Commission on Nightlife and Culture Agenda

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Join us on updates from the Commission of Nightlife and Culture along with Bridge Fund information you won't want to miss.

Featuring updates from:

- John Falcicchio, Deputy Mayor, DMPED
- Sybongile Cook, Director, Business Development, DMPED
- Shawn Townsend, Director, Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture, MONC

Special Guests:

- Fred Moosally, Director, Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, ABRA
- Vinoda Basnayake, Chairman/Nightclub Owner, Commission on Nightlife and Culture
- Ris Lacoste, Chef/Restaurantuer, and Owner of Ris Restaurant

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting Agenda

July 8, 2019 | 6:30 P.M.-8:00 P.M.

Reeves Center Community Room

1. Welcoming Remarks
2. Commissioner Introductions
3. Commission Role and Responsibilities
4. First Year Priorities
5. Public Comment (3 minutes per person)

Next Commission Meeting-October 2019 (TBD)

If you have any questions, concerns or comments for the Commission on Nightlife and Culture, please send the information to nightlife@dc.gov.

Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20004

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Agenda

3/10/20

I. Roll Call

II. Review of 10.22.19 Meeting Minutes

III. Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture's Briefing

IV. Discussion of New Business

V. Public Comments

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Agenda

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

I. Roll Call

II. Review of 03.10.20 Meeting Minutes

III. Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture Update

IV. Discussion of New Business & Guest Speakers:

a. Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA), Director **Fred Moosally**

b. DC Health Phase Two Update, Associate Director, **Arian Gibson**

c. Department of Employment Services (DOES), **Quoinett Warrick**

d. Nightclub Rent Relief Letter

V. Public Comments

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Agenda

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

I. Roll Call

II. Review of 06.23.20 Meeting Minutes

III. Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture Update, Director, **Shawn Townsend**

IV. Discussion of New Business & Guest Speakers:

a. Department of Employment Services (DOES), Director, **Unique Morris-Hughes**

b. DC Health Phase Two Update, Associate Director, **Arian Gibson**

c. Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA), Community Resource Officer, **Sarah Fashbaugh**

d. Events DC, Vice President, Communications & Marketing, **Chinyere Hubbard**

V. Public Comments

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting Agenda

October 22, 2019 | 6:30 P.M.-8:00 P.M.

Reeves Center Community Room

I. Roll Call

II. Review of 07.08.19 Meeting Minutes

III. Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture's Update

IV. Discussion of New Business

V. Public Comments

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting
July 9, 2019 | 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

I. ***Introductions***

II. ***Overview of the Roles & Responsibilities of the Commission (Com. Basnayake)***

- a. Specific ***six*** items that are listed, in the legislation itself, as the roles & responsibilities of this Commission.
  - i. There is established a Commission on Nightlife and Culture, which shall advise the Mayor, Council, Office, and public on ways to improve laws and policies that impact nightlife establishments and residents living near such establishments by examining the following issues affecting areas with high concentrations of nightlife establishments:
    1. Common Complaints
    2. Public Safety & Traffic Concerns
    3. Community Development Concerns
    4. Economic Impact
    5. The availability and responsiveness of the Office and relevant agencies to the concerns brought by nightlife establishments and residents; and
    6. Any other issues the Commission considers relevant
       - a. Reference for this legislation: https://code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/sections/3-664.html

III. *"An active & well-managed nightlife economy and creative arts community certainly makes the city a better place to live, work, play obviously. So I think as we move forward one of the concerns was this commission was here just to promote nightlife, and I wanted to clarify that actually is not the case, we are to be advocates for all the different stakeholders of nightlife. We do want to celebrate nightlife- the arts community, the creative community in D.C.- and as John stated there is a big financial impact to having nightlife in the city, which is a benefit to the city in the impact of having an active vibrant arts community, but we also do that while recognizing there is a financial impact but also even costs. And that cost is recognizing that we need to create an environment in which best practices are promoted, and where bad actors and bad actions are dissuaded to put it lightly. But one of the purposes of this commission was to make the only interactions that the individuals of nightlife community have with each other and the arts community have with each other and have with government not just be regulatory, but that to have an open dialogue where we can all speak and sort of make sure that everyone's interests are shared. Because I am sure a resident*

that is complaining about noise and some of the negatives of potentially having a vibrant nightlife economy are sort of, they have as much to say and as much to gain from this commission as entrepreneurs concerned about over regulation in their community." ***---(Com. Basnayake)***

IV. The First Year of Commission Agenda- Prioritize what follows

a. *Pop Up Process* (Pop Up: a short term experience whether cultural, food related, art, exc.)
   1. The process is detrimental
   2. A need to work collectively to streamline the procedures
   3. A lot of vacant spaces in need of renovation
   4. Retail Side: Developers have a need to populate such spaces. Need to create a streamline process to promote economy.
   5. Events D.C.: availability to help navigate. Have made the process seamless to about 6-8 weeks.
   6. Independent Operators need assurance: A serious drain on profit; it is growth but there is the fear of leaving independent operators/small businesses behind. Need to support & help these businesses with such competition.
   7. ABRA: There are safety concerns. Willing to collaborate to create events that attract people to different parts of the city.
      a. Pop Up Benefits
         i. It is a huge part of bringing culture, entrepreneurship, and art into the city.
         ii. Various arts can be highlighted
         iii. It brings people to different, less populated or less popular, spaces in the city.
         iv. It occupies the many vacant spaces.
         v. People are craving the connection between nightlife and art; people are thirst for it.

b. *Sexual Harassment*
   i. Huge need for more from the Restaurant Association & business owners.
      1. Create access & steps to produce comfort level.
         a. Awareness of where to go what to do; they are embraced/comforted.
      2. Spread awareness of steps for victims of sexual harassment & responsibilities of employers to protect their employees.
         a. A process in place that is simple, attainable, and feels safe/protected.

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b. Normalize that there is help for everyone.
    i. There are different types of victims of sexual harassment.

c. *Community:*
    i. A need to take care of D.C.'s older generation; the villages
        1. Figure out their needs & wants
        2. Take care of them
            a. A sense of volunteerism w/in younger generation (Maybe D.O.E.S. and/or ServeDC)

d. *Collaborate & Utilize with the D.C. Cultural Plan*
    i. How to use this for the first year commission agenda

e. *DMPED*
    i. Creative Economy
    ii. Often times companies/establishments will come to DMPED
        1. DMPED would like to be able to play a role; to promote and market DC & its cultural vibrancy
            a. Create partnerships/collaboration

f. *Promotional Perspective*
    i. Establish authenticity
        1. Residents who live in the city and tourists who visit D.C. are craving this; they merely have a taste.
            a. Craving a connection between art and nightlife
            b. Introduce an authenticity tag
                i. When people think of D.C. they do not think great nightlife, art, & retail
        2. Need to rebrand & create nightlife with arts
            a. Pop Ups are something very special & contribute to this
            b. We are the nation's capital; helps economy.
        3. Residents feel the disorganization; need for organization
            a. DC Branding
        4. Create all of this in a way that is welcomed by residents, businesses, exc. (the city)

g. *Pioneering: Set precedent for the Nightlife Commission & other future nightlife offices in the U.S.*
    i. To create a good foundation on what legislation ideas to push that benefit the community & office:
        1. ASSESSMENT OF NIGHTLIFE IMPACT STUDY *FIRST & VITAL STEP IN ESTABLISHING THE IMPORTANCE OF NIGHTLIFE, THE OFFICE, & THE COMMISSION TO D.C.
            a. New opportunities, including employment/creating jobs, for new industry

2. Piggy Back off other offices that have good processes & practices to jump of
    a. (Netherlands example)
3. Marijuana & Sports Betting processes & stakeholders: include & utilize this (look to the future)
4. Town Halls: various communities particularly club and bar owners the strict liability of alcohol sell to minors (jeopardizing license)
5. Parking: employees, residents, exc.
    a. Looking at different cities to see plans

h. *202Creates*
    i. Grown in popularity
    ii. Create spotlight and collaboration between the commission and 202Creates

i. *Goals: "a lot of wins"*
    i. Every Quarter the commission will send priorities discussed within meetings
    ii. There will always be some movement before the next meetings
        1. Ex: Impact Study= financial cost to that. 1) have to go to the city to ask & figure out allocation 2) hopefully do this before the next meeting 3) if cannot, the commission figures out why (ex: maybe there will be a need to get help from public sector)

V. Public Comments

a. Representative from the Business Trade Association:
    i. Recommends to give serious thought to the importance of economic value of nightlife push → 15 years ago: 20% of nightlife part of economy
    ii. Lowing Barriers to entry
        1. On the art side, barriers even higher
    iii. Noise Best Practices
        1. Developing technical resources to community establishments
        2. If city can help with that (resources)

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

This Commission on Nightlife and Culture meeting was joined along with The Recovery Weekly Check-in with the Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). All the Commissioners were invited to join this meeting via cell phone or tune in on Mayor Bowser's social media.

The updates and guests' speakers are below.

Featuring updates from:

- John Falcicchio, Deputy Mayor, DMPED
    - Deputy Mayor Falcicchio introduced all of the guests and provided a brief introduction of the topic that would be discussed.
- Kristi Whitefield, Director, Department of Small and Local Business Development
    - First steps that businesses should take to apply for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP):
        - Don't wait to get my paperwork in order!
        - Did I apply for PPP last year? If so, look at that paperwork and see what needs to be updated
        - Don't wait to get my paperwork in order!
        - Did I apply for PPP last year? If so, look at that paperwork and see what needs to be updated
    - Resources
        - The DLSBD team is ready and available to provide technical support and assistance to District businesses applying for PPP funds:
            - email: dslbd.ptac@dc.gov
            - Phone: (202) 727-3900 (select option #7)
    - Additional resources:

- District Chamber of Commerce
- DC Main Streets
- Business Improvement Districts
- Greater Washington Black
- Chamber of Commerce
- Your current lender
- Small Business Development Centers
- Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

- Shawn Townsend, Director, Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture, MONC
    - Director Townsend provided the following updates:
        - Restaurant Week began yesterday January 25, 2021 and it will run until February 7, 2021!
        - To see the list of participating restaurants, visit ramw.org/restaurantweek.
        - We want to remind Carry-out and delivery services to turn off their cars and take their keys when delivering and pick up food around the District.
        - The Office of Planning (OP) wants to hear from patrons and business owners about their experience with outdoor dining. To learn more and fill out the brief survey, visit https://publicinput.com/W4624.
        - We want to emphasize that during a Snow Emergency, streateries and parklets are not to be used.

- Vinoda Basnayake, Chairman/Nightclub Owner, Commission on Nightlife and Culture
    - Vinoda who is the owner of three nightlife establishments in the District shares that he has had a rough time with his nightclub because of the business nature, he had to shut down. However, he's had a good experience in applying and receiving PPP loans and grant relief programs from the DC government.

- Vinoda added that he has found the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture and the Commission to be valuable during the pandemic where as a nightlife operator you're able to get your questions answered.

Special Guests:

- Fred Moosally, Director, Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, ABRA
    - Director Moosally provided the following update regarding the Reopen Washington DC ABRA Amendment Act of 2021
        - The bill proposes several innovative approaches to help rebuild DC's economy, provides businesses and patrons with expanded opportunities, and maintains the city's reputation as a top destination to live, work, and dine out.
        - Proposed provisions include:
            - extending programs introduced on an emergency basis
            - establishing new license categories
            - amending several licensing operational requirements.
        - Create a commercial lifestyle license
            - Creates a new alcohol license that allows patrons to walk around and consume alcohol purchased from on-premises establishments within predefined boundaries.
            - License would be limited to mixed-use commercial developments located on private property that are pedestrian friendly and governed by a commercial owners' association.
            - Security and signage posted at areas of ingress and egress would re-enforce public consumption laws.
        - Extends the Streatery Program
            - In 2021, alcohol establishments may operate their registered streateries throughout the calendar year at no cost.

- In 2022 and 2023, alcohol establishments may operate their registered streateries between May 1-October 25 during both years for a one-time registration fee of $100.

- Allow new taverns in Georgetown
  - Eliminates current cap of six (6) taverns in the Georgetown historic district instituted by the DC Council in 1994.
  - Maintains prohibition on nightclubs. Currently there are zero (0).
- Create A third party alcohol license
  - Creates a new license to regulate the delivery of alcohol by delivery companies on behalf of on-premises retailers and manufacturers.
- Permits doggie bags of spirits
  - Allows restaurants and hotels to permit dining patrons to leave with partially consumed bottles of spirits. Current District law only allows patrons to leave with partially consumed bottles of wine.
- Eliminate application hurdles
  - Permits applicants to self-certify alcohol applications and use electronic signatures.
  - Eliminates requirement for nightclubs to resubmit their security plan with their renewal application.
- Attract new full-service grocery stores to wards 7 & 8
  - Create a new 25 percent full-service grocery store Class A alcohol license to allow license holders to sell beer, wine, and spirits for off-premises consumption.
  - Requires applicants interested in opening a Class A grocery store in Wards 1-6, to first open and operate a Class A grocery store in Wards 7 or 8 for a minimum of six (6) months.

- Allows these stores to sell individual containers of beer, malt liquor, or ale where their sale is now prohibited.

- Anna Valero, Owner, Hook Hall
    - Anna discussed the Restaurant Worker Relief fund:
        - From the start of the pandemic, those hit hardest and fastest by the COVID-19 shutdowns and restrictions are workers in the hospitality industry. That's why we rolled out HOOK HALL HELPS.
        - Formed the Workers Relief Fund in partnership with RAMW to take tax deductible donations
        - Through Hook Hall Helps, area hospitality workers receive meals and supplies provided through the generous support of the greater Washington, DC community.
        - To support local restaurants, we compensate kitchens for providing the meals, and a way for all in the industry to stay connected and give back during these difficult times.
        - Meet needs of workers in the industry where they are
            - Provide meals and supplies with dignity
            - For the industry, by the industry
            - Online / In person trainings
            - Originally around unemployment support and safety net services
            - Evolved to education and training
            - Create a sense of connection between workers, operators, vendors and the greater community
        - Continue to meet workers where they are and provide leadership training for those to return stronger than before

- First meet basic needs
- Second meet connection needs
- Third provide education/training

- Ris Lacoste, Chef/Restaurantuer, and Owner of Ris Restaurant
    - Ris shared her experience managing her restaurant during the pandemic and applying for federal and local finds.
    - In the beginning of the pandemic, Ris pivoted to take out delivery. Throughout the pandemic, Ris grew her operations and has been able to sustain her business.
    - Ris has applied for PPP and local funds and her experience has been positive.
    - Ris expressed that she would like for the city to help operators inform them of their rights when it comes to negotiating with landlords.

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Minutes

March 10, 2020

Welcoming Remarks

The Chair of the Commission welcomed all the commissioners and public attendants. Commissioners present are:

1. Ris Lacoste
2. Keith Slade
3. Fred Moosally
4. Colleen Hawkinson
5. Ian Callender
6. Vinoda Basnayake - Chair
7. Anwar Glover
8. Cristina Amoruso
9. Chinyere Hubbard
10. Nick Nayak

Chairman Basnayake gave a brief review of 10.22.19 meeting minutes and they were approved.

Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture's (MONC) Briefing from Director Townsend

- Coronavirus update & relevant information
    - Director Townsend encouraged the Commissioners and attendees to visit coronavirus.dc.gov to find the latest information regarding the virus.
    - Director Townsend also informed attendees of the several working groups and discussions that our office has been part of to address the concerns the nightlife industry is having regarding the coronavirus.
- Performance Oversight Hearing 1/22/20
    - MONC attended its second Performance Oversight Hearing where Director Townsend was joined by multiple business owners to testify on behalf of MONC's accomplishments and assistance to local nightlife businesses.
    - Director Townsend thanked the community stakeholders and industry leader for testifying on behalf of MONC.

- Bystander Intervention Training 2/11/20
    - MONC partnered with MOWPI, DCRCC, and Uber to offer a Bystander Intervention Training to nightlife industry employees. The survivor-centered training was led by sexual violence prevention experts and advocates from DCRCC. The training educated attendees on the warning signs of potentially unsafe situations and provided attendees with safe ways to prevent or intervene in situations that could lead to sexual violence or harassment.

- Go-Go Bill Signing Event 2/19/20
    - MONC coordinated the well attended event for Mayor Bowser signing the bill designating Go-Go music as the official music of DC.

- DC Nightlife Economic Impact Study 2/26/20
    - Director Townsend shared highlights from the nightlife study:
        - $7.1 billion annually in revenue
        - $562 million in annual tax revenue
        - 65,000 jobs
        - 2,437 establishments
    - A major challenge mentioned by the study mentions that 81% of owners surveyed said that Metro reducing their hours had severely impacted their business.
- Keep Metro Open Rally 2/26/20
    - MONC hosted and organized MMB's Keep Metro Open Rally. The rally was to call for extended Metro hours for the District and regions nightlife industry employees. Attendees represented a great glimpse of the many different types of nightlife work, ranging from bartenders, to nightclub owners and even hotel and hospital employees.
    - 81% of surveyed establishments stated that their business was negatively impacted by limited Metro hours.
- Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) Sociable City Summit
    - Director Townsend led a delegation of District government representatives from ABRA, DCRA, FEMS, and DDOT to showcase how DC has adapted to a thriving nighttime economy. MONC attended several panels discussing a variety of nightlife related topics from public safety to how women are influencing nightlife in cities across the U.S.

- The Mayor and Washington, D.C. will be the host of the RHI Sociable City Summit in 2021.
- MONC hosted an Active Shooter Response Training that was well attended.
- MONC's next Newsletter is soon forthcoming.
- Jon Stover & Associates presented the DC Nightlife and Economic Impact Study and its methodology:
    - The purpose of the study was to identify and understand the constituency and climate among the different nightlife sectors as well as to measure the economic output of the nightlife industry.
    - Conducted surveys, focus groups from six different sectors.
    - Compiled data from ABRA, DCRA, and DOES.
    - Restaurants, Bars, Nightclubs and performances venues.
    - Needs: Rising rents, pool of applicants, hiring and maintaining employees
    - Guiding principles for MONC: being an advocate for the different nightlife sectors, serve all the nightlife stakeholders, managing nightlife activity from a collaborative framework as a mediator.
- Chairman Basnayake reiterated the importance of the nightlife economic impact study and being a nightlife office that's efficient and a Commission known for getting things done.
    - The Commission on nightlife and Culture is working on the items below:
        - Pop-up legislation process
        - Noise ordinance
        - Strict liability for selling alcohol to minors

Discussion of "New Business"

Director Fred Moosally from ABRA

- On March 5th, 2020, Mayor Bowser introduced the District of Champions Extension of Hours Amendment Act where it allows the ABC board to, when professional teams make the playoffs, allow nightlife establishments to sell alcohol until 4:00 a.m. and operate 24 hours.
- Mayor Bowser signed four alcohol laws that went into effect on Friday, February 21, 2020. Below are some of the highlights:
    - ABC Manager licenses go from being valid for two (2) to three (3) years, along with the alcohol awareness certification required for the license.

- ABC establishments only need alcohol awareness training once every three years.
- Licensees that close or cease operations for 21+ days must place their license in safekeeping.
- Licensees can apply through the board for an endorsement to have video games and play cash and you have to be 18+ to play.
- ABRA is currently providing fake ID training April 9th and 10th 2020.
- A new ABC board member – Edward Grandis is getting sworn in

Commissioner Cristina Amoruso asked her fellow Commissioners how we can increase foot traffic and advertising due to COVID-19 especially for businesses open after hours and nightclubs.

- Chairman Basnayake proposed to create a listening tour to gather more information about the challenges these operators are face.

Commissioner Callender

- Pop-up update
  - At the moment, there has not been a meeting schedule with Fire-EMS to discuss this topic. However, Commissioner Callender participated in a Pop-up event to discuss how developers can activate unleased spaces and find innovative ways to find models that don't pose any risk to the owners/investors.
  - The creative community would like ABRA and DCRA to be on the same page when it comes to activating a vacant space. For example, how could artists change the use of a vacant 55,000 square ft school that could be activated for cultural events to engage the community?
  - Commissioner Hawkinson shared that many of the BIDS are interested in activating vacant spaces.
  - Commissioner Moosally explains that the challenge with pop-ups is how do you go about establishing criteria to obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy. ABRA wants to make sure the space is safe.
  - Commissioner Slade added that the challenges lie with rezoning the space, however, a temporary certificate of occupancy may be the solution.
  - Commissioner Lacoste suggested that BIDs should come up with a list of places that are preapproved for artists who want to activate the space.

Currently, a such list does not exist, but DuPont Circle BID might be able to investigate it.
    - The public asked how long it takes for someone to get a temporary certificate of occupancy. It takes around 10 business days depending on the project and submission of documents.
- Chairman Basnayake shared similar issues that operators have with ABRA:
    - Strict liability for selling alcohol to minors
    - Disproportionate enforcement
    - Noise complaints
    - Hookah/Tobacco enforcement
        - Chairman Basnayake suggested that the Commission could make recommendations to the Mayor suggesting changes to the law. If this is not the case, the MONC should try to address the issue by working directly with the DC Health.

