engagement
Women's Focus Group

SAVANNAH STOPOVER

Kayne Lanahan
Director
Public Space

SAVANNAH'S WATERFRONT

Julie Mussleman
Director
Public Space

THE SAVANNAHIAN

Rachael Flora
Writer
Women's Focus Group

SERVICE BREWING

Kevin Ryan
Venue Operators Meeting

SHOT BY SOMI

Somi Benson
Patron/Photographer
Public Space

SOBREMESA

Guinn Friedman
Co-Owner
Venue Interview

Ryan Ribeiro
Co-Owner
Venue Interview

SOCIAL CLUB / SORRY CHARLIE'S

Harley Krinsky
Owner
TT, Social Venues

STARLAND YARD

Ava Pandiani
GM
Public Space

SUNSTATES SECURITY

Da'Von McClure
Regional Manager
Venue Safety

SYMBIOSCITY

Denise Grobowski
President
Quality of Life

TATEMVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD

ASSOCIATION

Weslyn Bowers
D.E.I. Community Advocate
Quality of Life

THE RAIL PUB

Trina Brown
Owner
Social Venues

TREE HOUSE

Wes Putman
Venue Operators Meeting

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jason Combs
Chairman
Quality of Life

TOURISM LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Michael Owens
Chairman
Quality of Life

TRIDENT STRATEGY GROUP

Moncello Stewart
President
TT

VICTORY NORTH

Andrea De La Higuera
Marketing
Women's Focus Group

VISIT SAVANNAH

Joe Marinelli
President
TT

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Photo Credits

Photos in this report are a combination of stock photos, photos provided by Visit Savannah, and photos taken by RHI staff during on-site visits.

APPENDIX IV: DRINK TAX DATA

Drink Tax Data

Per the City of Savannah, Department of Revenue:

Mixed Drink Tax		
Month	2021	2022
January	\$ 170,147.00	\$ 262,926.00
February	\$ 139,720.00	\$ 183,413.00
March	\$ 151,763.00	\$ 221,024.00
April	\$ 228,445.00	\$ 300,339.00
May	\$ 279,979.00	\$ 304,274.00
June	\$ 261,358.00	\$ 253,341.00
July	\$ 251,523.00	\$ 290,057.00
August	\$ 292,039.00	\$ 275,593.00
September	\$ 213,089.00	\$ 241,312.00
October	\$ 227,170.00	\$ 227,065.00
November	\$ 250,831.00	\$ -
December	\$ 223,180.00	\$ -
Total	\$ 2,689,244.00	\$ 2,559,344.00

APPENDIX V: CHATHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES DATA FOR ZONE 1

Based on Chatham Emergency Services' Call Natures log between January 1, 2022 – July 31, 2022, which was exported for this project. Zone 1 includes the Downtown Historic District.

RHI'S SUMMARY OF ZONE 1/ENTIRE CITY COMPARISON

- ▣ Intoxication in Zone 1 represents 70% of all intoxication calls in the city
- ▣ Drug overdoses in Zone 1 represent 44% of all drug overdose calls in the city
- ▣ Stabbing | Shooting | Penetrating Trauma in Zone 1 represents 73% of all Stabbing | Shooting | Penetrating Trauma calls in the city.

ORIGINAL DATA PROVIDED

Trip Count by Nature of Call

Trip Date IS BETWEEN 01/01/2022 AND 07/31/2022; AND Call Types IS (Disabled) 04- BACK UP | ASSIST OR (Disabled) 05- NEONATE TEAM ONLY OR (Disabled) 06- NEONATE- BABY OR 01- ALS-PARAMEDIC OR 02- ALS-AEMT OR 03- BLS; AND Response Zone IS Zone 1...