Commissioner Callender asked if there are any resources providing venues sound proofing to mitigate noise complaints. Director Townsend added that there are internal conversations about creating a noise abatement advisory panel to review applications on a case by case basis where we would cover 80% of the cost to sound proofing selected businesses.

Public Comments

Pop-up installations

- The public asked how long it takes to get a temporary certificate of occupancy. It takes around 10 business days depending on the project and submission of documents.
- DCRA should create an inspection checklist to check for safety precautions. This would streamline the approach to obtaining a temporary certificate of occupancy.

Nightlife Economic Impact Study

- The economic impact study did not get much attention because it was overshadowed by got wrapped up with COVID-19. MONC should consider running a targeted media campaign to advertise the findings from the study.

- Director Townsend agreed that the study got lost during the press conference where mostly COVID-19 related questions were asked but he attended several media outlets and newspaper to advertise the study. Additionally, the Director attended a luncheon where council member Brianne Nadeau was present and other councilmembers such as Brandon Todd have seen it.
- On page 24, which is about the licensing process and concerns of operators, MONC and the Commission should focus on the barriers to entry of small and new businesses as it relates to settlement agreements. MONC and the Commission should work with RAMW and the DC Nightlife Council to get more insight and strategies on how to approach this topic.
- Chairman Basnayake mentioned that MONC will connect with the Mayor's communications team to create a press release and social media strategy to disseminate the study's highlight.

Noise Abatement Reform

- The creation of funds for a noise abatement might be budget challenges in the current environment, however, there might be intermediate strategies that MONC and the Commission can work on to advance this issue. An example being small businesses that cannot afford sound abatement consulting: MONC and the Commission can come up with a list of DIY resources to make sure they're taking any necessary steps to mitigate sound.
- Chairman Basnayake suggested that some of this financial burden should be on the developers that should soundproof their buildings.
- It can be a great idea to incorporate a training where MONC invites a sound consultant to give best practices on how operators can mitigate their sound.
- Several years ago, there was a noise task force comprised of DC Government agencies, ANC Commissioners, developers and community leaders that met regularly to discuss this issue and ended up creating a report with recommendations that were submitted to the council.
- There are concerns of excessive noise complaints in areas like U Street. It's hard to tie the noise from a single establishment due to it being in a thriving a nightlife corridor. ABRA pointed out that there is no monetary fine for noise complaints. ABRA investigators do not measure sound. Additionally, they do not select establishments unless there is a specific noise complaint and cannot order establishments to turn the music down.

- Commissioner Lacoste asked if there is a record of the number of visits per establishment. ABRA does keep a record of these visits and monitors excessive callers.

Hookah/Tobacco Law

- At the moment, DC health is enforcing the Smoke-Free and Tobacco Law, where the consumption of tobacco (which includes hookah smoking) is illegal at these establishments. Many of the hookah lounges on 9th and U Street are receiving verbal warnings. They suggest that there needs to be a meeting between the DC Government and the operators to come to the solution regarding the exemption criteria.
- Director Townsend added that the law does not address the concerns of the operators and that MONC will continue to engage DC Health to find a solution.

Next Meeting

- Commissioner Glover would like to touch base on the state of Go-Go and disproportionate enforcement.
    - Go-Go bands are being penalized for any altercation that happens inside of nightlife establishment.

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Minutes

June 23, 2020

Welcoming Remarks

The Chairman Basnayake of the Commission welcomed all the commissioners and public attendants. Director Townsend called on the following commissioners and guest speakers that were present:

Commissioners	Organization
1. Ris Lacoste	Restaurant Owner/ Sexual Harassment Advocate
2. Keith Slade	Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
3. Sarah Fashbaugh	Alcoholic Beverage Administration Regulation (ABRA)
4. Jared Powell	Alcoholic Beverage Administration Regulation (ABRA)
5. Colleen Hawkinson	DuPont Circle BID
6. Ian Callender	Arts
7. Vinoda Basnayake - Chair	Nightclub Owner
8. Cristina Amoruso	Department of Small and Local Businesses Development (DSLBD
9. Chinyere Hubbard	Events DC
10. Nick Nayak	Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development (DMPED)
11. Theresa Belpulsi	Destination DC
12. Keith Sellars	Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP)
13. Jeffrey Scott	Commission on Arts and Humanities
14. Maggie O'Neill	Visual Artists

Guest Speakers

Name	Organization
Quionett Warrick	Department of Employment Services (DOES)
Arian Gibson	DC Health
Andre Chisolm	Department of Employment Services (DOES)
Anne Chamberlin	District Department of Transportation (DDOT)

John Falcicchio	Acting Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development (DMPED)/ Chief of Staff
Alex Haje	Nightclub Owner
Matt Cronin	Nightclub Owner

The following speakers gave important updates from their agencies to the nightlife industry.

Sarah Fashbaugh from the ABRA gave the following update of several changes that ABRA underwent since the onset of COVID-19.

- During the reopening phase of I and II, establishments were able to allow the consumption of food and drinks onsite.
- Phase I allowed for outdoor dining while phase II allowed for indoor dining at a 50% capacity of their smallest seating capacity on the establishment's certificate of occupancy. Additionally, no more than six people can be seated at a table and the tables need to be six feet apart.
- As a relief efforts, ABRA came up with the following temporary permits at no cost:
    - Allow establishments to sell alcohol per carry-out delivery
    - Establishments can register to have a "Pop up" location
    - Establishments can apply to have outdoor dining
- ABRA will be offering a Phase II training to ABC licensees on June 30, 2020 and other trainings during the summer.

Arian Gibson from DC Health gave the following updates regarding Phase II of reopening:

- Bar service with a bartender is not permitted
- Bar seating is permitted for dining only
- Standing is not permitted during
- Employees need to stay home if they're feeling sick and they always need to wear a proper face covering
- Customers must wear a face covering when not eating or drinking
- Buffet style service areas are allowed during Phase II but they must be served by a staff member
- DC recommended that operators stagger their employees' shifts to avoid crowded work areas and educate employees of COVID-19

- Screen employees before coming to work to make sure they haven't been in close contact with a someone that tested positive for COVID-19
- According to the Mayor's Order, hookah is not allowed during phase II

Alex Haje, owner of Opera Nightclub, and Matt Cronin, General Manger of several performance venues and nightclubs such as Echostage and Soundcheck, discuss the nightlife rent relief letter.

- The reality for bars, nightclubs, and performance venues is ~~not~~ the limited indoor capacity does not make sense for their business model so they will be opening until there is a vaccine in place.
- At this point, nightclub owner's biggest concern is mounting rent. There should be protective measures for business owners that have personal guarantees in their leases.
- We need the District government to provide some type of relief for the nightclub and performance venues.
- Chairman Basnayake wanted to note that he was part of the ReOpen DC subcommittee that oversaw the guidelines for nightclubs and clarified that recommendations such as 5 people for 1,000 square feet are just recommendations and not the law.

Director Townsend addressed questions regulations about the consumption of hookah.

- During phase II, hookah is not permitted in the District.

Representatives from DOES gave the following update on unemployment benefits.

- DOES has received over 117,000 unemployment claims and out of this number, 72,000 claims have been processed and over $600 million dollars have been paid out.
- There is a delay due to the number of claims that DOES has received. They have recruited volunteers from other District government agencies to assist them with processing claims.

John Falcicchio, The Acting Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development and Mayor Bowser's Chief of Staff joined the meeting to provide the following remarks.

- The Acting Deputy Mayor emphasized that as the District government, we have to figure out a way ~~how~~ to provide relief for the nightlife industry, specifically those businesses that cannot reopen until the last phase or a vaccine has been approved.
- As we begin phase II, the District government wants to hear feedback from the industry if the guidance isn't clear.

- The responsibility of the Commission on Nightlife and Culture is to make sure that we're communicating these guidelines effectively for those who have to implement them.
- District government decided to create Streateries to expand the footprint of restaurants and retail. As of Phase II, we've received over 300 applications for Streateries and we're looking to put together a pilot program for road closures in Adams Morgan.
- Regarding the nightclub rent relief letter, the Mayor's Office on Policy is reviewing several questions and concerns:
    - How much will it cost the District?
    - How we can implement it?
    - We need to make sure that we're clear on what we need from applicants.
    - Communicate how long will the process take.

Live music performance venue waiver.

- This live performance music venue waiver was created with the intention that if a business wanted to put together an event outside of the Phase II guidelines, they would have to apply.
- The District recommends that applicants think about how they would incorporate the existing guidance to maximize the level of safety for everyone.
- Mass gathering over 50 people is not permitted. This does not apply to indoor dining because there are restaurants that have a larger capacity and can do it safely, for example, maintaining social distance.
- Another example where you can have a gathering over 50 people and do it in a safe manner is a drive-in movie theater where Events DC is working on that project

Director Townsend provided an update on what the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture has been working on since onset of the pandemic.

ReOpen DC Advisory Group—Restaurant and Food Retailers Subcommittee

- Director Townsend was appointed to serve as the Associate Committee Director for the ReOpen DC Advisory Group—Restaurant and Food Retailers Subcommittee. This subcommittee was tasked with advising Mayor Bowser on best approaches and innovations on how to reopen Washington, DC's restaurant and food retail sectors. As Associate Committee Director, Director Townsend was tasked with assisting the subcommittee with carving out recommendations and guidance on safely reopening an

industry ~~of~~ which is heavily relied on. We've coordinated numerous discussions with industry leaders, workers, and received an overwhelming amount of feedback through Mayor Bowser's ReOpen Survey.

- For more information on the different reopening stages visit coronavirus.dc.gov/reopendc

Phase 1 Reopening

- Prior to phase one, MONC was hands-on in assisting businesses who decided to open their doors for the first time or those businesses who were opened for take-out/pick-up and wanted to expand their side-walk cafes.
- Our office focused on providing some type of relief which was Outdoor Dining. We worked with our sister agencies like ABRA, DDOT, and DC Health to have a safe and successful outdoor dining experience.

Performance Oversight Budget Hearing

- MONC testified before the Committee on Government Operations Chaired by Councilmember Brandon T. Todd on the Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2021 DC HOPE Budget and Financial Plan.

Phase 2 Reopening Guidelines

- On June 22,2020 the District entered phase two, allowing restaurants and other food establishments indoor dining at 50% capacity. Our office continued to be instrumental in providing DC Health and ABRA with guidance and recommendations from the nightlife community. These restaurants and other food establishments may open for indoor dining with the following minimum safeguards:
    - All indoor dining/drinking customers must be seated, place orders, and be served at tables;
    - No more than six (6) individuals may be seated indoors at a table or a joined table, and indoor and outdoor fixed tables that accommodate larger groups than are permitted may demarcate six (6) feet between groups and allow seating at those large tables;
    - Bar seating is prohibited if any bartender is working at that bar;
    - All tables must be placed so that patrons are at least six (6) feet apart;
- We want to encourage the nightlife industry to attend ABRA's webinar training regarding phase two on June 30, 2020.

- We would like to encourage all DC residents to get tested for COVID -19 at our Fire Stations and they can find more information visiting coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
- Lastly, I want to thank my team, Jennifer McCahill for working with DOES for ensuring our nightlife employees are receiving their unemployment benefits.

Public Comments

Streateries

- Regarding the Streatery pilot program, the District government would like to evaluate it before expanding into other parts of the District.

Evaluation of the spread of COVID-19 in regard to a phase three opening

- DC Health takes into consideration the number of positive cases and hospitalizations.
- DC Health does not require restaurants to test the temperatures of incoming customers. DC Health instead recommends that establishments screen their workers before their shifts.
- Every Tuesday and Thursday at 10am and 3pm DC Health offers a webinar where they explain phase two guidelines and how to protect the safety of their team's members more in depth.

Commissioner Ian Callender wanted to inform the Commission and attendees that the Department of Public Works is commissioning a murals project highlighting DC Statehood by painting 51 murals across the District ahead of the DC Statehood House Hearing.

Open container legislation

The public has noticed that they've seen people with opened alcoholic beverages. ABRA regulates businesses not people. Businesses do not have the ability to mandate a customer after they leave their establishment. If residents would like to have an open container policy, one would have to ask the council to put forth a legislation.

We expect the establishment to sell their alcohol to-go in sealed containers. There is no expectation from the establishment to manage what patrons do after they leave their establishment.

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Commission on Nightlife and Culture's Public Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2020

6:00 PM

Welcoming Remarks

The Chairman Basnayake of the Commission welcomed all the commissioners and public attendants. Director Shawn Townsend called on the following commissioners and guest speakers that were present:

Commissioners	Organization
1. Vinoda Basnayake - Chair	Nightclub Owner
2. Sarah Fashbaugh	Alcoholic Beverage Administration Regulation (ABRA)
3. Fred Moosally	Alcoholic Beverage Administration Regulation (ABRA)
4. Maggie O'Neill	Visual Artists
5. Keith Slade	Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
6. Ian Callender	Arts
7. Colleen Hawkinson	DuPont Circle BID
8. Cristina Amoruso	Department of Small and Local Businesses Development (DSLBD)
9. Donovan Anderson	ABC Board
10. Theresa Belpulsi	Destination DC
11. Jeffrey Scott	Commission on Arts and Humanities
12. Chinyere Hubbard	Events DC
13. Keith Sellars	Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP)
14. Ris Lacoste	Ris Restaurant

Guest Speakers

Name	Organization
Unique Morris-Hugues	Department of Employment Services (DOES)
Arian Gibson	DC Health

Commissioner Ian Callender reviewed the June 23, 2020 Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting Minutes.

- Sarah Fashbaugh from ABRA gave an update about Phase One and Phase Two along with updates.
- Arian Gibson from DC Health gave an update on Phase Two and provided additional guidance to restaurant operators and mask wearing.
- Matt Cronin, a nightclub general manager, spoke about a letter he wrote to the DC Council and the Mayor asking for rent relief for DC's nightclubs.
- DOES spoke about unemployment claims and the application process.
- Acting Deputy Mayor John Falccichio gave us an updates on behalf of the Executive Office of the Mayor.
- During the public comments period, attendees touched on the guidance and processes for streateries and parklets. Additionally, they advocated for an open container legislation that would benefit restaurants during these difficult times.

New Business & Guest Speakers

Director Shawn Townsend provided updates from the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture.

Business Support Grants Emergency Amendment Act of 2020

- Kenyan R. McDuffie, Chair of the Council of the District of Columbia's Committee on Business and Economic Development, and Councilmember Charles Allen co-introduced the Business Support Grants Emergency Amendment Act of 2020. This legislation establishes a Business Support Grant Program to provide eligible businesses financial support to aid in their recovery from the public health emergency. **The emergency authorizes up to $100 million from the CARES Act to provide COVID-19 related relief.**
- The Mayor shall establish rules for the application process provided that those rules considers prioritizing available funding as follows:
    - 40% to restaurants;
    - 30% to hotels;
    - 15% to retail;
    - 15% sports and entertainment sectors;

- Nightclubs are included in this section
- Currently, there is not sufficient CARES ACT funding to allocate to this bill. Unfortunately, DC was shorted approximately $700 million dollars less than other states due to being identified as a territory.

Engine Idling PSA for Drive-in Movie Operations

- MONC partnered with the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) to develop a PSA in response to community concerns regarding air pollution around the RFK stadium. MONC engaged Commissioner Anwan Glover to participate in the video that was played during drive-in movie events organized by Events DC.

#MaskUpDC Campaign / Summer Restaurant Week

- In light of Summer Restaurant Week 2020, MONC and Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) teamed up to amplify the #MaskUpDC campaign through social media to encourage patrons to dine-in/take-out, supporting their favorite restaurants while properly wearing a mask. Additionally, MONC highlighted Halfsmoke, Tortilla Coast, Ivy City Smokehouse, and Provost for Restaurant Week on Mayor Bowser's social media accounts.
- Director Townsend thanked the Office of Cable Television and Entertainment (OCTFME) for assisiting our office with these projects.

<u>Upcoming Events</u>

The Rammys 2020

- Tune in to watch the Rammys as we honor the region's restaurant community!

Mayor's Arts Awards

- Join us on September 30, 2020 at 7:00 PM in recognizing DC's creative community. The 35th Annual Mayor's Arts Awards is an inclusive celebration for District residents of all 8 Wards honoring the city's vibrant creative community and patrons of the arts and humanities.

Lastly, MONC is working diligently with sister agencies to figure out how we can provide relief to an industry that has been deeply impacted during COVID.

Director Unique Morris-Hughes will give an update on unemployment claims.

Overview of DOES's presentation

- Unemployment Insurance (UI) By the Numbers
- Economic Assistance Available through DOES
- Unemployment Insurance and Covid-19
- FPUC, PEUC, EB, and LWA
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
- Shared Work
- Returning To Work

Unemployment Insurance (UI) By the Numbers

- From March 13, 2020- September 10, 2020, DOES had 138,001 claims filed which 89,797 have been paid. DOES has paid over a $1 million dollars.
- Now DOES has over 5K unemployment claims being processed. Reviewers are making sure that applicants are eligible in order to receive compensation.

Economic Assistance Available through DOES

- DOES has economic benefits available during this time.
- It's important to know the eligibility. In order to be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits:
    - You must have either lost your job, through no fault of your own, or had your wages or salary limited.
    - Independent contractors, or gig workers;
        - The recent CARES Act, however, has expanded eligibility for both unemployment insurance and created another program, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).

FPUC, PEUC, EB, and LWA

- **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)**
    - Effective March 29, 2020 through July 25, 2020.
    - $600 per week on top of current benefits.
    - This benefit has expired. But the PEUC has replaced it.
- **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)**
    - Effective March 29, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

- 13 additional weeks of UI benefits, plus $600 FPUC, although FPUC expired at the end of July 2020.

- **Extended Benefits**
  - This is an additional 13 weeks on top of the previous 13 weeks.
  - Effective May 24, 2020.
  - 13 weeks of UI benefits after PEUC is exhausted.
- **Lost Wages Assistance**
  - Effective week ending August 1, 2020 through September 5, 2020.
  - Additional $300 per week on top of current benefits.
  - These payments are retroactive to August 1, 2020.
  - These are additional 6 weeks.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

- Effective January 27, 2020 through December 31, 2020.
- Individuals who are typically ineligible for regular UI (i.e. independent contractors, gig workers, those with insufficient work history) that cannot work due to COVID-19, are eligible for a maximum of 39 weeks of benefits, which includes $600 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC).
- Must first apply for regular UI and then be denied in order to receive this assistance.

Shared Work Program

- Is a volunteer option for District employers that provides an alternative to layoffs confronting businesses due to a reduction in work.
- This program allows DOES to pay employers that have an approved shared work plan by DOES that shows employees that have had their work reduced due to COVID-19 paying the employees unemployment insurance benefits.
- Advantages for employers:
  - Keep your skilled, trained workers.
  - Maintain product and service quality levels with your skilled workforce.
  - Skilled, trained workforce is available when business demand increases.
  - Avoid the time and expense of hiring and training new employees.
  - Maintain employee morale by avoiding layoffs and keeping workers on-the-job
- Disadvantages for employees:

- Provides continuous employment by reducing hours instead of total unemployment if laid off.
- Employees continue to work and earn wages and also receive a portion of unemployment benefits.
- Helps employees maintain skills while working reduced hours.
- Allows for the continuation of health care and retirement benefits.
- Avoids the difficulties related to layoffs and finding another job.

- Application process
  - District of Columbia employers can apply by visiting the Shared Work Program page of the DOES website at www.does.dc.gov.
  - Affected unit (or units) covered by the plan.
  - Number of full or part-time workers in affected unit.
  - Percentage of workers in unit covered by plan.
  - Estimated number of layoffs averted by the Shared Work plan.
  - Usual weekly hours worked by eligible employees and the percentage their hours will be reduced.
  - Plan of how employer will notify workers (including collective bargaining unit if applicable).
  - Plan's expected start and end dates.
  - Other documents and verifications required by the District of Columbia's Shared Work Program legislation.

Returning to work

- It's important for businesses and employees to understand what the requirements are for returning to work.
  - A claimant may be disqualified from receiving UI benefits if they refuse to accept suitable work without good cause.
  - More information can be found at does.dc.gov.

Director Townsend thanked Director Unique Morris-Hughes and her team for working with the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture on resolving inquiries and questions that our office received regarding employees unemployment insurance claims.

Arian Gibson from DC Health provided an update on Phase Two.

- DC Health is working with BIDs and other organizations on how to implement streateries.
- DC Health is in the process of setting up a hotline for food establishments to ask questions via a hotline number or email related to Phase two guidance. Hopefully next week they will have it set up.

Sarah Fashbaugh from ABRA provided the following update.

- Beginning October 1, 2020, carryout hours are being extended. Licensees can begin to sell from 6:00 am to 1:00 am daily.
- Licensees do not have to do anything to participate if they are registered in the carryout program. Currently, ABRA has 800 businesses registered.
- Businesses that would like to participate have to register and if they wish to sell alcohol, they must sell at least 1 prepared food item to go with it.
- Please remember to check IDs even if businesses are using 3rd parties delivery applications.
- On-premises and off-premises hours will be extended starting October 1, 2020. On premises licensees like restaurants and taverns can start selling alcohol at 6:00 am. Off-promise and on-promise Licensees can apply but they cannot use the hours until October 1, 2020.
- Licensees that have hours restrictions on their settlement agreement need to have it amended before applying.
- For licensees that are interested in reimaging their outdoor space, ABRA is cohosting a training to help licensees do just that on September 17, 2020. ABRA will be hosting more trainings like this in the future.
    - On September 24, 2020 there's a training about new alcohol regulations
    - On September 20, 2020 we have a Books and records training at 10:30 am
    - On September 29, 2020 we have an ID Compliance Training
- Director Fred Moosally addressed a question regarding how ABRA will handle the renewal process
    - The ABC board decided to waive late fees.
    - For licenses that are set to expire, the ABC board is letting them be reinstated until May of 2021 and will not be charged for late fees.

Commissioner Chinyere Hubbard provides an update from Events DC

- Events DC has been working hard to open the Convention Center for businesses virtually and putting high tech protocols to keep everyone safe.
- Today, President and CEO Greg O'Dell and Deputy Mayor John Falccichio held a walkthrough with members of the press to showcase the Convention Center's safety measures and unveil the new turnkey production studio. It's 19K square feet and can accommodate 130 people while adhering to all social distancing guidelines.
- The first event was the Mayor's Infant Maternal Health Summit and the next event will be the Rammys this Sunday at 6:00 PM.
- Events DC is also showcasing another platform name GATHER, where it brings people together virtually.
- Events DC was proud to be the first convention in the northeast region to receive the GBAC accreditation which gives third parties validation that venues are implementing safe protocols, cleaning, and disinfecting programs.
- Events DC also installed touchless thermal scanning and artificial intelligence to make sure we're keeping everyone safe.
- Events DC has been thinking creatively during these challenging times. One example is Park Up, where people can drive-in to enjoy movies.
- In order to sign up to use this platform is through Events DC sales department.

Public Comments

If restaurants are closing at midnight for in person dining, can they operate until 1:00 a.m.?

Response by ABRA:

- Patrons need to exit by midnight.
- There's no carry out endorsement, you do not need to apply if you're already sign up for the carryout delivery program.

Commissioner Cristina Amoruso encouraged everyone to support Art All Night where they'll be highlighting DC's creatives, artists, and business community.

Commissioner Ian Callender would like to ask Director Fred Moosally for guidance in regard to businesses having to prepare at least one food item to go with takeout food deliveries.

Response from ABRA:

- The item must be prepared onsite.

Winterization or relief for businesses during the winter months

- DCRA and other agencies are currently looking at this matter to see what can be achieved.
- Director Townsend has talked about this with sister agencies like DCRA and Fire & EMS and they are currently assessing the financial impact of providing this type of relief.

Sidewalk Café Fee Permit Relief

- Main Street Executive Director Jennifer Kuiper would like to recommend that DDOT would waive the fees to acquire a sidewalk café permit.
- Director Townsend will continue this timely conversation and schedule a call with DDOT to initiate a discussion and see if this can be achieved.

Chairman Basnayake reiterated that Commissioners should regularly check in with their industries to see if there are any challenges that they would like to bring up for the Commission.

- Chairman Basnayake wanted to bring up an issue from the nightclub owners regarding $100 million dollars relief that the DC Council passed and dram shop laws. There is a concern that DC establishments are going to pay a higher premium rate. Bars and nightclub owners would like to get the coverage faster.
    - Dram shop liability requirements: Director Fred Moosally recommended for the Commission to look at examples of this law in other jurisdictions such as Iowa where they've instituted certain exceptions that benefit the licensee such as placing a cap to the liability rate or shifting liability away from the licensee.
- Commissioner Ian Callender mentioned that artists he has engaged with are discussing ways for these artists to occupy some of these restaurants spaces that are closing which can be activated.
    - DCRA will begin discussions with the Director of DCRA and zoning permit team to see if there is a possibility.
- Retailors using outdoor spaces
    - There were conversations during the ReOpen DC Committee about retailers being able to obtain outdoor space permits. Director Townsend will follow up on where these conversations were left off.

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October 22nd, 2019

Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

Commission on Nightlife and Culture Minutes

Welcoming Remarks

The Chair of the Commission welcomed all of the commissioners and public attendants. Commissioners present are:

1. Jeffrey Scott
2. Keith Slade
3. Colleen Hawkinson
4. Ian Callender
5. Vinoda Basnayake - Chair
6. Anwar Glower
7. Sarah Fashbaugh
8. Kenneth Holmes
9. Cristina Amoruso
10. Theresa Belpulsi
11. Tiffany Thacker

Commission's Chair reemphasized that this Commission will get things done. One of these items will be the completion of the Nightlife Economic Impact Study finished by (hopefully) February and that will be a great achievement. This study will be important for the nightlife industry as well as the creatives.

Commission's Chair Reviews July's Commission meeting minutes

- Commission's roles and responsibility and what each commissioner wanted to get out of this opportunity.
- Commission's Chair discussed the vacant position of an Associate Director for the Office of Creative Affairs. He expressed that some Commissioners have asked him about this new office and the roles and responsibilities of the position and how it will impact the work that they're doing.

- Pop up Process: There is no update from DCRA at the moment. However, Director Townsend added that ABRA is willing to move forward but we're waiting on DCRA and FEMS for a further discussion.
- Sexual Harassment: Commissioner Ris Lacoste (absent) expressed the importance of having a conversation about creating safer spaces at night.
- How to collaborate with the community at larger and making sure the Commission is voicing their concerns.
- Collaborate and Utilize DC's Cultural Plan
- DMPED: The acting Deputy Mayor was present during July's meeting and he expressed how important the nightlife economy is to DC and conducting the Nightlife Economic Impact Study.
- Promotional Perspective: DC is going to host the 2021 Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) Summit.
- 202Creates would be another avenue of promoting DC's nighttime economy.
- Goals and quick- ins

The Commissioners accepted July's Commission Meeting minutes and had no further questions.

Commission Discussion

MONC/Director's Updates

Director Townsend addressed the following items on the July's Commission Meeting minutes.

- Sexual Harassment: Initiative 77 tasked the Office of Human Rights to provide sexual harassment trainings to the nightlife industry. MONC and the Commission on Nightlife and Culture will follow up with the Office of Human Rights for more information on these trainings.
- Community: Through the Mayor's Office on Aging, Director Townsend have gotten many inquiries to involve seniors in nightlife activities.
- Promotional Perspective: MONC received access to Destination DC's membership benefits. MONC will use this site as a vessel to promote the nightlife industry.
    - Ex: If you're an establishment, promotor, and a business etc that attend one of our training/meeting, and we will highlight you through Destination DC's website as an incentive.

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MONC 2019 Review

MONC had the opportunity to present the following legislation that affect nightlife to the Mayor.

- **Nightlife Establishment Preservation Act**
  - This act would create an annual tax credit for nightlife and cultural businesses that have resided in the District for more than 5 or 10 years. This measure would provide financial relief to longstanding businesses with the rising costs of operating a business in the District. MONC will partner with the Director Kristi Whitefield from the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) to work together on this Act.
- **District of Columbia Agent of Change Act**
  - If a live entertainment venue is in place before the residential building, the residential building would be responsible for paying for soundproofing or notifying tenants/purchasor of close proximity to live entertainment venue. Likewise, if a new live entertainment venue opens in a residential area, the venue is responsible for the cost of soundproofing. This measure will help safeguard the survival of live entertainment venues and reduce the number of noise complaints reported to regulatory agencies that potentially result in fines/loss of business for the venues.
  - MONC will work with Director Ernest Chrappah from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to discuss this legislation further and provide feedback.
  - Director Townsend acknowledged Chris Naoum and Mark Lee for bringing this issue early on.
  - Director Townsend mention that the Agent of Change Act has been a success in other parts of the world and across the U.S.

- Due to an increase in pocket picking and auto theft on 9th and U Street corridors, MONC has partnered with MPD to conduct business outreach in these areas. Additionally, we've met with MPD to have crime stats in these areas and be more proactive.
  - We've encounter several issues:
    - At times, businesses are not aware of what happens inside of their establishments
    - At times, patrons report stolen items a week after, and that's not very helpful for MPD
- After the active that happened in Dayton, on September 24, 2019 MONC partnered with Serve DC, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Homeland Security Emergency

Management Agency (HSEMA), and Nightclub Security Consultants to host Nightlife Active Shooter training to discuss ways the nightlife industry can prepare, prevent, and react to an active shooter incident.

- Director Townsend announced that MONC is hosting a Nightlife Active Shooter Response Training on Thursday, October 24th at Penn Social.
- Commissioner Cristina Amoruso asked if our office will be conducting similar trainings in the future because some of the Main Street executives are interested in bringing it to their districts.
- MONC partnered with Washington, DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) to contract a consulting firm to conduct a Nightlife Economic Impact Study to assess the financial impact of DC's nightlife.
    - MONC met with WDCEP on 9/5/19 to discuss the collaboration. Released the RFP on 10/7/19. We will choose a firm mid-November.
    - We want to see a snapshot of where we are in nightlife, how we can improve, and the amount of tax revenue. New York conducted a similar study and reported ~700 million in tax revenue generated.
- Commissioner Keith Slade asked about how MONC chooses the venue to host the Active Shooter Training. Director responded by saying that the location's layout and what we needed such as projectors, seating, and mics Penn Social could provide.
- 2021 Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) Sociable City Summit
    - MONC is in the planning stages and attending the 2020 Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) Sociable City Summit in Seattle, Washington will be part of that.
- MONC proposed the Mayor's Nightlife Task Force (MNTF)
    - MONC is creating a nightlife task force dedicated to address nightlife topics that may arise over time. The purpose of MNTF is to have a continuous dialogue with District agencies, nightlife businesses, and residents regarding nightlife issues.
    - This task force will me monthly.
- Unite the District Festival connected creatives with Audi Management to highlight DC arts and culture. We also met with the Georgetown BID who wants to work with the creatives to activate empty storefronts.
- Last month, Mayor Bowser announced the return of the Mayors Arts Awards! These awards will honor individuals, groups, nonprofit organizations, or private entity contributions in the arts. There is also an "Excellence in the Nightlife Economy" award category! You can nominate bars, clubs, entertainment venues and nightlife promoters.

The deadline is Friday, November 1st, 2019. To cast your vote visit: https://maa.awardsplatform.com/

- You have to be a district resident to vote.

2020 Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meetings

Third Tuesday of the following months:

- January
  - 1/28/20
- April
  - 4/21/20
- July
  - 7/21/20
- October
  - 10/20/20

FY19 Stats

- Assisted 62 businesses at least 75 times and solved 98% of their issues in the following areas:
  - Regulatory stream line assistance
  - Compliance/Enforcement
  - Public safety
  - Sound mitigation
  - ABC License Protest issues
- Our last Active Shooter Training, 100 employees attended and 50 businesses were represented.
- Hosted Hosted 19 roundtables with Community Improvement Districts (CIDS), Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and nightlife establishments as we engaged 105 businesses to discuss the following topics:
  - Underage Drinking
  - Compliance/Enforcement
  - Fire and Public Safety Issues
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Parking Issues
- Hosted MONC Training Day to establish a continuous dialogue between the nightlife industry and D.C. Government agencies.
  - Over 50 nightlife employees attended

  - Engaged 50 businesses
- Attended 64 Advisory Neighborhood Committees (ANCs) and civic associations meetings.
- We surpassed our social media goal, and we're looking to double that in the next fiscal year.
- 234 outreach and community events attended.

FY2020 Look Ahead

After meeting with the Mayor, we needed to come up with areas of focus that tell businesses what we do. Our areas are:

- **Promote:** a safe, economically and culturally vibrant night time economy
- **Engage:** nightlife stakeholders by conducting outreach and providing assistance
- **Solve:** issues by collaborative alliance of District government agencies affiliated with the night time economy
- **Educate:** nightlife establishments on existing district policies and regulations as well as provide quarterly trainings.

Director Townsend opened up for questions/comments.

Public Comments

Commissioner Anwar Glover asked how do we work/engage with OCTFME?

- Director Townsend, responded by saying that we are looking to work with Director Angie Gates as well as the future Associate Director for the Mayor's Office of Creative Affairs.

Commissioner Anwar Glover expressed his concerns with a lot of the gun violence.

Suggestion - OCTFME collaboration with MONC – **shoot cameras not guns program.**
Commissioner Glover wants to see more television and film being filmed in DC.

- This could create opportunities for children that want to explore film. **What we can we activate now and not have to wait till 2022 to see in effect**. Will contact OCTFME to discuss tutoring or mentoring program. Suggest grant opportunities for kids!

Commissioner Jeffrey Scott mentioned that CAH – can offer assistance re: mentorship program.

GUCCI Changemakers North America Scholarship Program – MONC will reach out regarding this because it's offered in DC. **Deadline for submissions is December 31st, 2019.**

The Commission's Chair addressed the misconceptions regarding the Office of Creative Affairs.

- They're looking for an Associate Director
- Commissioners are welcome to spread the vacancy
- The new office of going to oversee the Mayor's Arts Award and control the city's art

The World Series – ABC licensed establishment are able to apply for extended hour of operation not sale during the World Series.

Chris Naoum asked how we reach the nightlife industry to send this information.

- We're using outlook to send these information to our community.
- Director Townsend encouraged everyone to visit the MOCA website and use the link to send us an inquiry or put in their contact to receive updates from our office.

BIDS – Commissioner Hawkinson suggested businesses in each BID be able to opt into MONC's relevant contact database when we push out notices. MONC will follow up on this to increase our outreach.

Chris Naoum mentioned the music study and how that may help our study. We are using multiple studies to assist with ours. In total there are about 6 studies we will be looking at for reference when conducting our Nightlife Impact Study.

Performance Motion Amendment Act – Something seems to be wrong with the credit. Should have gone through in 2019 but doesn't seem to be working out. Check with OTR? Businesses were expecting this relief. Director Townsend will follow up on this legislation.

Commission's Chair suggested - In advance of quarterly meetings, Commissioners should reach out to their constituents to explore what they care/are concerned about. Each Commissioner was chosen to represent a different facet of nightlife so we should be reaching out to stakeholders to fulfill why the Commission was created.

Commissioner Ian Callender asked about the status of Pop-ups/Special Events – continued discussion has brought to light the greatest issue is with FEMS and safety. What do we need to

do to activate the space without investing thousands of dollars? This conversation needs to be had with the Fire Chief.

WMATA – reached out to MONC regarding a study for nighttime mobility. They want to utilize our contacts to reach the nightlife industry for research. We will be engaging with them and connecting with other MOCA agencies to extend the reach as far as possible for data.

Commissioner Colleen Hawkinson offered to disseminate any information regarding the WMATA survey to her contacts.

Commission's Chair suggested to monitor a list of legislation impacting nightlife and going over updates before every Commission's Meeting.

Nightlife Owners Concerns

- Need clarity on marijuana regulation
- Need clarity on Sports betting

ABRA is still a major concern. We need to discuss what investigators are allowed or not allowed to do because some behavior seems inappropriate and many establishments feel targeted. Meeting scheduled with Director Fred Moosally week of 10/28/2019.

Nightlife interactions with agencies have historically been regulatory**.** Establishments would like to work more collaboratively. No more "Gotcha" mentality. Perhaps there could be new ABRA training altering the culture of ABRA investigators.

CHANGE OF LAW:

25–781. Sale to minors or intoxicated persons prohibited – the onus of this law cannot continue to fall on the shoulders of the operators. This has to be revised to take into consideration that the quality of fake ID's has surpassed detection by Police and scanners therefor operators cannot be held liable when they've taken all appropriate steps to ensure patrons are of age.

Commissioner Kith Slade asked about ABRA's investigators capabilities regarding the detection of Fake IDs.

Sarah Fashbaugh explained that ABRA offers Training on how to detect fake IDs nine times a year. However, ABRA investigator cannot detect if an ID is fake or not.

Sidone Yohannas, from Veritas Law Firm explained that the underage who are caught do not receive any penalties.

Commissioner Kenneth Holmes added that it was helpful to speak with the nightlife communities in another jurisdiction to hold the students accountable similar to what the universities does.

Director Townsend added that the only time we see the underage students being held accountable is when ABRA investigators are checking for IDs with MPD officers and they can make an arrest.

Commissioner Sarah Fashbaugh mentioned that ABRA cannot issue any citations to individuals.

8:01 PM: The Commission meeting concluded.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DC'S NIGHTLIFE INDUSTRY

2020

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF NIGHTLIFE AND CULTURE

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

We say it all the time: Washington, DC is a city that has something for everyone – from world-class museums to world-champion sports teams, from playgrounds to monuments, from Michelin-starred restaurants to concert halls and nightclubs.

Washington, DC is no longer a one-business, government town with a 9-5 schedule. We are a city of innovators, creatives, and change-makers – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We are also a growing city, now more than 700,000 residents strong. But it's not just our population that is growing – so, too, is tourism, our business corridors, and our nightlife and culture industry.

Currently, our city's nightlife industry accounts for $7.1 billion in annual revenue and supports nearly 65,000 jobs. To manage this growth and ensure more people and neighborhoods are benefitting from the nightlife industry's prosperity, in 2018, with the support of the DC Council, we joined cities around the world in creating an office dedicated to nightlife – the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture. This office, led by Director Shawn Townsend and his incredible team, ensures that we are working across DC Government and with businesses and community members to build a vibrant DC nightlife that works for everyone.

And what does it mean to have a nightlife that works for everyone? It means that people can live, work, and play side by side. It means we are meeting the needs of late-night and early-morning workers. And it means that as we continue to grow and prosper – as we add new venues, restaurants, and destinations – our city's nightlife continues to reflect the diversity and vibrancy of DC.

Sincerely,

Muriel Bowser
Mayor

On February 19, 2020, Director of the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture Shawn Townsend, poses with Mayor Muriel Bowser, at the bill signing designating Go-Go music the official music of Washington, DC.

Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser.

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

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Executive Summary

John Shore

Executive Summary

While the District may be better known for its politicians than its DJs, the District's nightlife has a rich history. From the first Beatles concert in the United States to the creation of Go-Go music, a world-renowned punk scene, and one of the country's most robust nightlife scenes for LGBTQ+ venues, the District has long been a vibrant, inclusive place to have fun and connect socially.

The District's restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues contribute $7.1 Billion to the city's economy.

64,980 Jobs
(8% share of the District)

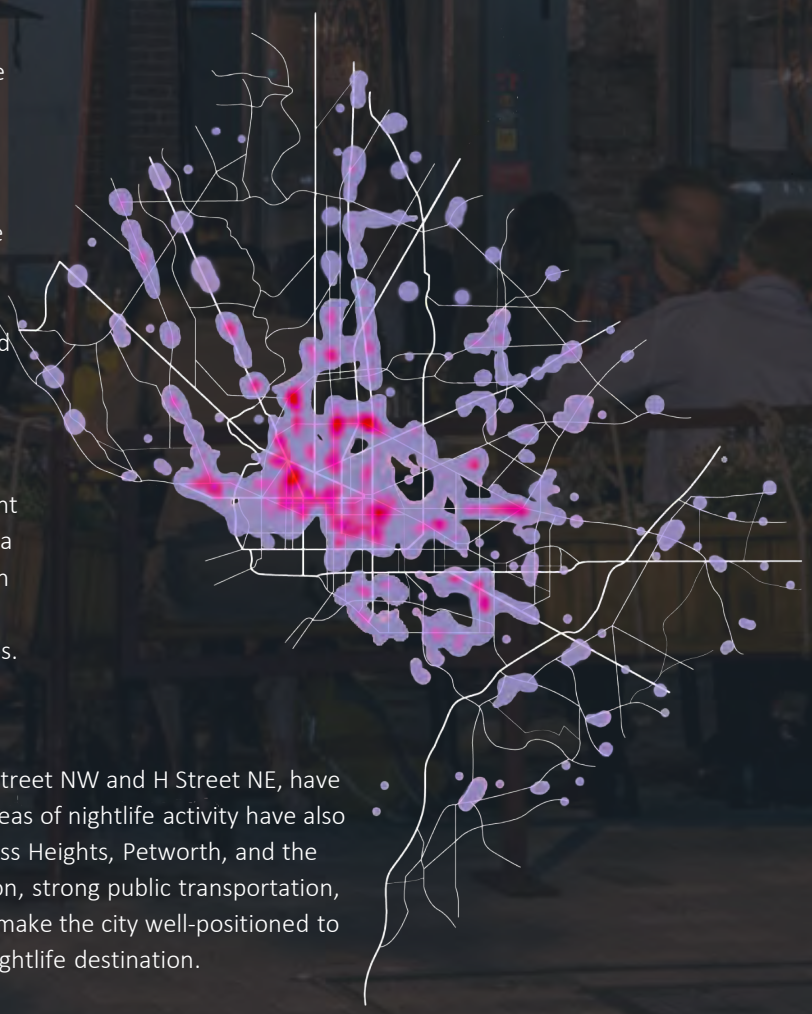
2,437 Businesses
(6.7% share of the District)

$7.1 Billion Annual Revenue
(3.7% share of the District)

The 2,437 business establishments in the District operating as restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues play a large and unique role in the District's economy. Nightlife establishments contribute $562 million in annual tax revenue to the District.

The nightlife industry provides a large share of dining, entertainment, recreational, and cultural activity to the District. Beyond the economic and fiscal impacts, the nightlife economy generates amenities that attract workers, employers, residents, and visitors from around the world to the District.