Chatham Emergency Services

	01- ALS-PAR	02- ALS-AEM	03- BLS	Total
ABDOMINAL PAIN	248	28	170	446
ALLERGIC REACTION	89	3	18	110
ALT MENTAL STATUS	269	15	73	357
ANIMAL BITE ATTACK	27	5	29	61
ASSAULT DOMESTIC	237	24	330	591
BACK PAIN	68	6	94	168
BURNS	24	0	10	34
CARDIAC ARREST	219	10	39	268
CHEST PAIN	1117	66	253	1436
CHOKING	30	1	15	46
DEAD PERSON	12	0	1	13
DIABETIC PROBLEM	249	18	76	343
DIZZY	119	11	76	206
DRUG OVERDOSE	97	4	28	129
ELECTROCUTION LIGHTNING	3	0	0	3
EYE PROBLEM INJURY	25	0	14	39
FALL	818	72	453	1343
HEADACHE	68	8	60	136
HEART PROBLEM AICD HYPER HYPO TENSION	28	1	3	32
HEAT COLD EXPOSURE	46	3	20	69
HEMORRHAGE LACERATIONS	213	22	135	370
HYPERTENSION HYPOTENSION	199	19	37	255
INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT	4	0	4	8
INGESTION POISONING	78	6	24	108
INTOXICATED PERSON	91	8	64	163
LIFT ASSIST NO INJURY	1	0	473	474
MEDICAL ALARM ALERT	261	12	71	344
MEDICAL ISSUES	384	29	502	915

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Page 1

Trip Count by Nature of Call

Trip Date IS BETWEEN 01/01/2022 AND 07/31/2022; AND Call Types IS (Disabled) 04- BACK UP | ASSIST OR (Disabled) 05- NEONATE TEAM ONLY OR (Disabled) 06- NEONATE- BABY OR 01- ALS-PARAMEDIC OR 02- ALS-AEMT OR 03- BLS; AND Response Zone IS Zone 1...

Chatham Emergency Services

	01- ALS-PAR	02- ALS-AEM	03- BLS	Total
MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION	1303	77	449	1829
MVC VS PEDESTRIAN	50	0	13	63
NAUSEA VOMITING	181	24	158	363
PAIN	305	37	458	800
PREGNANCY CHILDBIRTH	68	5	18	91
PSYCHIATRIC	15	0	700	715
RESPIRATORY DISTRESS	1724	119	448	2291
SEIZURES	609	48	121	778
SICK PERSON	311	30	276	617
STABBING SHOOTING PENETRATING TRAUMA	184	11	53	248
STROKE CVA	249	11	46	306
SUICIDE ATTEMPT	135	14	163	312
TRAUMATIC INJURY	194	10	94	298
UNCONSCIOUS FAINTING	1015	63	248	1326
UNKNOWN SITUATION	183	11	79	273
USE OF FORCE CHECK	8	0	116	124
WELFARE CHECK	2	40	13	55
Total	11,560	871	6,525	18,956

RescueNet™ Reporting

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Page 2

APPENDIX VI: JUVENILE ARRESTS IN THE NORTHWEST PRECINCT

Data was compiled per request by this project by the Savannah Police Department for the number of juvenile arrests (18 and under) that occur Downtown. Data represents arrests in the Northwest Precinct.