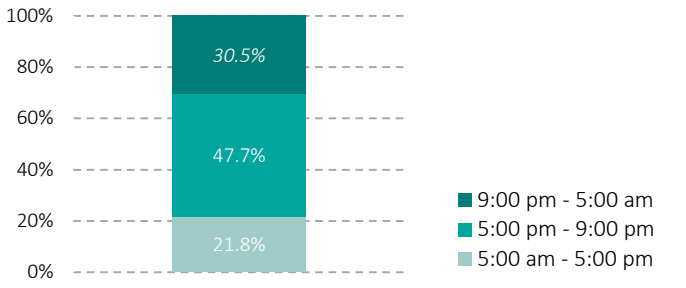
Nightlife establishments provide employment opportunities for those looking for an income source during off-peak work hours. Approximately 57% of employment in the nightlife industry is comprised of part-time jobs, a source of flexible employment increasingly important in today's economy. These jobs generate nearly $3.1 billion in salary and wages for the industry's 64,980 jobs.



Historic centers of nightlife, such as Downtown DC, U Street NW and H Street NE, have re-emerged as regional nighttime destinations. New areas of nightlife activity have also emerged, such as Capitol Riverfront/Navy Yard, Congress Heights, Petworth, and the Southwest Waterfront. The District's growing population, strong public transportation, and base of arts, cultural, and educational institutions make the city well-positioned to continue growing as a renowned music, culture, and nightlife destination.

Study led by Jon Stover & Associates on behalf of the DC Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

Nightlife Industry Revenues By Time Of Day



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Economic Impacts of The District's Nightlife Industry

Impact	Employment	Revenue
Direct (Nightlife Operations)	57,250	$5,365,962,748
Indirect (Supply Chain)	5,162	$1,222,580,249
Induced (Spending of Wages)	2,568	$479,864,592
Total	**64,980**	**$7,068,407,589**

Source: IMPLAN

Businesses Reported That Over The Last Three Years:

Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Key Priorities for the Nightlife Industry

Based on survey feedback and focus group discussions, many of the issues facing the District's nightlife businesses can be grouped in the following categories: rising costs and declining profits, attracting and retaining employees, transit access for employees and customers, regulatory costs and timeframes, community approvals and protest processes, and developing better strategies to address safety, security, and cleanliness efforts.

As the District's nightlife economy grows, businesses face increasing competition, rising costs, difficulty attracting employees, and regulatory hurdles that cut into already-slim margins.

This study recommends five guiding principles to help MONC prioritize and refine its activities in its second year of operations and beyond:

1. A diverse and vibrant nightlife makes the District a great place to live, work, and visit.
2. MONC serves all nightlife stakeholders.
3. MONC interventions aim to improve compliance and minimize nightlife impacts.
4. MONC activities address the most pressing challenges of the nightlife industry.
5. The best way to serve nightlife stakeholders is through collaborative relationships, risk mitigation, and proactive problem-solving.

About the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture and This Study

The legislation creating the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC) was first introduced by Ward 4 Councilmember Brandon Todd and later signed into law by Mayor Muriel Bowser on October 18, 2018. The primary function of the MONC is to serve as an intermediary between nightlife establishments, residents, and the District government. Guided by the Commission on Nightlife and Culture and nightlife stakeholders, MONC is currently developing its policy agenda. This study, led by Jon Stover & Associates in collaboration with MONC, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the Washington DC Economic Partnership, Javera Group, and Brick & Story, was conducted to help MONC – and the District at large – understand the dynamics of the nightlife industry from a cultural and economic perspective.

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

Study Context

Why is the nightlife economy important? Nightlife activity contributes significantly to the District's economy. Since the nightlife economy depends heavily on customer traffic outside of the traditional nine to five, nightlife industries allow for second jobs and often provide for more flexible and creative work. This economic sector has grown significantly in recent years as customers, residents and visitors alike spend increasing amounts on experiences such as dining, drinking, dancing, and shows. Importantly, the nightlife economy is a vital part of the District's legacy, identity, and brand, helping to attract both workers, residents, and tourists to the District.

Ted Eytan, MD

About This Study

Nighttime activity is a large part of the District of Columbia's economy, identity, and services. The purpose of this study is to articulate the characteristics and impacts of the nightlife economy and identify opportunities for the District to help it thrive.

What is the Nightlife Economy?

The nightlife economy refers to all business sales, consumer spending, employment, and other economic activity related to the nighttime. However, there is not a consistent definition of the nightlife economy. Sometimes it refers primarily to the time of day, such as economic activity after the sun sets or once most people are off from work. Other times it refers primarily to certain industry sectors for which a large portion of their operations typically occur at night.

This study considers both approaches: it focuses on four types of businesses (restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues) and compares three different time periods (5:00 am to 5:00 pm, 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and 9:00 am to 5:00 am). Importantly, the nightlife economy is more than just business activity: it is also about the workers, customers, neighborhood residents, other businesses in the supply chain, and the city services that support each industry.

The Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

This analysis was commissioned by the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC). The legislation creating MONC was first introduced by Ward 4 Councilmember Brandon Todd and later signed into law by Mayor Muriel Bowser on October 18, 2018.

Though this is the District's first year with a nightlife office, the "Night Mayor" or "Nightlife Director" concept is becoming more prevalent in major cities, as local governments recognize the significant impact that the nightlife economy can have on a region.

The primary function of the MONC is to serve as an intermediary between nightlife establishments, residents, and the District government. Guided by the Commission on Nightlife and Culture and other nightlife stakeholders, MONC is in the process of developing its policy agenda for the upcoming years.

Study Objectives

The purpose of this study is to assist MONC – and the District at large – understand the dynamics of the nightlife industry, from cultural and economic perspectives, and quantify the industry's impacts. The study describes the characteristics and needs of the District's nightlife industries and quantifies its contribution to the District's greater economy. This study also reviews best practices for measuring nightlife impacts, describes the nightlife's role in the District's history and identity, and develops guiding principles to help MONC refine its programming and operations to support the District's nightlife economy for years to come.

This study focuses on the perspective of nightlife business owners and operators. Other nightlife stakeholder perspectives, such as workers, patrons, and community members, should continue to be evaluated as well.

Methodology

The overall economic impact of the District's nightlife economy was analyzed based on key industry sectors and time of day. The analysis used leading data sources, including city-provided information and data collected from local industry representatives.

Industry Sectors and Time of Day. This study assesses the four industry sectors most closely associated with the "nightlife economy" in the District of Columbia: (i) restaurants, (ii) bars, (iii) nightclubs, and (iv) theaters and performance venues. The economic contribution of these industries was evaluated in full and over different time periods throughout the day: 5:00 am to 5:00 pm; 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm; and 9:00 pm to 5:00 am.

Fiscal and Economic Impact Model. This analysis used an impact modeling software called IMPLAN, which leverages data and multipliers specific to the District of Columbia to calculate the indirect and induced economic impact and direct fiscal contribution.

Contribution Analysis. A Contribution Analysis Model in IMPLAN was used to determine the nightlife industry's role in the greater economy. This economic impact model assessed all nightlife industry sectors and accounts for industry-specific business-to-business indirect expenditures to limit overcounting contributions within the industry itself.

Data Sources

District Data. This analysis includes data provided by a range of District agencies to ensure this study incorporated the most accurate and current data available, including the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Department of Employment Services, and the Office of Taxation and Revenue. The collected data was used to quantify the number of businesses in each sector.

Third Party Data. Other secondary data used in the analysis includes the US Census, American Community Survey, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ESRI Business Analyst, and JobsEQ.

Review of Benchmark Studies. Recently conducted analyses and studies specific to the subject matter were reviewed and assessed for best practices. Relevant District plans and policies, such as the DC Cultural Plan, were also reviewed.

Nightlife Industry Surveys. As part of this study, 183 electronic surveys were completed by nightlife business owners and operators within the four target industry sectors. The survey captured how economic activity varies by industry, time of day, and day of the week, and quantified the needs and concerns of these business sectors. The Nightlife Industry Survey was administered electronically by MONC and other industry partners, and each respondent represented a different nightlife establishment in the District.

Nightlife Stakeholder Focus Groups. A total of six focus groups (and over 60 participants) were convened for stakeholders representing the following perspectives: (i) restaurant owners and operators; (ii) bar owners and operators; (iii) nightclub owners and operators; (iv) theater and performance venue owners and operators; (v) nighttime-oriented gallery owners and operators; and (vi) community leadership including city agency staff, neighborhood-serving nonprofits, and Advisory Neighborhood Commission commissioners. The purpose of these focus groups was to facilitate a thorough discussion of the unique needs and conditions of the nightlife industry.

Glossary of Terms

This study uses the following definitions for the key terms below:

Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) ABRA issues and renews licenses that enable businesses to sell and serve alcoholic beverages.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) An ANC is a non-partisan, neighborhood body made up of locally elected representatives called Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners. They are a unique feature of DC's Home Rule Charter and provide people with a greater say in matters that affect their neighborhoods.

Bars Many restaurants are also bars, and there are few operational distinctions between the two. However, for the purposes of this study, we make a distinction and define bars as businesses with an active 'tavern license' issued by ABRA.

Contribution Analysis The gross changes in a region's existing economy supported by a given industry.

DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) DCRA is responsible for regulating construction and business activity, including permitting, compliance and code enforcement, business and professional licenses, corporate registration, and special events permits.

DC Department of Employment Services (DOES) DOES provides comprehensive employment services to ensure a competitive workforce, full employment, life-long learning, and economic stability.

Direct Economic Impact The businesses, revenue, jobs, wages, and other economic activity generated from the operations of a particular industry or industries.

Employment The total number of full-time and part-time jobs.

Fiscal Impact The amount of tax revenue to the District of Columbia generated from an economic activity, including sales tax, alcohol tax, income tax, and the issuance of licenses and permits. This study does not include property tax in its fiscal impact.

Indirect Economic Impact Indirect impact includes the supply chain of goods and services from other industries that enable activity in a given industry.

Induced Economic Impact Induced effects are the results (spending) of increased personal income caused by the direct and indirect effects.

Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC) MONC advocates for the District's after-hours economy by serving as a central point of contact between DC Government, the nightlife industry, and District residents.

Nightclubs District business establishments with a 'nightclub license' issued by ABRA.

Nighttime The period between 5:00 pm and 5:00 am. The study further compares activity from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm and 9:00 pm to 5:00 am.

Nightlife Economy Economic activity related to the business operations, employment, and sales specific to restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues.

Nightlife Industry Industries for which a large portion of activity occurs between 5:00 pm and 5:00 am. This study focuses on four such sectors: (i) restaurants, (ii) bars, (iii) nightclubs, and (iv) theaters and performance venues.

Restaurants Businesses in Washington, DC with an active restaurant license from the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) and that do not have an active tavern license issued by ABRA.

Theaters and Performance Venues Establishments that operate as a performing arts venue, movie theater, or live music venue. Most have a DCRA motion picture theater license, public hall license, or a live theater license. Venues do not include sports stadiums or arenas, unless stated otherwise.

"By encouraging greater dialogue and experimentation, [nocturnal governance] structures are challenging traditional approaches to urban governance and paving the way for a new wave of studies on the urban night."

- The Urban Studies Journal [1]

Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser.

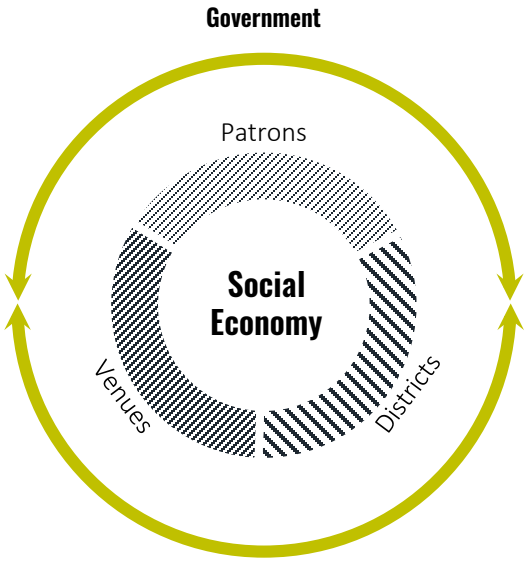
Snapshot:

Responsible Hospitality Institute

Best Practices in Nightlife Management Approach

A leading thought leader in nightlife management, the Responsible Hospitality helps communities around the world facilitate collaborative solutions to the most difficult nightlife challenges. RHI evaluates five overlapping sectors in assisting a city to develop a Sociable City Plan – market forces, government policy, patron activity, venue practices, and district management – to determine strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement.

RHI recommends a three-step process to facilitate change with these constituencies: (i) evaluate – a data-driven assessment of conditions and needs; (ii) motivate – building trust and understanding; and (iii) engage – collaborate directly with each. Importantly, RHI emphasizes cooperation and risk management over enforcement and compliance.[2]



Source: Responsible Hospitality Institute

Nightlife economic impact assessments are an increasingly common way for cities to identify the characteristics, scale, and needs of their nighttime-oriented business community.

NYC's Nightlife Economy: Impact, Assets, and Opportunities *(2019)*

New York City's nightlife is assessed from stakeholder perspectives and includes industry assets, and economic impact of five sectors: food service, bars, arts, venues, and sports/recreation.[6]

London's 24 Hour Economy *(2016)*

London's study explores the benefits of London's citywide nighttime economy by industry sector and assesses the impact of the "Night Tube" train service.[7]

The Economic Impact of San Francisco's Nightlife Businesses *(2016)*

This study includes economic impact, sales tax, and business taxes generated by the city's art galleries, nightclubs, music venues, theaters, restaurants, and drinking establishments.[8]

Edmonton's Late-Night Entertainment Economy *(2016)*

The Edmonton report estimates late-night business revenue, emphasizing economic output and job creation and recommendations for public transit, police presence, and local management.[9]

Sydney Night Time Economy: Cost Benefit Analysis *(2011)*

This analysis features both economic benefits and costs of Sydney's nighttime economy, with an emphasis on economic output and net impacts on transit and policing.[10]

Best Practices in Measuring the Nightlife Economy

Cities across the United States are increasingly data-driven when making policy decisions and allocating financial resources for purposes related to economic development, placemaking, and revitalization. Over the last few years, municipalities have begun to apply this approach to better understand the positive and negative impacts of the nighttime portion of a city's economy. This work stems from a variety of issues, concerns, and needs and is often a result of city agencies wanting to articulate the scale of employment, sales, and visitor impact in the nighttime compared to the daytime.

There is no universal approach for conducting a nightlife impact study as the purpose, objectives, and methodologies of each typically reflect a city's unique conditions and needs. Studies often differ in defining geography, industry focus, time of night, data sources, and the types of impacts assessed. While each nightlife study follows a unique methodology, several commonalities exist. Most studies focus solely on businesses in the hospitality and entertainment industries that are traditionally associated with the nightlife sector. Furthermore, given the relatively small number of prior research into the economic impact of nighttime economies, analyses often utilize in-person surveys to collect quality data. This is often supplemented with government supplied data, particularly to measure employment-related data points.[3]

A Growing Municipal Focus on Managing the Nightlife Economy

In recent years, city governments have placed increasing attention on the nightlife economy and issues associated with night-shift workers, noise and trash complaints, permitting challenges, and late-night transportation options. Over a dozen cities in the United States and more than 40 across the world[4][5] have developed new agencies or staff positions with this specific charge, often referred to as a Night Mayor, Night Manager, or a range of different agency or department names (such as the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture).

There is a noticeable shift in how cities recognize the value of nightlife. Instead of relying solely on policing, licensing and enforcement, more cities are seeing the value of a more proactive approach to minimizing impacts while celebrating nightlife's cultural and economic contributions.

Relevant District Studies and Context

Within the past few years, there has been increased attention paid to the importance of the nightlife economy within the District. The findings, recommendations, and conclusions from recent studies provide context and insights that have informed this analysis. The Music Venue Study and DC Food Economy Study both provide deeper context on industries that are critical to the success of the District's overall nighttime industry. The Cultural Plan highlights central themes across the people, places, and communities impacted by the District's nightlife industry. The DOES Minimum Wage Study narrows in on the impacts to an important stakeholder group within the District's nightlife scene. Finally, the 14th & U Nightlife Study serves as a basis of understanding of how nightlife impacts a portion of the District and a subset of the District's economy.

As a collection, these reports provide an important backdrop for the District's nightlife industry and inspire further research on the economic impact of the industry. A deeper understanding has been gained from these past reports about specific nightlife industries and prevalent themes within the District's nightlife economy. This study builds off this work to further understand and communicate the economic impact of the District's nightlife industry.

Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser.

Recent reports exploring culture, music, neighborhood nightlife, food, and minimum wage in DC showcase the city's unique assets and challenges.

Cultural Plan *(2019)*

The DC Cultural Plan lays out a vision and recommendations for how the District can invest in and strengthen its cultural creators, spaces, and consumers. The goal of this plan is to make culture more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable.(11)

Music Venue Study *(2020)*

The District is currently assessing and documenting the existing music venues throughout the District to create a thorough inventory of these establishments.(12)

14th & U Nightlife Study *(2012)*

This study measures nightlife activity within the U Street Corridor, 14th Street and Logan Circle area of DC, as well as the economic benefits of nightlife. Results indicate that nightlife and sociability are significant economic engines.(13)

DC Food Economy Study *(2019)*

This report highlights the economic and employment impacts of DC's food economy. Recommendations and strategies are put forth to support new businesses, foster industry connections, and advance inclusive and equitable growth.(14)

DOES Minimum Wage Study *(2017)*

This report from DOES studies the District's minimum wage workforce. Legislated increases in minimum wage and tipped minimum wage are described to understand how workers, families, businesses, and industries will be impacted.(15)

The Role of Nightlife In the District

Nightlife in the District has seen significant growth over the past 20 years, building upon the District's long history as an entertainment and cultural hub. Historic centers of nightlife, such as Downtown DC, U Street NW, and H Street NE, have re-emerged as regional nighttime destinations. New areas of nightlife activity have also emerged, such as Capitol Riverfront/Navy Yard, Petworth, Congress Heights/St. Elizabeth East, and the Southwest Waterfront. The District's growing population, strong public transportation, and base of cultural and educational institutions make the city well-positioned to continue growing as a renowned nightlife destination.

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

DC's Cultural History

While the District may be better known for its politicians than its DJs, the District's nightlife has a rich history. From the first Beatles concert in the United States to the creation of Go-Go music, a world-renowned punk scene, and one of the country's most robust nightlife scenes for LGBTQ+ residents,[16] the District has long been a vibrant, inclusive place to have fun and connect socially.

1917 // Prohibition Shuts Down All Bars in DC

The ban on alcohol sales resulted in the closure of 267 bars in the city and sparked the creation of nearly 3,000 speakeasies. With the closure of licensed (and segregated) bars, Prohibition inadvertently helped break down racial barriers in the city, as white and black residents came together at small, hidden speakeasies to enjoy an increasingly popular beverage of choice: the cocktail.[17]

1900s – 1960s // "Black Broadway" on U Street

Beginning the 1900s, the U Street NW corridor emerged as a cultural hub for African American musicians, poets, and other entertainers. This period featured the opening of several landmark venues, including the Howard Theater (in 1910) and Lincoln Theater (in 1922). This period also featured the first paid performance of Duke Ellington, who grew up near the U Street NW neighborhood. The site of his first performance, the True Reformer Building, still stands today at 1200 U Street NW.[18]

1960s – 1980s // Growing LGBTQ+ Nightlife Scene

Between the 1960s and 1980s, several DC neighborhoods, including Dupont Circle, Barracks Row, and South Capitol Street, became growing nightlife destinations for the LGBTQ+ community. The District has continued to maintain an assortment of bars and clubs oriented towards the LGBTQ+ community.[19]

1964 // The Beatles' First US Concert

After being greeted by an enormous crowd at Union Station, the Beatles played their first public concert in the United States at the Uline Arena (then known as the Washington Coliseum). The building, at 1140 3rd Street NE, still stands today and was renovated in 2016 for retail and office use.[20]

1968 // DC Riots

Riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. caused significant property damage across the city and marked the start of a period of disinvestment and decline along several key nightlife corridors, including H Street NE, 7th Street NW, 14th Street NW, and the U Street NW.

1971 // Inaugural Performance at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Created to help establish the District as the nation's cultural center, The Kennedy Center now attracts over two million annual visitors and hosts more than 2,200 performances and exhibits per year.[23]

1972-1978 // The Rise of Go-Go

Several foundational Go-Go bands, including Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers, Trouble Funk, and Rare Essence, formed in DC, releasing studio albums and performing in clubs, bars, and recreation centers around the District and region.[21,22]

1979 // Rise of the DC Punk Scene

The District's punk scene included the seminal hardcore bands the Bad Brains and Fugazi. The founding of indie label Dischord Records, the birth of the Riot Grrrl movement, and a slew of DC-based punk bands have had a lasting influence on American music.

1980 // The 9:30 Club Opens Its Doors at 930 F Street NW

The club becomes one of the central hubs of DC's prominent hardcore punk scene and today it continues to operate as one of the city's most popular music venues.[24] The venue, now located on V Street NW, has regularly been credited as one of the best music venues in the country.[25,26]

1991 // The Green Line Opens on U Street

The new Metro Station played a significant role in brining customers back to the historic corridor, which is now once again one of the District's most popular nightlife destinations.

1997 // Opening of the Capital One Arena

Home to the Washington Wizards, Washington Capitals, and the Georgetown University's men's basketball team, the arena has attracted 47 million visitors and hosted more than 4,500 events, playing an integral role in bringing activity back to Downtown DC.[27]

2000s-2010s // Revival of Historic Nightlife Corridors

Increased investment and residential density along H Street NE, U Street NW, and 14th Street NW has driven the corridors' reemergence as thriving nightlife destinations, attracting people from across the DC region to eat, drink, shop, and attend shows.

2008-2018 // Revitalization of Capitol Riverfront and the Southwest Waterfront

New clusters of nightlife activity continue to emerge across the District. Catalyzed by the opening of Nationals Park in 2008, Navy Yard is a major daytime and nighttime destination. Similarly, starting with Arena Stage's 2010 multi-theater renovation, the redeveloped Southwest Waterfront now attracts significant nightlife activity at The Wharf and at Audi Field, the newly built DC United stadium.

2018 // Opening of the St. Elizabeths East Entertainment and Sports Arena

The 118,000 square foot multi-purpose event facility brings an entertainment hub to the Congress Heights neighborhood in Southeast DC. The arena hosts a range of concerts and activities, houses the practice facility for the Washington Wizards NBA team and is home to the 2019 WNBA champion Washington Mystic and the NBA G League Capital City Go-Go.

2018 // Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture Established

MONC serves as the intermediary between nightlife establishments, residents, and the District government (legislation introduced by Councilmember Brandon Todd).

2020 // Go-Go Becomes the Official Music of DC

On February 19, 2020, Mayor Bowser signs the Go-Go Music of the District of Columbia Designation Act to make Go-Go the official music of the District (legislation introduced by Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie following the Don't Mute DC movement).

The District's Nightlife Conditions

The District's local nightlife industry is supported by a range of key physical and demographic assets including:

Nightlife Identity

The District is home to several neighborhoods with dense clusters of nightlife businesses, including Dupont Circle, Adams Morgan, U Street, Shaw, H Street NE, Georgetown, and Petworth.

Walkability

With pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and commercial clusters located throughout various neighborhoods, DC is one of the most walkable cities in the country,[28] making it easy for patrons to walk between different nightlife businesses.

Mix of Transit

Served by the second largest heavy rail system in the country[29] and an expansive bus system, DC is one of the most transit-accessible cities in the US. This transit mix allows customers and workers to travel to and between nightlife establishments.

Tourism

More than 23 million domestic and international tourists visit the District annually, creating a reliable customer base for nightlife business. A high share of visitor spending is on dining and entertainment, averaging over $149 per day.[30]

Safe & Secure Environment

The District's low rates of crime compared to other major metropolitan areas in the country create a secure environment for nightlife activity.[31]

Small Business Resources and Support

The District fosters a supportive environment for small businesses, providing a range of resources from technical assistance to grants to help businesses achieve success.

Growing Population and Economy

The District's growing population and above-average median household income provide a strong consumer base for nightlife businesses. Over the past decade, the District's population has increased 17%, growing by 104,000 residents,[32] and nearly 25% of personal income tax filers in DC reported incomes of at least $100,000 in 2019.[33]

Diversity of Nightlife Options

Since 2008, nightlife options in the District have expanded significantly. The number of restaurants, bars, and clubs in the city has grown from 800 in 2008 to more than 2,400, as of 2020.[34] The District's nightlife economy also expands beyond traditional storefronts, leveraging unconventional spaces of rooftops, alleyway networks, and industrial spaces.

Influx of Young Professionals

The District attracts many young professionals to the city, with 32.8% of the total population between the ages of 18-34.[35] Universities in the District, including American University, The Catholic University, Gallaudet University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, and University of the District of Columbia, and allow the city to maintain a consistent base of students and young professionals.

Burgeoning Food and Drink Scene

From hidden gems to nationally acclaimed restaurants, the District's dining and drinking scene is rapidly growing. Restaurants, both new and old, are being supported by the city's growing population and growing investments along commercial corridors across the District.

DC's nightlife and culture are both inextricably linked with Go-Go music. Go-Go traces back to the 1960s and 1970s, when local band leaders would talk and gesture with audiences while bands' percussion section continued playing the beat.

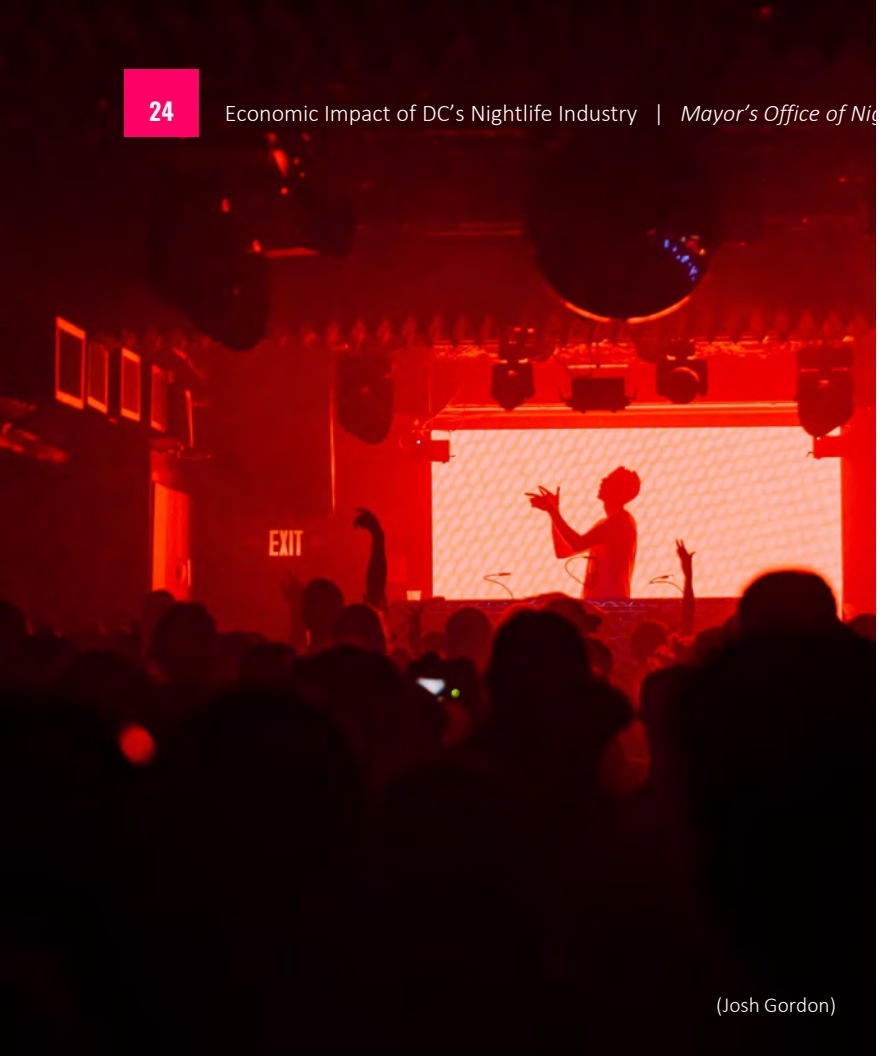
This evolved into a distinct musical sound and performance style, characterized by syncopated, percussion-heavy beats and frequent "call and responses" between the musicians and audience. Go-Go music continued to grow over the several decades, with several local bands, most notably Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers, achieving national prominence in the 1970s and 1980s.

While some Go-Go bands have broken into mainstream charts over the years, Go-Go's popularity has remained heavily concentrated in the DC area and is still closely tied with local African American culture. Today, Go-Go bands play at a variety of bars, nightclubs, and other venues throughout DC and Prince George's County, Maryland. However, the closure of many longtime venues over the past twenty years resulted in grassroots and legislative efforts to ensure that Go-Go remains a lasting fixture in DC's culture. In February 2020, Mayor Bowser signed the Go-Go Music of the District of Columbia Designation Act, which officially names Go-Go music as the official music of the District and creates a mandate to design and implement a new program to support, preserve, and archive Go-Go music and its history.

"In addition to helping to make the District of Columbia a vibrant, world-class city, our outstanding nightlife nurtures entrepreneurship and employment and keeps our economy thriving."

– Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie

Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser.



(Josh Gordon)

(Roxplosion)

(Vickey Ford Sneakshot Photography)

For those attending day parties in the District, nightlife begins when the sun is still out.

Day parties are organized events in the District designed to bridge the gap between brunch and typical late-night clubbing hours. Usually hosted at restaurants or clubs, these parties typically take place on Saturdays and Sundays and last from either 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm or 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Parties typically include food and DJs and require guests to pre-register and pre-pay.

These events allow bars and nightclubs to expand their operating hours, attract customers on Sundays, and significantly boost overall sales. According to interviews with local nightclub owners, day parties can generate up to 30% of weekly revenue at some establishments. Additionally, the pre-registration typically required of day parties allows venues to more easily plan and staff events, making day parties a particularly important piece of many nightlife business models.

> "Mayor Bowser has tasked DMPED with three tasks: jobs, affordable housing and tax revenue. This report underscores that DC's nightlife economy directly and indirectly impacts all three positively. The report also highlights the region's interconnectedness. If we continue to work together as a city and a region, we will help more workers, more businesses, and all of our economies will thrive."
>
> *– Acting Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development John Falcicchio*

The District's Players and Influencers in the Nightlife Industry

While the direct nightlife industry of DC is comprised of establishments and businesses that predominantly operate during the evening and nighttime hours, these establishments are shaped and influenced by public, private, and nonprofit sector entities. The nightlife ecosystem is dependent not only on a business's patrons, staff, performers, and industry partners, but also the regulatory, civic, and compliance agencies and departments within the District's government. Place management organizations such as business improvement districts and Main Street programs often have direct relationships with these establishments and provide guidance and support navigating community relationships and business assistance.

The Role of the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

MONC serves every type of nightlife stakeholder and works to facilitate collaborative relationships between nightlife establishments, residents, and the District government.

Little Salon (Chris Maier)

After normal operating hours, you can find a lot more than paintings and portraits at many art galleries in the District.

After 5:00 pm, many independent galleries in DC transition into eclectic event spaces, hosting a diverse range of creative and professional gatherings. These spaces, which often blend creative exhibitions with food, music, and other programming, serve as a strong catalyst for partnerships between different businesses and perform-ers in the local nightlife ecosystem. However, the flexibility and experiment-ation supported by these spaces can create regulatory and permitting challenges for gallery owners.

Art All Night (Victoria Pickering)

Little Salon (Chris Maier)

Art All Night (Victoria Pickering)

Consumer Trends and E-Commerce Has Led to a Rise in Experiential Businesses, Particularly in Nightlife Industries.

Across the District, and the entire country, the nature of retail and small business is rapidly changing. The rise of e-commerce and changing consumer preferences have led to the decline of traditional merchandise retailers and indoor malls. However, the rise of e-commerce has not stopped people from going out to shop and socialize. On the contrary, consumers have increasingly directed discretionary spending towards more experience-based activities, such as dining and travel, that are more difficult, or impossible, to digitally replicate. Since 2009, spending on travel and eating and drinking away from home has had a compounded annual growth rate of 4.4%.[29]

This national shift towards more experiential industries, coupled with increasing competition, has resulted in the rise of more "hybrid" stores offering a wide range of goods and services throughout different times of day. These hybrid businesses typically blur the lines between traditional business classifications. Examples include bars that operate as coffee shops during the day, or art galleries that transition into private event spaces at night. In DC, many nightclubs have reflected this nationwide trend by offering daytime brunch service and events, to help supplement nighttime revenue. This increasing flexibility has helped businesses remain resilient through technological changes, shifting consumer preferences, and rising costs.

The Blurred Line of Nightlife Industries

The line is blurring between a café and a bar, a bookstore and a restaurant, or a brunch spot and a nightclub. Innovative business owners are finding ways to capture spending from different types of customers at different times of the day and across different days of the week. This trend is redefining age-old industry definitions and breaking the barriers between what used to be distinct business categories. Correspondingly, a clear line cannot be drawn to categorize a "daytime" versus a "nighttime" industry. This study assesses restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and venues, but the nightlife economy is expected to be composed of an increasingly wide range of enterprises, as business owners continue to innovate.

Additional industries operate during nighttime hours and are interrelated to the nightlife economy.

Taxi and Rideshare Drivers

DC's rideshare industry is highly active on weekend nights. Uber and Lyft usage in DC is highest during morning rush hours (6:00 am to 10:00 am), evening rush hours (4:00 pm to 7:00 pm), and weekend late night hours (9:00 pm to 3:00 am).[36]

Hotels

In 2018, the District's 132 hotels drew 23.8 million visitors who spent a total of $7.8 billion on lodging, entertainment, food and beverages, shopping, and transportation.[37]

Hospitals

The District has three medical schools and 16 hospitals with a total of 742 beds, with operations running around the clock.[38]

Building Support Services

Night shift workers including custodians, building maintenance, and security personnel maintain buildings during off-peak hours.

Sports

Washington's professional sports teams bring millions of visitors, mostly at night, to DC stadiums and arenas. These venues total nearly 105,000 seats.[39]

Artists and Performers

Professional artists and performers form a crucial piece of DC's nightlife. These professionals, including dancers, actors, comedians, and musicians, entertain patrons at theaters and other cultural venues throughout the District.

DC's Nightlife Industry Conditions

The District's restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues each play a distinct role in making the city fun, interesting, and prosperous.

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

DC's Nightlife Businesses

The large and growing nightlife sector plays a unique role in the District's economy. There are 2,437 business establishments in the District that operate as a restaurant, bar, nightclub, or performance venue. Peak operations for nighttime industries occur after a majority of the daytime workforce is off work. This, of course, impacts the type of customers that are served and the type of jobs supported by nightlife industries.

Nightlife businesses provide a large share of dining, entertainment, recreational, arts, and cultural activity. In addition, nightlife businesses provide employment opportunities to those who are unable to work during the day or who need an additional source of income, employing many people on a part-time basis. This type of employment is increasingly important in today's economy, and provides the flexibility needed by artists, musicians, and other creative workers.

Nightlife businesses, which operate primarily after dark, are particularly susceptible to issues pertaining to lighting and safety. Food service leads to issues with trash removal and rodents. Late hours lead to unequal access to city services such as the Metro. And young patrons, live music, and alcohol consumption are often associated with neighborhood conflict and negative stigma. Providing entertainment or serving alcohol brings heightened levels of licensing and oversight to the nightlife industry.

Despite these challenges, the District's nightlife industry is vibrant, creative, and has grown considerably in recent years. Nightlife establishments are a fundamental part of the city's overall economy.

DC's Nightlife Industry

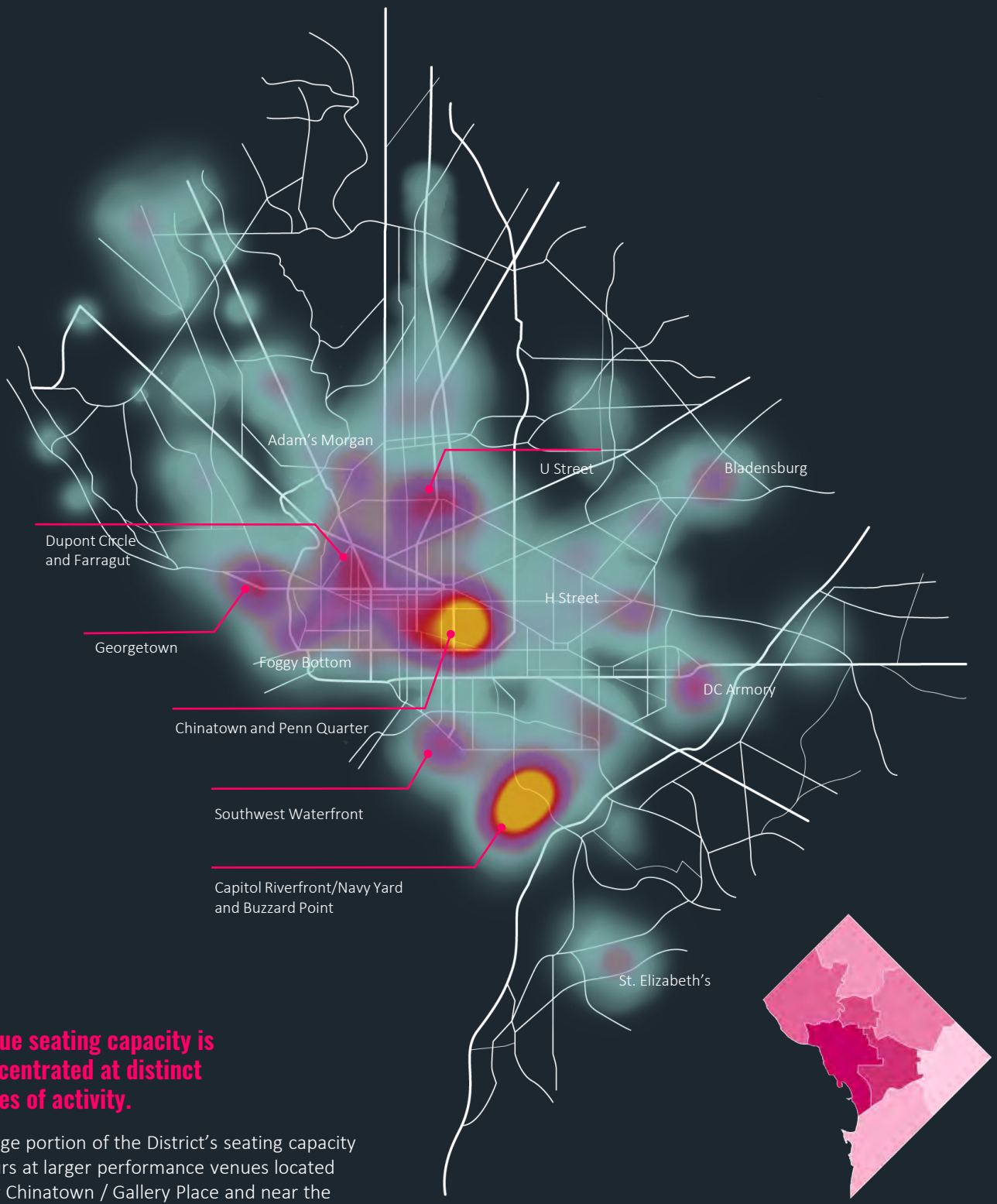
Type of Establishment	Total Establishments	Seating Capacity
Restaurant	1,990	122,683
Bar	369	56,710
Nightclub	37	10,396
Theater/Venue	41	**158,432**
Combined	**2,437**	**348,221**

Note: Restaurant capacity figure represents establishes with alcohol licenses only. Restaurants without alcohol licenses are excluded from the capacity figures. Performance venue seating capacity includes facilities with and without active alcohol licenses. Performance venue seating capacity figures include sports stadiums, which are not included in the economic impact assessment. When excluding sport arenas and stadiums, the District's performance venues have a combined 53,563 seats.
Data Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, seating capacity (2020)

Nightlife businesses radiate from the center of the District.

Nightlife businesses line the District's commercial thoroughfares and are concentrated towards the downtown area. Places further away from downtown, such as Wards 7 and 8 to the southeast, are particularly underserved by dining and nightlife businesses.

Data Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Active Licenses (2020); ESRI Business Locator Data (2020).



Venue seating capacity is concentrated at distinct nodes of activity.

A large portion of the District's seating capacity occurs at larger performance venues located near Chinatown / Gallery Place and near the Southwest Neighborhood.

The largest concentration of nightlife activity occurs in Wards 1, 2, and 6.

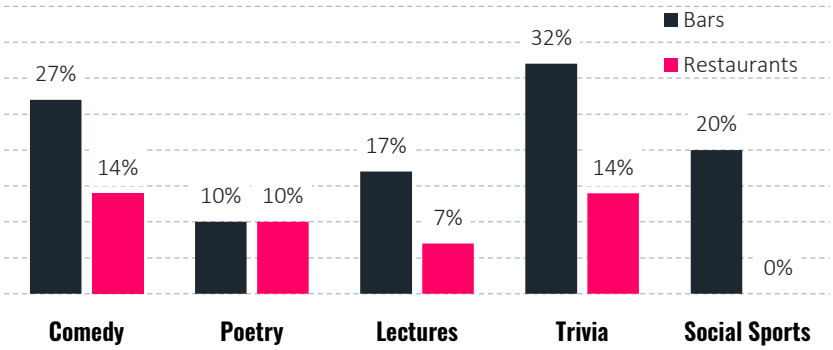
Source: Capacity as reported per licensing by DC's Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (2020).

The District's nightlife industry brings diverse entertainment options, attracting patrons and customers to events, social functions, and unique offerings.

One of the ways in which the District's nighttime-oriented businesses help attract a larger customer base is by providing a range of entertainment options appealing to differing interests and tastes. Over half of the city's bars provide live music or a DJ while nearly a third have a trivia night. Other common entertainment options among DC's bars include comedy shows, readings, and social sports.