Arrest Count Incident Type	Years			Arrests Years			
	2021	2022	Grand Total	Age	2021	2022	Grand Total
LARCENY,ENTERING AUTO	20	10	30	9	1		1
SERVICE,SERVE WARRANT	10	14	24	10	1		1
AUTO THEFT	4	13	17	11	1		1
DISORDERLY CONDUCT	8	5	13	12	4	5	9
SIMPLE BATTERY DVA	9	2	11	13	5	12	17
BATTERY	6	4	10	14	14	16	30
DAMAGE PROPERTY,PRIVATE	5	5	10	15	11	22	33
OTHER JUVENILE OFFENSES	2	7	9	16	29	25	54
WEAPON OFFENSE FREE TEXT	2	5	7	17	20	27	47
AGG ASSAULT,PROP DAMAGE,NO INJ	2	4	6	18	21	19	40
FAMILY OFFENSE	3	2	5	Grand Total	107	126	233
MOVING TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	3	1	4				
PRIVACY,TRESPASSING	1	3	4				
PERSON,MISSING 12-16 YO		4	4				
DRUGS,MARIJUANA POSSESSION	2	2	4				
WEAPON,FIRING OF	3	1	4				
AGG W GUNSHOT WOUND,NON-DOM		4	4				
STOLEN PROPERTY,POSSESSION		3	3				
CHECK SUBJECT	2	1	3				
AUTO THEFT,OTHER VEHICLE	3		3				
DRUGS,DANGEROUS DRUGS	1	2	3				
AGG ASSAULT,NON-DOM,GUN		3	3				
LARCENY,SHOPLIFTING		3	3				
TRAFFIC,DUI ALCOHOL	3		3				
WEAPON,ALTER IDENTITY		3	3				
OBSTRUCTING,FREE TEXT		3	3				
ROBBERY, STREET, GUN	1	2	3				
WEAPON,POSSESSION OF		3	3				
HOMICIDE, NON-FAMILY, GUN	1	2	3				
AGG ASSAULT,FAMILY,STRONGARM		2	2				
OBSTRUCTING,RESIST OFFICER	2		2				
RUNAWAY		2	2				
BURG,FORCED COMMERCIAL	2		2				
LARCENY,BICYCLE	2		2				
BURG,NO FORCE,RESIDENTIAL	2		2				
AGG ASSAULT, FAMILY OTHER WEAP	1	1	2				
INVESTIGATE,PROWLER		1	1				
THREAT TO INJURE PERSON		1	1				
STOLEN PROPERTY,RECEIVE		1	1				
AUTO THEFT,RECEIVING STN		1	1				
DRUGS,COCAINE POSSESSION	1		1				
AGG ASSAULT,DOM,GUN,NO INJURY		1	1				
POSSESSION STOLEN AUTO		1	1				
LARCENY,OTHER		1	1				
THEFT BY CONVERSION	1		1				
DRUGS,HALLUCINOGEN		1	1				
AGG ASSAULT,NON-FAMILY,OTHER V	1		1				
SEX,CHILD FONDLING	1		1				
ILLEGAL USE OF CREDIT CARD		1	1				
SIMPLE BATTERY	1		1				
PERSON,MISSING 17 AN UP	1		1				
BURG,FORCED RESIDENTIAL		1	1				
OBSTRUCTING,FEL RESIST	1		1				
Grand Total	107	126	233				

APPENDIX VII: SECURITY PLAN GUIDELINES SUBMITTED TO ABC

When applying for an Alcoholic Beverage License, applicants must submit a Security Plan for review and discussion with the Savannah Police Department's ABC unit.



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Security Plan Assistance Sheet

This form was designed to be used as an outline to aid in the creation of a suitable Security Plan when applying for an Alcoholic Beverage License. This outline provides a general idea of the minimum concerns that should be addressed, but applicants are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible. It should be noted that not all concerns listed apply to all businesses. **Security Plans should be typed. Applicants should also type out the question they are answering AND answer the question using complete sentences.** Upon review of the Security Plan by SPD, applicants may be asked to provide additional information (in writing) before the Security Plan can be approved.

Please provide your name, establishment address and date on the security plan when submitted.