Outdoor seating options, such as sidewalk cafes and summer gardens (including rooftop decks), are incorporated throughout the District's nightlife establishments. These are popular ways for restaurants and bars to attract customers during the warmer months.

Types of Entertainment Options Offered in DC's Restaurants and Bars

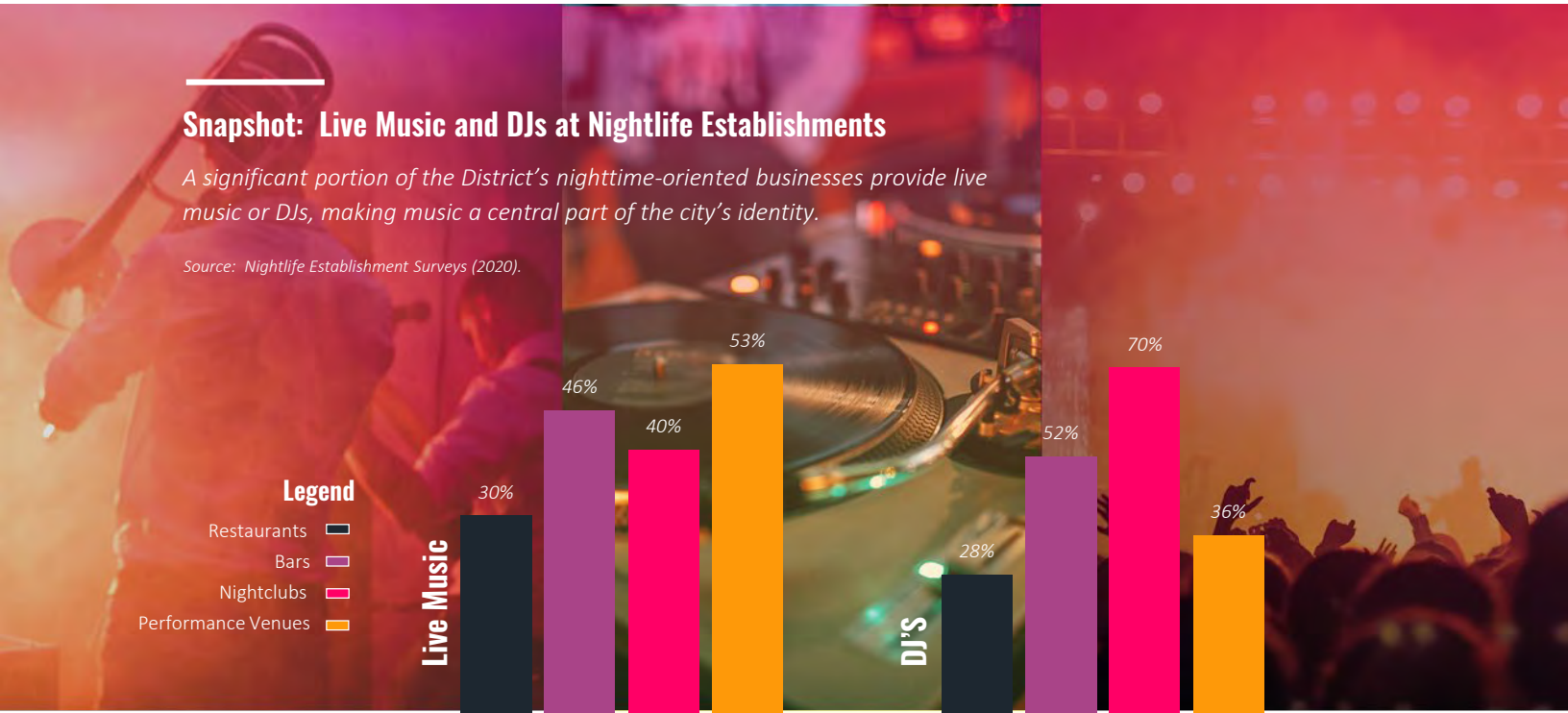


Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Types of Entertainment Facilities

Type of Establishment	Serving Alcohol	Onsite Tastings	Dance Floor	Sidewalk Café	Summer Garden
Restaurant	872	7	77	399	192
Tavern	369	10	112	101	120
Nightclub	37	0	37*	4	10
Theater/Venue	41	0	1	2	9
Combined	**1,325**	**17**	**192**	**506**	**331**

** Figure reflects the number of nightclubs that have dancing, not necessarily the number with dance floors.*
Source: Nightlife Establishment Licenses, Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (2020).



Snapshot: Live Music and DJs at Nightlife Establishments

A significant portion of the District's nighttime-oriented businesses provide live music or DJs, making music a central part of the city's identity.

Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020).

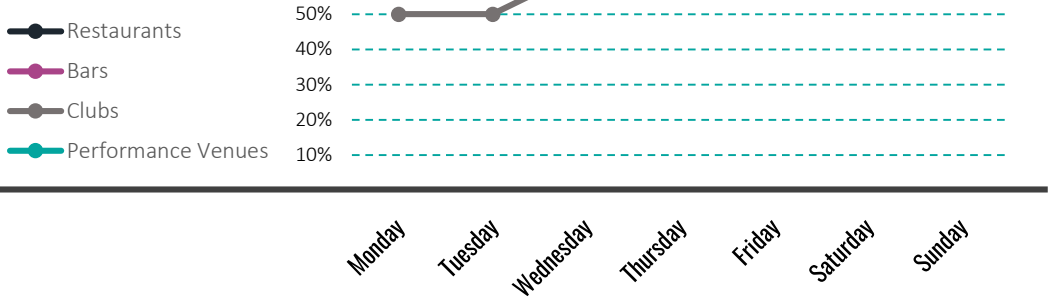
Nightlife Industry Operations

Nighttime customers are key, but daytime revenue is needed, too.

The defining characteristic of nightlife industries is that most of their revenue is generated after 5:00 pm. However, many businesses require daytime customers – including on weekdays – to remain profitable. Many bars across the District act as coffee shops during the daytime and serve brunch on the weekends. Performance venues offer matinee performances, educational programs, and special events during the day. Nightclubs are the most heavily reliant on late night and weekend customers, yet a majority of DC's nightclubs offer day parties on Saturday and Sunday afternoons which can account for nearly a third of average weekly revenues.

Most nighttime-oriented businesses operate seven days a week.

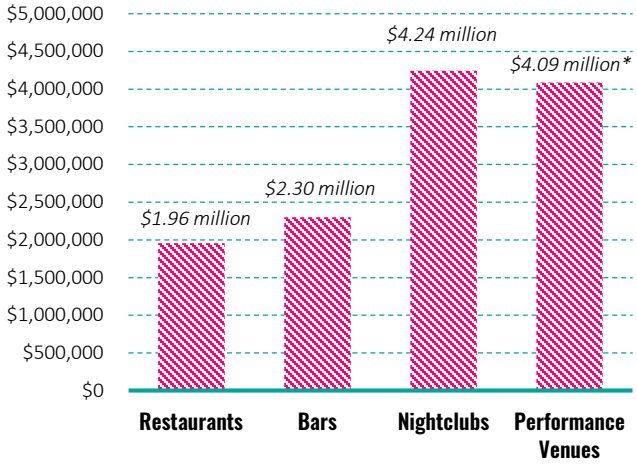
Nightlife businesses are most frequently open nearer to the weekend on Thursdays through Sundays. All industries report that 87% or more of their businesses are open on these days. Clubs have the lowest percentage of open businesses on Mondays through Wednesdays, while over 70% of all businesses in all other industries remain open on these days.



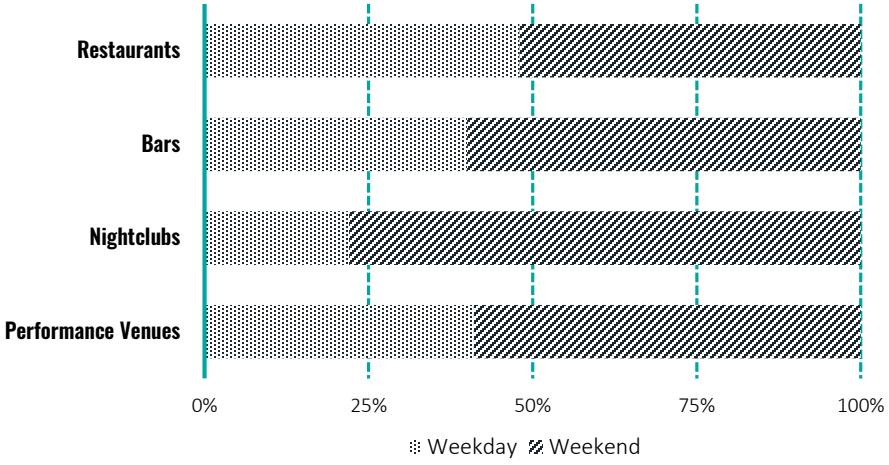
Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Average revenue per establishment by nightlife industry type.

Nightlife establishment revenues vary considerably based on industry type. Nightclubs report the highest average revenue while the average restaurant grosses just under $2 million per year.



Source: ESRI Business Summary Data Provided Through InfoGroup, IMPLAN
Note: Average performance venue revenue figures do not include concert halls; when accounting for concert halls venue revenues average $11.4 million



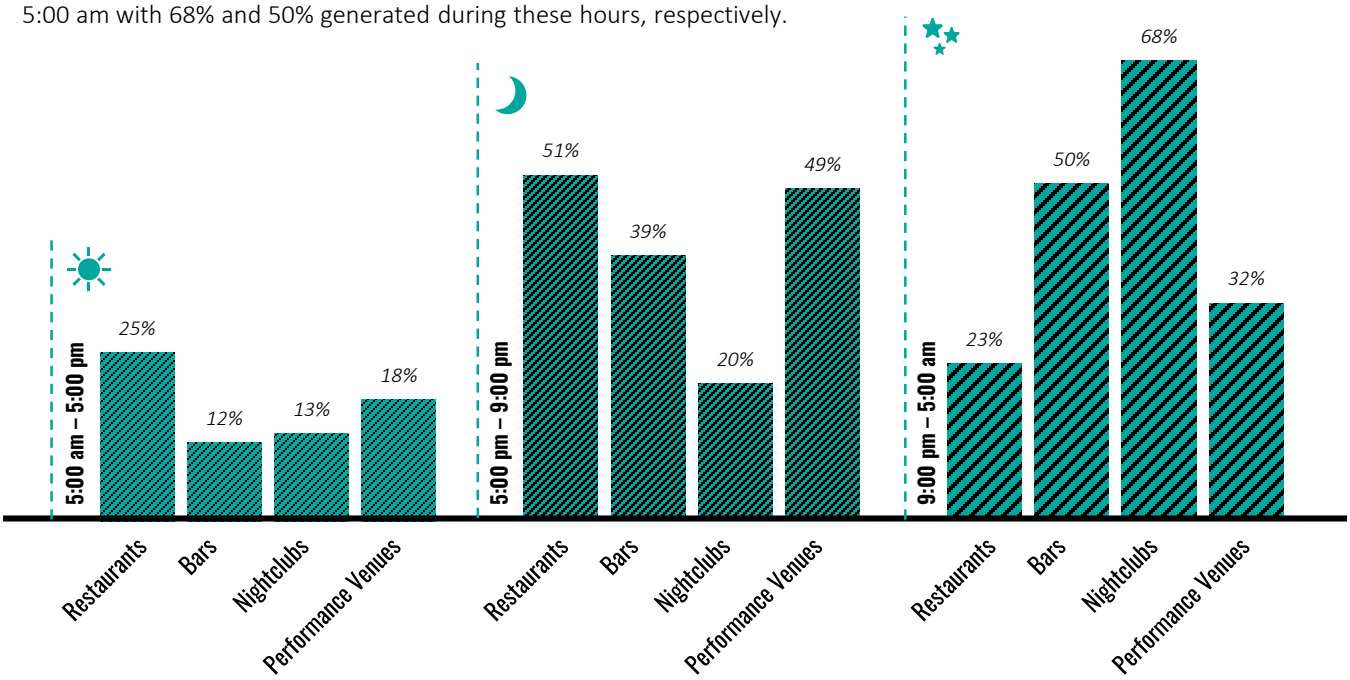
A majority of nightlife industry revenues occur on weekends.

All nightlife industries report that more than half of their revenue is generated on weekends. Nightclubs report a higher portion of revenue on weekends (78%) than any of the other three industry types. Restaurants capture more weekday revenue (48%) than the other nightlife industries.

Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

All four nightlife industry sectors earn at least 75% of their revenue after 5:00 pm.

Nightlife industries report that between 75% and 88% of their gross revenue is generated after 5:00 pm. Nightclubs and bars report the highest percentages of gross revenue earned between 9:00 pm and 5:00 am with 68% and 50% generated during these hours, respectively.



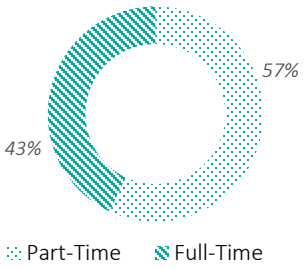
Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Nightlife Employment

57% of the nightlife industry workforce are part-time employees.

Many of these jobs are second jobs, and this employment is often underreported by data sources.

Source: Nightlife Surveys (2020)



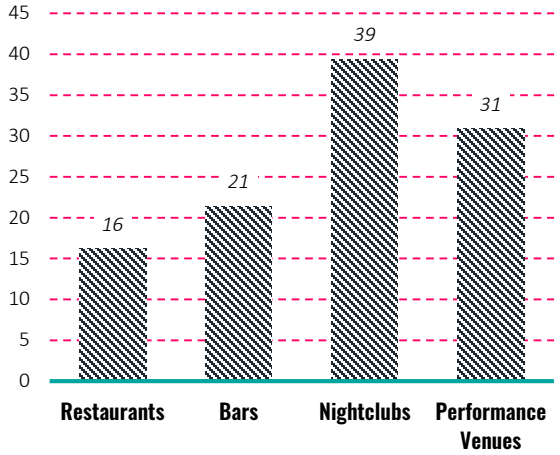
54.4% of the District's nightlife industry workers live outside of the District's limits.

This is consistent with the District's overall workforce–53.6% of whom commute in from outside of the city.

Source: JobsEQ (February 2020)

Nightlife employment varies by business type.

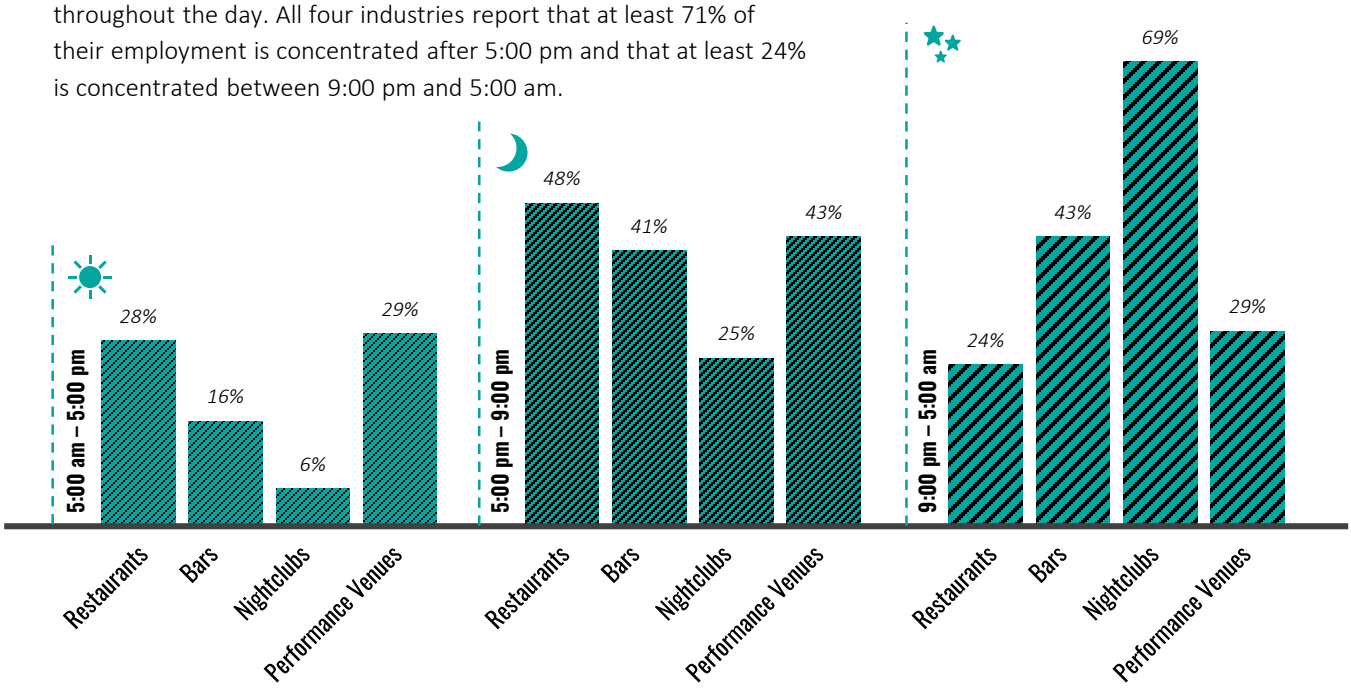
Employment per nightlife industry establishment ranges on average from 16 to nearly 40 employees (including part-time and full-time workers) with nightclubs and performance venues employing more workers per establishment on average.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Peak nightlife industry employment occurs after 5:00 pm.

Nightlife industry businesses experience varying employment throughout the day. All four industries report that at least 71% of their employment is concentrated after 5:00 pm and that at least 24% is concentrated between 9:00 pm and 5:00 am.



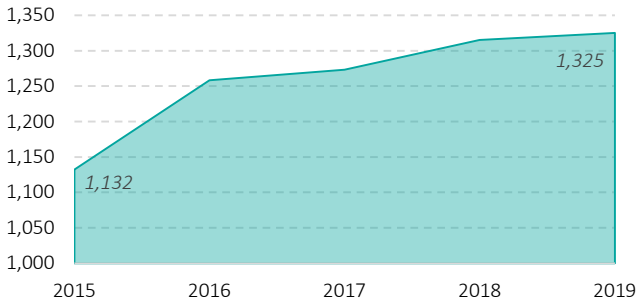
Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Changes in Operations

The District has seen a boom in nightlife establishments over the last ten years, especially among restaurants and bars.

There are signs the District's nightlife establishment scene may have reached saturation. Growth of new businesses leveled off in recent years. And the number of restaurants that ceased operations increased from 72 in 2018 to 125 in 2019.(40)

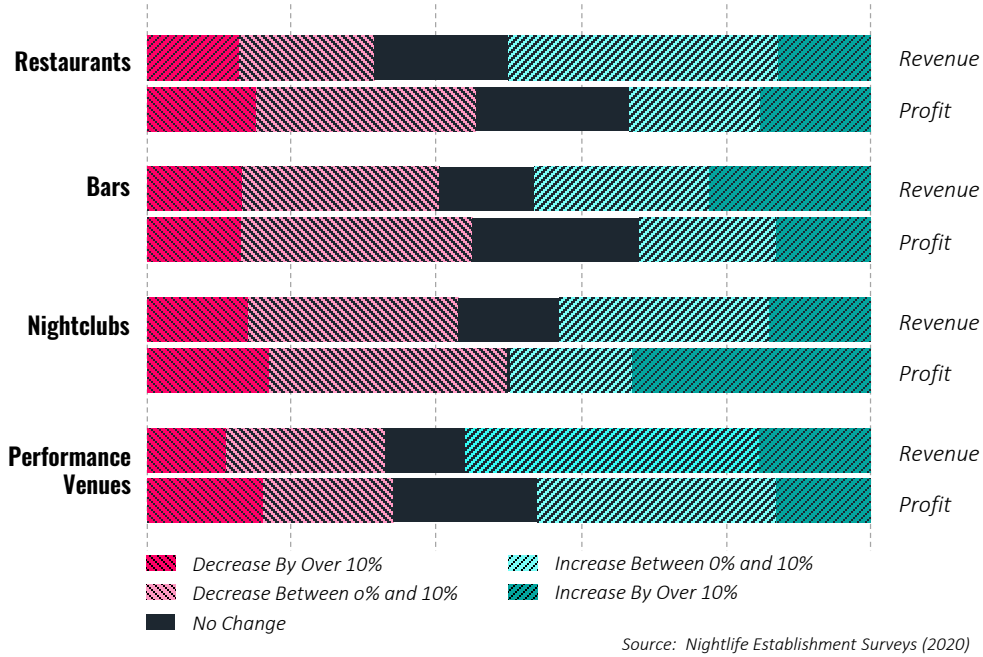
Establishments with Active Alcohol Licenses



Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration

Nightlife businesses report moderate increases in revenue and moderate decreases in profit over the last three years.

A majority of businesses reported that they saw increased or stable revenues over the last three years. While revenues were reported to be stable or increasing, businesses report simultaneously experiencing declining profits, on average. Operators expressed that these declining profit margins reflect increasing costs within a competitive marketplace with price-sensitive customers.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Operators are optimistic about future growth.

Despite slim operating margins and increasing competition, nearly half of surveyed nightlife establishments anticipate their revenue will increase in the coming years and fewer than a quarter expect a decline.

Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Restaurant and Bars Snapshot

"DC's newfound status is the go-to spot for chefs and restaurateurs looking to expand into new territory. The dining revolution here has happened so quickly, and now's the moment we sit back and savor it. So to DC chefs, we'd like to say this: You rock. Keep killing it."

- Zagat[41]

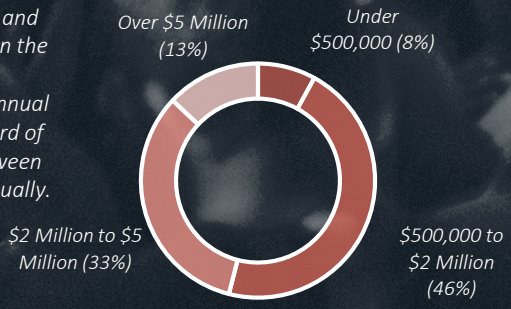
Breakdown of Restaurants and Bars in the District

A total of 2,359 establishments are included in the District's restaurant and bar industry. Of this total industry, 84% of the establishments are restaurants (43% with an alcohol license and 56% without) and 16% of the industry are bar establishments.

Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Active Restaurant and Tavern Licenses (2020); ESRI Business Locator Data for all Restaurants (2020)

Most of the District's Restaurants and Bars Gross Between $500,000 and $5 Million Annually.

Nearly half of the restaurant and bar industry establishments in the District generate between $500,000 and $2 million in annual revenue. Approximately a third of the businesses generate between $2 million and $5 million annually.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

2,359

Total Number of Restaurants and Bars

This figure includes all types of restaurants and bars.

53,603

Estimated Industry Employment

This total industry employment includes 43,054 restaurant employees and 10,549 employees working at bars.

$4.7 Billion

Estimated Industry Revenue

The average restaurant in the District generates approximately $1.95 million in annual revenue while the average bar generates $2.3 million.

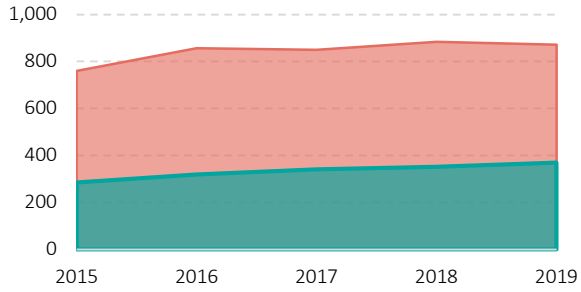
179,393

Capacity of Establishments with Alcohol Licenses

Approximately 68% of this seating capacity is contributed by restaurants while 32% of the seating capacity comes from bars.

The number of restaurants and bars has grown.

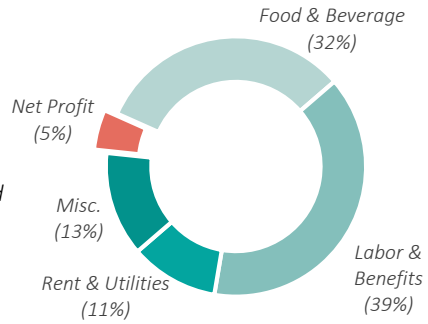
The District saw a net increase of 200 restaurants and bars with alcohol licenses between 2015 and 2019.



Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Active Restaurant and Tavern Licenses (2015-2019)

Profit margins of food and drinking places are slim.

Profit margins in the restaurant industry are typically around 5%. Increased expenses – from employment to food costs – can impact these narrow margins.



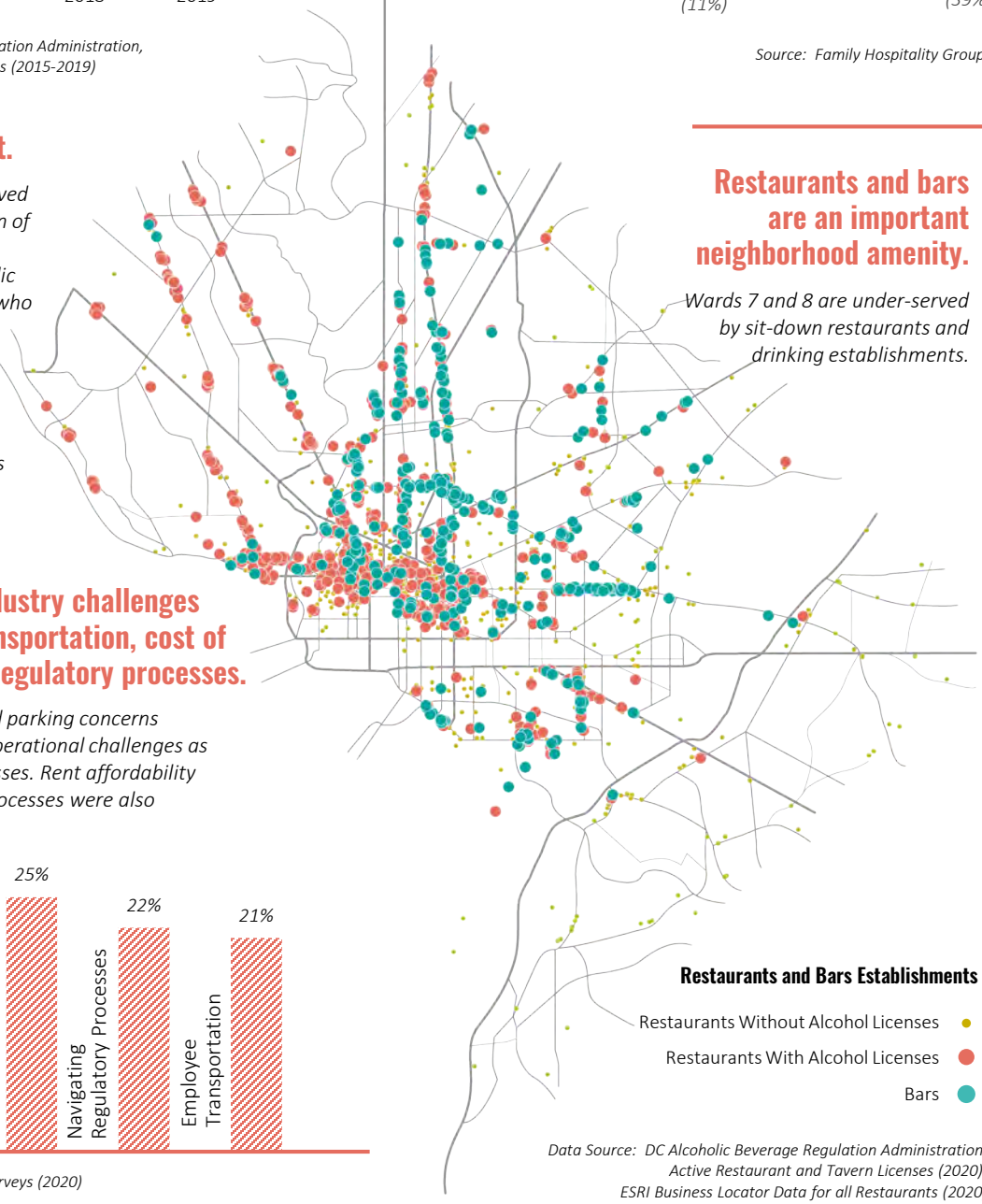
Source: Family Hospitality Group

Advocacy and Support.

Restaurants and bars are served by the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) and other local public and nonprofit organizations who work to promote and sustain growth and development of the industry while providing its members legislative and regulatory representation, marketing and small business support, and assistance with programming and events.

Restaurants and bars are an important neighborhood amenity.

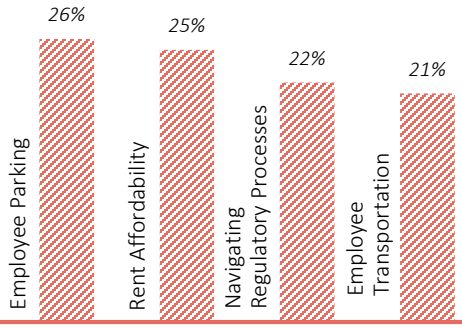
Wards 7 and 8 are under-served by sit-down restaurants and drinking establishments.



Data Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Active Restaurant and Tavern Licenses (2020); ESRI Business Locator Data for all Restaurants (2020)

The most common industry challenges include employee transportation, cost of rent, and navigating regulatory processes.

Employee transportation and parking concerns ranked among the highest operational challenges as reported by surveyed businesses. Rent affordability and navigating regulatory processes were also identified as key challenges.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Nightclub Industry Snapshot

> "A club is as much a part of the community as any other business. We help drive values for commercial properties and economic growth."
>
> *– Nightlife focus group participant*

Nightclub Revenue Throughout the Day

Nightclubs reported that nearly one-third of their revenue is generated before 9:00 pm. DC's popular Day Parties hosted at nightclubs bring large customer activity earlier in the day on Saturdays and Sundays.

Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

37

Total Number of Nightclubs

This figure is based on the total number of active 'nightclub' licenses issued by ABRA.

1,457

Estimated Industry Employment

The average nightclub in DC employs approximately 39 people.

$111.9 Million

Estimated Annual Industry Revenue

The average DC nightclub generates approximately $3 million in revenue annually.

10,349

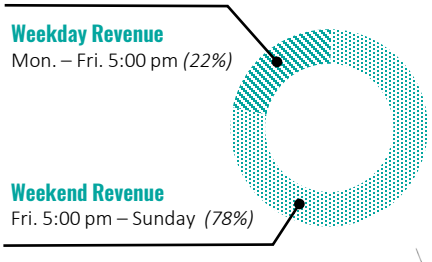
Nightclub Capacity

The capacities of nightclubs in DC range from 75 to 1,000 persons, with an average capacity of 200 people.

> "DC's nightlife is at a better place than before, and there's lots of potential for growth. We have good support from the city. It's all integrated together."
>
> *– Nightlife focus group participant*

Nightclubs generate 75% of their revenue on weekends.

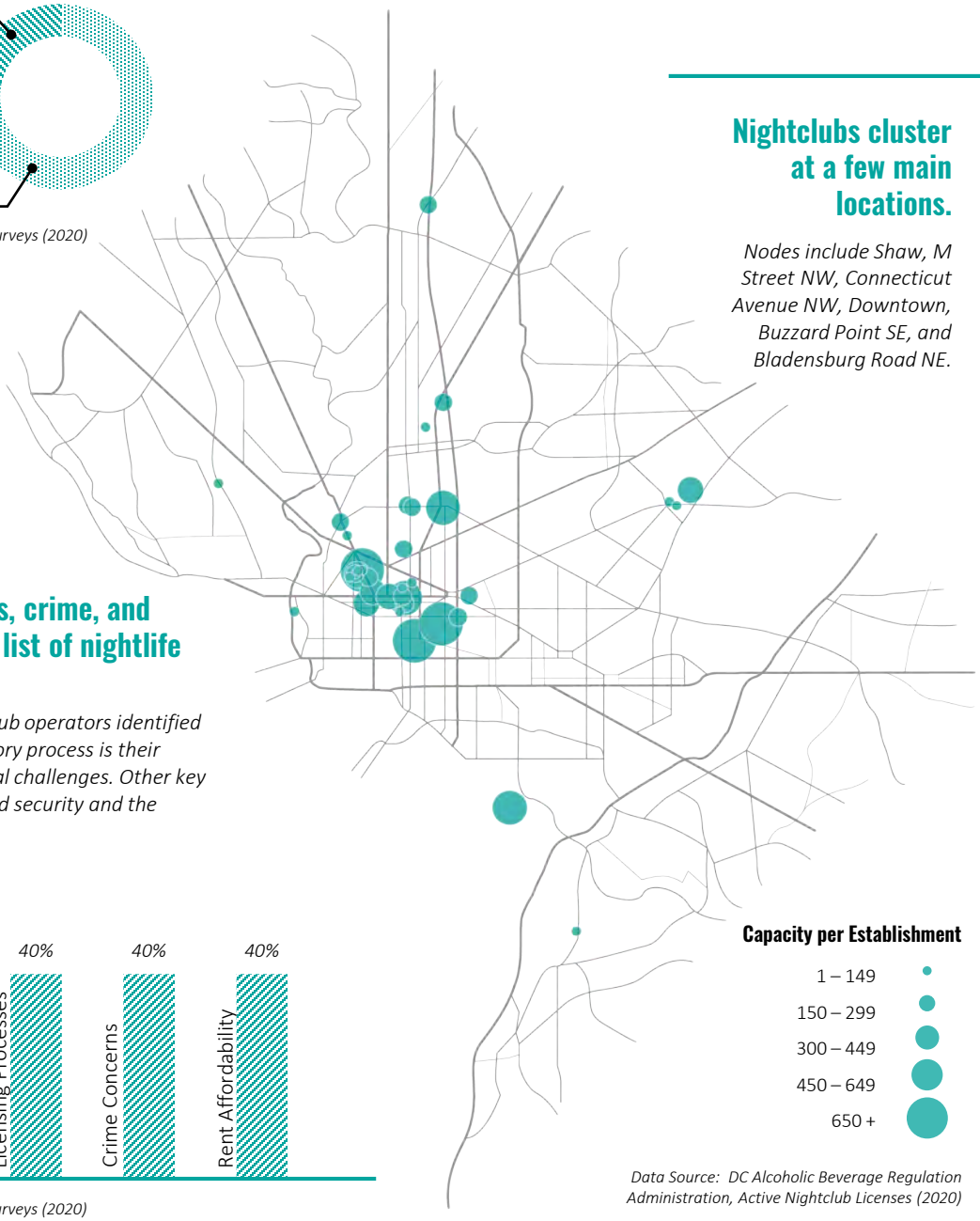
Almost a quarter of nightclub revenue is generated during weekdays.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Nightclubs cluster at a few main locations.

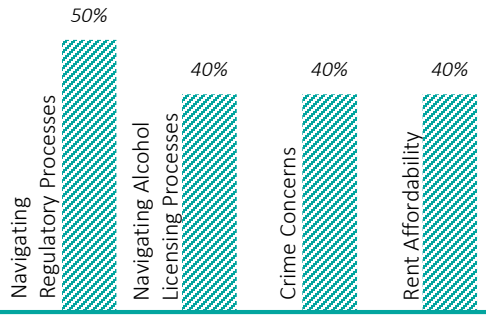
Nodes include Shaw, M Street NW, Connecticut Avenue NW, Downtown, Buzzard Point SE, and Bladensburg Road NE.



Data Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, Active Nightclub Licenses (2020)

Regulatory processes, crime, and cost of rent lead the list of nightlife industry challenges.

Half of the surveyed nightclub operators identified that navigating the regulatory process is their most substantial operational challenges. Other key challenges include crime and security and the affordability of rent.

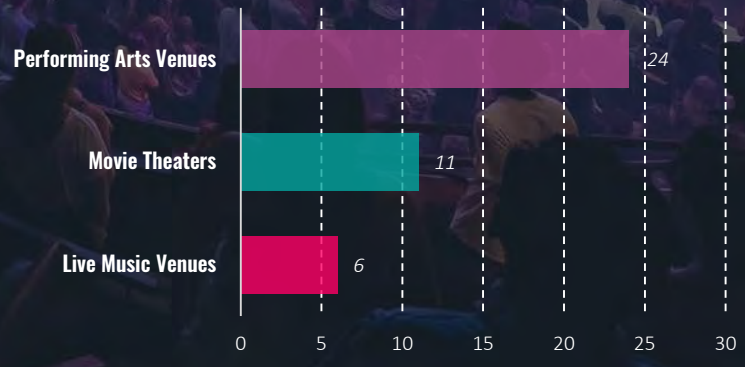


Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

Theater and Performance Venue Snapshot

DC's theaters and performance venues house world-class entertainment for a wide range of audiences. The District's theater scene includes nationally acclaimed cultural establishments such as the Kennedy Center and Arena Stage and historically-significant midsized theaters such as the Howard Theater and Lincoln Theater. Live music venues also serve DC's diverse entertainment needs, featuring standing room only performances at DC's famed 9:30 Club as well as larger hip-hop and rock concerts at The Anthem at The Wharf.

Performance Venues in the District



41

Total Number of Performing Arts Venues and Theaters

Of the theaters and venues in the District, 58% are performing arts venues, 27% are movie theaters, and 15% are live music venues.

1,696

Estimated Industry Employment

The average establishment in this industry has approximately 41 employees, including full-time and part-time workers.

$468.5 Million

Estimated Annual Industry Revenue

The average establishment in this industry generates approximately $11.4 million in annual revenue.

43,967

Theater and Performing Arts Venue Capacity

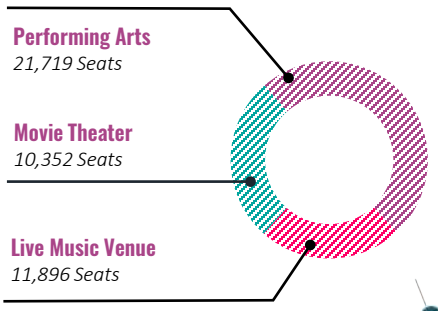
This capacity excludes all sports arenas and stadiums (which include a total capacity of 104,869 additional seats).

Howard Theater (Caleb Fisher)

"Per capita, the District's theaters produce more plays annually than any other city in the country except for New York."

- Arts America[42]

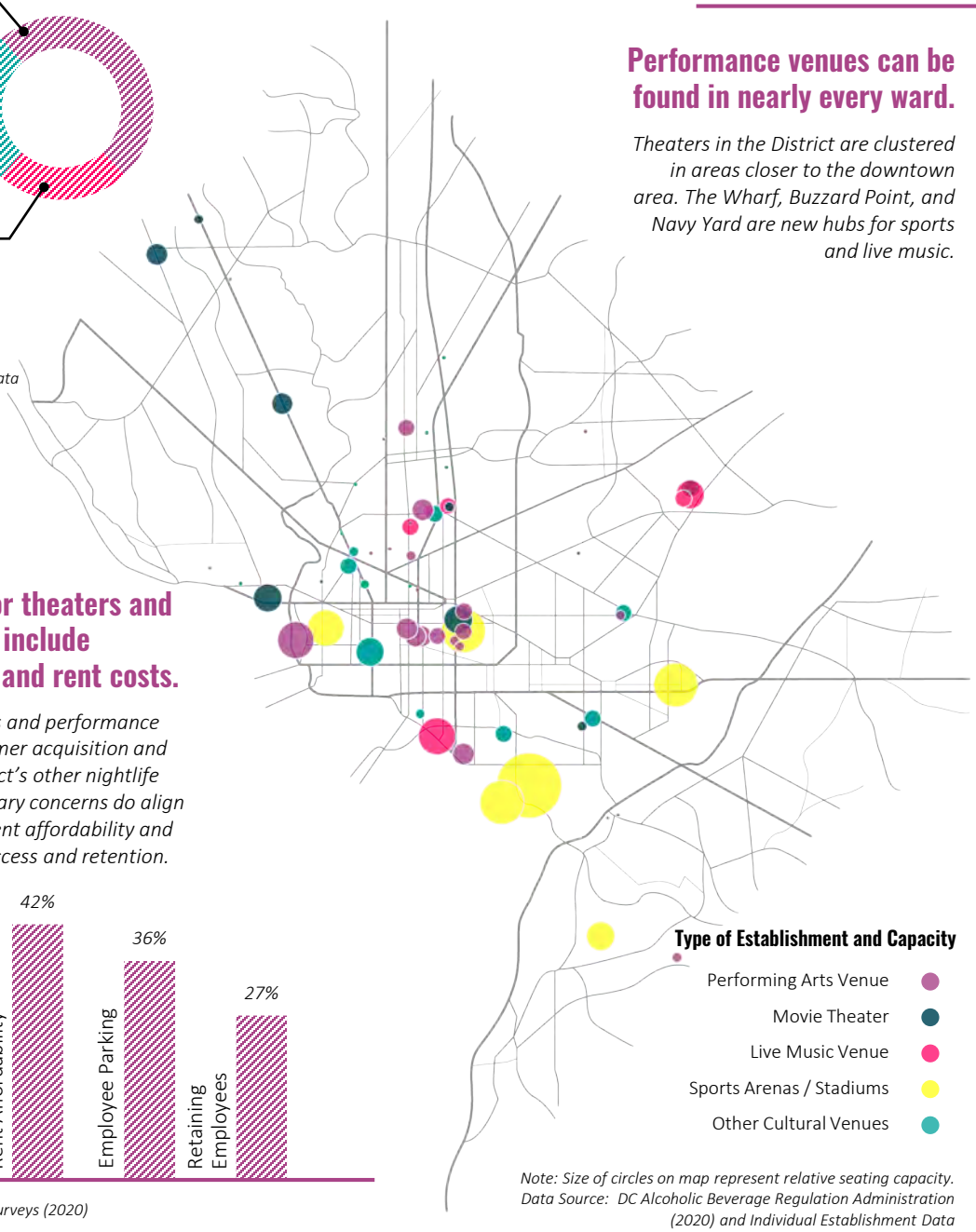
Performing arts theaters, movie theaters, and live music venues each provide over 10,000 seats.



Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration active licenses (2020); individual venue data

Performance venues can be found in nearly every ward.