- 1) **Identification of days and hours of operation:** What days of the week is your business open? For each day what time is your business open and close?
- 2) **Specific measures and procedures to address crowd management both inside and outside the premise:** How do you make sure crowds inside your establishment remain orderly? How do you ensure crowds outside (i.e. lines, smokers, etc.) your establishment remain orderly?
 - a. Do you have no loitering signs, if so how many, where?
 - b. Do you have cameras? If so how many? Inside / outside or both?
- 3) **Identification of any parking areas owned or controlled by establishment:** Where do your customers/patrons park when they're at your establishment?
- 4) **Means of controlling access to the premises and parking area:** How does your establishment control who comes in and out of your establishment? How do you control who uses your parking areas if it's private parking?
 - a. **Examples would be: cameras, security guards, signs, or gates.**
- 5) **Security Staffing:** Do you use Security Guards? If so, how many? How often do you use them? Where they trained "in house" or by a company? If they were trained by a company, provide the name(s). Do you employ Off-Duty SPD officers? If so, how many and how often?
- 6) **Measures used to combat underage consumption of alcoholic beverages:** What do you/your employees do to ensure that individuals under that age of 21 are not allowed to buy/consume alcohol at your establishment?
 - a. Clearly state how you card customers. Do you have servers calculate the age by doing the math in their head?
OR
 - b. Do you have a scanner where you scan the ID and it tells the employee how the subject is? **OR**
 - c. Do you enter the date of birth in a point of sale and it tells the employee the age of the customer?
- 7) **Measures used to distinguish between patrons who are over and under the age of 21, where applicable:** Does your establishment allow individuals under 21 to enter? If so, how do you identify people who are 21 and over from those who are under 21 years of age?
 - a. Clearly indicate if you have wrist bands/hand stamps or card subjects every time they order a beverage. Is there another type of measure taken to prevent underage sales?
- 8) **Measures and procedures to combat the risk of fire:** What is being done at your location to help ensure there are no accidental fires?
- 9) **Discuss matters related to managing emergencies, such as fires, evacuation tactics, assignment of employee duties during emergencies, and coordination with public safety:** In the event of an emergency how is your staff trained to evacuate patron? Do certain employees have certain duties during emergencies? How does your establishment contact/ work with police and EMS during an emergency?

APPENDIX VIII: AMBASSADOR PROGRAM REVIVAL GUIDELINES

Marysue McCarthy, a member of the Downtown Neighborhood Association and former Savannah ambassador, provided the following suggested guidelines for how an ambassador program could be revived.

SAVANNAH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM (Reinvented)

Note: I'm sure there is more that needs to be addressed from the former program. Discussions with other participants and supervisors can fill in the blanks.

1.) TRAINING

- ~A full-time Trainer/Supervisor should be part of the Savannah Ambassador force. They should not be an employee with other job responsibilities. In addition to the initial classroom work, the Trainer would initiate the street training so new hires are not influenced by individual preferences.
- ~Full training should be given to each hire, not just initial batch of Ambassadors.
- ~There should be ongoing observations and written reports of results by Trainer/Supervisor. When not training or supervising, Trainer would be on the street with the other Ambassadors.
- ~Workshops on particular skill sets for all should be conducted with follow-up performance observations and critiques.

2.) HIRING

- ~Hire older adults for continuity and maturity. (Some or all part-time?)
- ~Employ part-timer for paperwork? (Don't recall why this was a problem.)
- ~Have employees sign acknowledgement of requirements for work hours and scheduling, uniforms, cleanliness, appearance, options for changes, personal conduct, etc. (Not having something like this previously was a big problem.)

3.) HOURS

- ~Wednesday through Sunday, 10AM to 7PM (one hour for lunch; or 30 minute lunch with two, fifteen-minute breaks.)
- ~If seven day coverage is preferred, force can be broken into two groups (all forces working Friday, Saturday, Sunday.) Force can rotate schedules each month or each quarter:
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

4.) DUTY ROTATION

- ~To alleviate the physical strain of walking almost constantly for eight hours, a rotation of duties should be scheduled in two-hour increments of walking, bike patrol, walking, fixed kiosks. (Kiosks would be on Broughton to serve maximum number of residents, businesses, visitors, and students. Glass box on Ellis Square or on Bay would primarily serve visitors.)

5.) UNIFORMS

- ~Practical, comfortable, adaptable uniforms are needed. Cargo pants, preferably with zip removal of lower portion; 50 cotton/50 poly polo shirts; removable lining windbreaker; rain jacket; straw hat and rain cover; sturdy athletic shoes (not boots.) In summer, shorts would be substituted for the cargo pants. All would carry the Savannah Ambassador logo (new one needed.)
- ~A backpack for band aids, maps, etc.
- ~Full-length locker for each Ambassador in centrally located facility, where all off-street beginning and end-of-shift training, lunch breaks, filing daily activity reports and meetings, etc., would take place.
- ~City-issued iphone for photographs, emergency calls, situation guidance...

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SERVICES

Savannah, Georgia
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