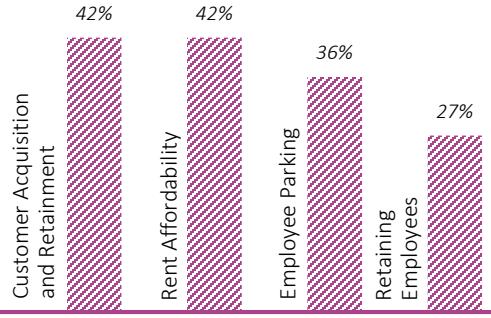
Theaters in the District are clustered in areas closer to the downtown area. The Wharf, Buzzard Point, and Navy Yard are new hubs for sports and live music.



Note: Size of circles on map represent relative seating capacity. Data Source: DC Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (2020) and Individual Establishment Data

The leading issues for theaters and performance venues include customer attraction and rent costs.

A higher portion of theaters and performance venues struggle with customer acquisition and retention than do the District's other nightlife industries. Their other primary concerns do align with their nightlife peers: rent affordability and employee transportation access and retention.



Source: Nightlife Establishment Surveys (2020)

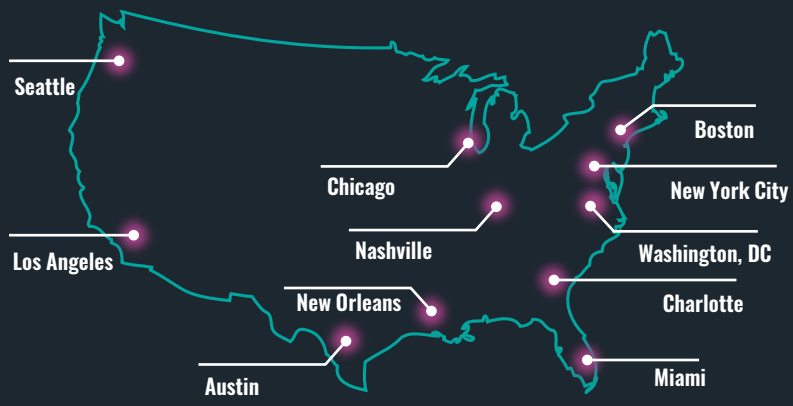
Nightlife City Snapshots

How the District Compares

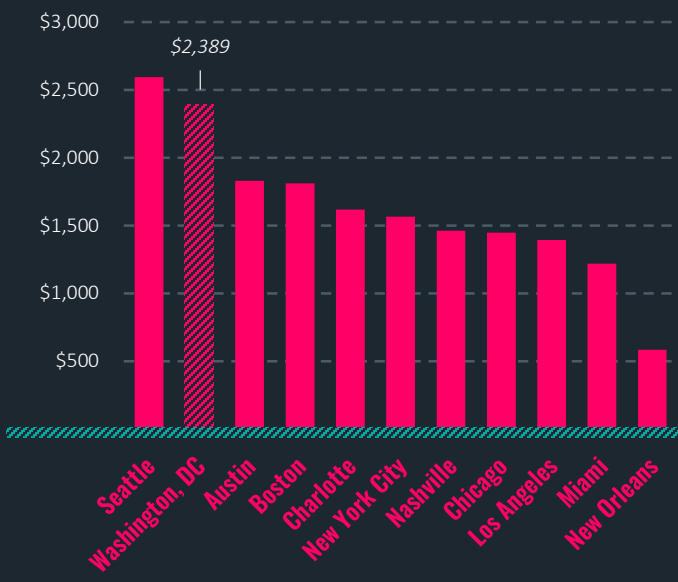
The District has an international reputation for politics, nonprofits, law firms, and museums. But over the last ten to twenty years the influx in population and corresponding surge in dining and drinking establishments have changed the city's nightlife image and reality.

Arts America ranks DC as a "top theater city" due to "Washington's vastly diverse, excellent, and thriving theater scene."[42] The District's diverse array of new restaurants, bars, breweries, and distilleries has garnered significant attention as well. Zagat rated the District as the #1 "most exciting food city in America" in 2016, and Bon Appetit awarded DC the "restaurant city of the year."[41]

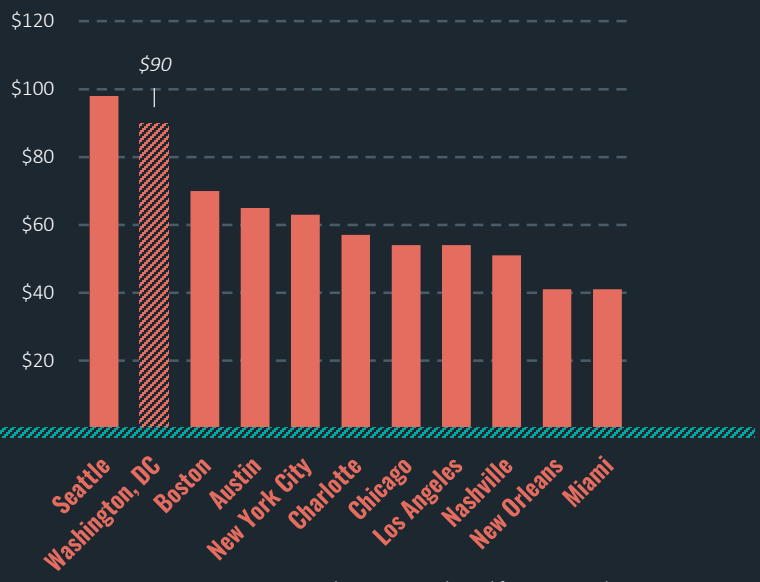
The District's dense population, influx of young professional households, and high average incomes helped bolster the nightlife economy's growth. The city now has one of the highest concentrations of restaurants, bars, and theaters in the country.



Per Capita Spending on Food Away from Home



Per Capita Spending on Tickets to Theater, Operas, Concerts, and Movies

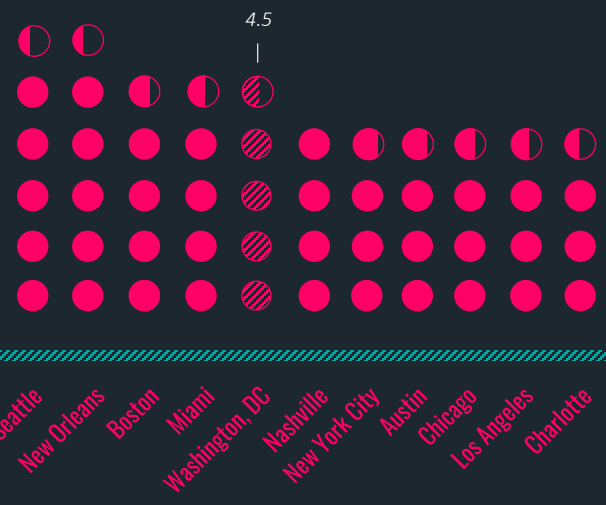


Source: ESRI Consumer Spending Forecasts derived from 2016 and 2017 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics

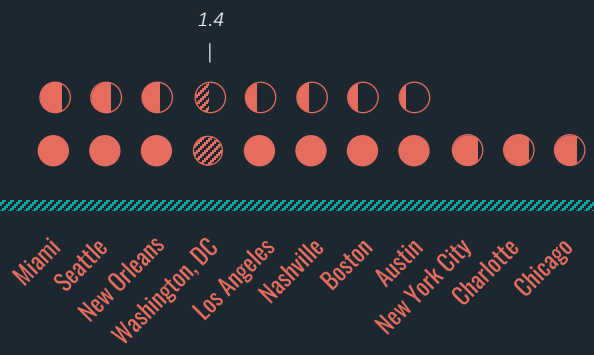
"Though Broadway bustles only four hours north, theatre lovers in Washington, DC know they have high-caliber productions and some of the nation's greatest artists in their own backyard. DC has served as the breeding ground for impactful new works on their way to Broadway."

- *Playbill*

Number of Eating and Drinking Establishments per Population 18+ (000)



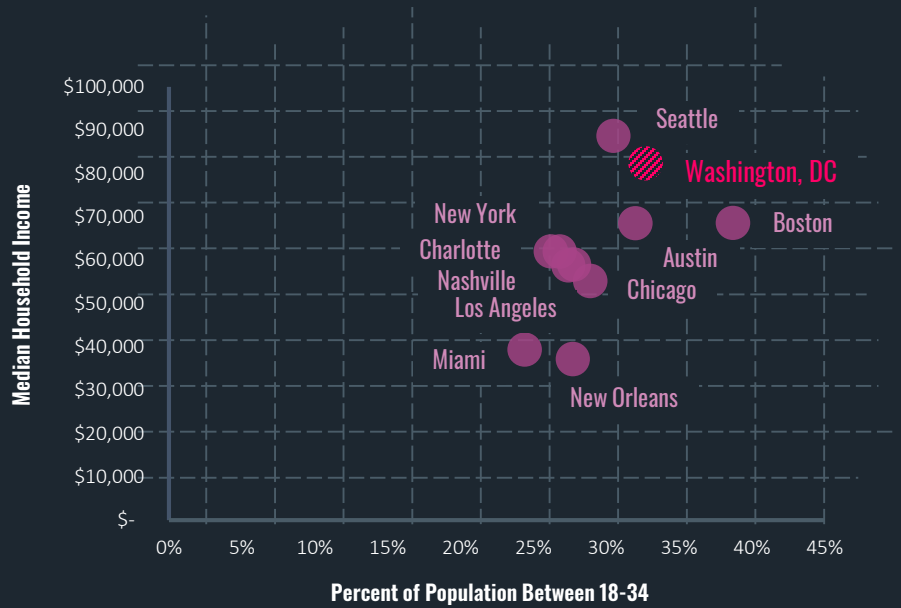
Number of Arts Establishments per Population 18+ (000)



Source: Infogroup, Inc.; US Census Bureau

The District has a diverse population, a high concentration of young professionals, and large household incomes.

Coupled with the high levels of outside visitors, the District has the ideal conditions to support a thriving nightlife industry.



Source: US Census Bureau, ESRI

DC's Nightlife Economic Impact

The 2,437 business establishments in the District operating as restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues play a large and unique role in the District's economy. Nightlife establishments provide employment opportunities for those looking for an income source during off-peak work hours. Approximately 57% of employment in the nightlife industry is comprised of part-time jobs, a source of flexible employment that is increasingly important in today's economy. There are 64,980 jobs in the nightlife industry, generating nearly $3.1 billion in wages.

In all, the District's nightlife establishments contribute $7.1 billion to its economy and generate $562 million in annual city tax revenue.

TOTAL NIGHTLIFE INDUSTRY

65,000 JOBS

7.1% of the District's Employment, including the nightlife economy's direct, indirect, and induced jobs

2,437 TOTAL NIGHTLIFE BUSINESSES

6.7% of the District's Businesses, including all restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues

$7.1 BILLION ANNUAL REVENUE

3.7% of the District's Economic Output, including the nightlife economy's direct, indirect, and induced sales revenue

$562 MILLION TOTAL FISCAL IMPACT

6.0% of the District's General Fund Tax Revenues stemming from direct nightlife industry operations

How Nightlife Spending Impacts the DC Economy

Nightlife Operations

Direct Impact

When a patron spends money at a nightlife establishment, this revenue directly supports business operations, the wages of its employees, and generates city tax revenues.

Business to Business Expenses

Indirect Impact

Dollars spent at a nightlife establishment not only impacts the business where the transaction takes place, but also impacts additional industries that rely on purchases made by nightlife establishments.

Spending of Wages

Induced Impact

Household spending of income earned by nightlife industry workers supports additional business activity and job creation.

Economic Impact of the District's Nightlife Industry

The District's nightlife industry contributes

$7.1 billion annually in additional revenue in the District.

The economic impact of DC's nightlife industries accounts for 3.7% of the District's economic output. The nightlife economy includes 2,437 businesses and approximately 65,000 jobs, $3.2 billion in annual labor income, and $7.1 billion in annual revenue. This impact extends beyond the four nightlife industry sectors by generating sales and employment in a wide range of local industries that support nightlife businesses and benefit from the increased household spending supported by nightlife workforce wages. While these figures speak exclusively to the impact of the nightlife industry within the District's boundaries, nightlife activity generates economic impact throughout the metropolitan area and beyond. Additionally, the ability of the District's nightlife businesses to attract visitors and new residents has an additional impact to the long-term local economy, though "influence" impact is not assessed in this study.

2,437
Nightlife Establishments

These establishments account for 6.7% of the total businesses in the District. The sales, wages, and business-to-business transactions of these establishments contribute $7.1 billion in annual revenue to the District's economy.

64,980
Nightlife-Supported Jobs

The nightlife industry supports 64,980 jobs, 7.1% of the District's total, generating approximately $3.2 billion in annual labor income.

Total Economic Impact of DC's Nightlife Industry

Impact	Employment	Labor Income	Total Sales
Direct	57,250	$2,393,832,006	$5,365,962,748
Indirect	5,162	$557,604,727	$1,222,580,249
Induced	2,568	$209,268,759	$479,864,592
Total	**64,980**	**$3,160,705,492**	**$7,068,407,589**

Note: The "Total Sales" column reflects "Industry Output," which is the value of production by the nightlife industry in a calendar year. Specifically, this figure describes annual revenues plus net inventory change.
Source: IMPLAN based on Nightlife Industry Data, ESRI

Economic Impact by Industry Type

Eating and drinking establishments have the largest economic impact of the District's nighttime-oriented businesses.

The District's restaurants and bars generate over $4.7 billion in combined annual revenue, directly supporting nearly 54,000 full-time and part-time jobs. While performance venues, galleries, and clubs only comprise a cumulative 3% of nightlife establishments, they generate 12% of total spending. In total, nearly $2.4 million of wages and $5.4 million of annual revenue are generated directly by nightlife establishments.

Direct Economic Impact by Industry Type

Industry Type	Establishments	Annual Revenue	Employment*	Labor Income
Restaurants	1,990	$3,891,330,260	43,054	$1,684,554,463
Bars	369	$849,079,964	10,549	$421,040,527
Performance Venues	41	$468,518,207	1,696	$210,367,070
Clubs	37	$157,034,317	1,951	$77,869,947
	2,437	**$5,365,962,748**	**57,250**	**$2,393,832,006**

** Employment figures include both full-time and part-time jobs. These employment figures are likely undercounted, as part-time and temporary work is often difficult to track and is frequently not officially reported by employers or employees.*

Source: IMPLAN based on Nightlife Industry Data

Total Employment Impact by Industry

The nightlife industry supports over 55,000 jobs in the food and beverage industry, accounting for 86% of the total jobs supported by nightlife activity in the District. 58% of these food and beverage jobs are at full-service restaurants. Outside of the food and beverage industry, the industries that see the highest employment impact from the nightlife economy include real estate, accounting, building services, motion picture and video, management, and accounting and payroll services.

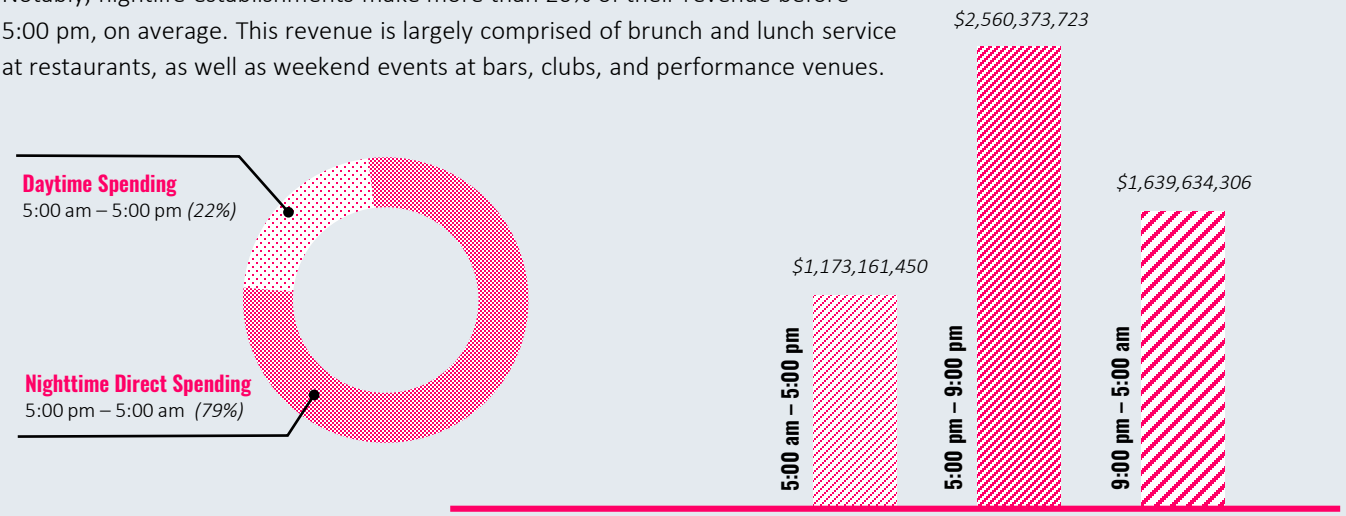
Industry	Employment Impact
Full-service restaurants	32,502
All other food and drinking places	15,061
Limited-service restaurants	8,031
Performing arts and sports promoters and agents	1,263
Other real estate	1,177
Management of companies and enterprises	566
Services to buildings	409
Independent artists, writers, and performers	367
Employment services	366
Motion picture and video industries	309
Accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll services	256

Note: Employment figures reflect direct, indirect, and induced impact within the District.
Source: IMPLAN based on Nightlife Industry Data

Direct Spending by Time of Day

Nearly half of all spending at nightlife establishments occurs between 5:00 pm and 9:00 pm. This largely reflects high rates of customer traffic during dinner service at restaurants, as well as happy hours and post-dinner crowds at bars and clubs.

Notably, nightlife establishments make more than 20% of their revenue before 5:00 pm, on average. This revenue is largely comprised of brunch and lunch service at restaurants, as well as weekend events at bars, clubs, and performance venues.



Source: IMPLAN based on Nightlife Industry Data.

"I am proud to have established the Office of Nightlife and Culture and am thrilled of all the work this office has done. This office is critical to coordinating efforts between our nightlife establishments and the District government and to ensuring that all residents and tourists can enjoy our vibrant after-hours economy safely." -- Councilmember Brandon Todd

Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

Economic Impact on Non-Nightlife Industries

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

The District's nightlife businesses contribute over $1.7 billion in additional annual revenue to industries outside the nightlife industry.

The economic impact of the District's nightlife extends far beyond the businesses directly involved in the eating, drinking, and entertainment industries. An assortment of other local industries rely on goods and services purchased by nightlife establishments, as well as revenue supported by the household spending capacity of employees within the nightlife economy. Several industries, including wholesale grocers, sound recording studios, and independent artists, writers, and performers, gain at least 7% of their annual revenue from activity supported by the nightlife industry.

The real estate industry sees the largest additional annual revenue attributable to nightlife industries, totaling over $404 million per year. This revenue is largely comprised of the commercial rents paid by nightlife establishments. The nightlife economy also contributes over $50 million in annual revenue to industries that support the operations and marketing of nightlife establishments, including management services, accounting and payroll services, advertising and public relations services, electric power transmission and distribution, and employment services.

Industries with Highest Share of Revenue Attributable to Nightlife Establishments

Industry	% of Total Revenue	Additional Annual Revenue
Management of companies / enterprises	17%	$180,714,237
Equipment repair / maintenance	8%	$2,346,781
Wholesale grocery	8%	$8,757,628
Electric power generation / distribution	7%	$82,561,782
Warehousing and storage	7%	$1,096,698
Independent artists, writers, performers	7%	$7,912,576
Lessors of nonfinancial intangible assets	7%	$4,015,562
Sound recording industries	7%	$3,199,980
Wholesale (other nondurable goods)	7%	$17,940,758
Building materials and garden supplies	6%	$8,566,819
Total Indirect & Induced Economic Impact	--	**$1,702,444,841**

Industries with Highest Annual Revenue Attributable to Nightlife Establishments

Industry	Additional Annual Revenue	% of Total Revenue
Non-owner/non-tenant occupied real estate	$331,433,258	5%
Management of companies and enterprises	$180,714,237	17%
Electric power transmission and distribution	$78,500,217	7%
Owner-occupied dwellings	$73,032,366	1%
Employment services	$58,395,152	3%
Advertising, public relations, related services	$51,021,701	2%
Accounting, bookkeeping, payroll services	$50,965,592	5%
Hospitals	$46,739,155	1%
Legal services	$42,658,774	0.3%
Internet publishing and web search portals	$39,568,120	2%
Total Indirect & Induced Economic Impact	**$1,702,444,841**	--

Note: Nightlife industries impact hundreds of additional industries within the District. Figures above represent industries outside of restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and performance venues that are most impacted by nightlife activity.

Source: IMPLAN based on Nightlife Industry Data

Fiscal Impact

The District's nightlife industry directly generates approximately $562 million annually in tax revenue, accounting for 6.0% of the District's annual tax revenue.

The nightlife industry is a strong tax revenue generator for the District, as most nightlife sales are subject to the restaurant sales tax rate of 10% instead of the retail tax rate of 5.75%. In total, sales taxes account for 82% of the total fiscal impact of the District's nightlife. The remaining 18% of tax revenue is comprised of taxes on income, corporate profit, production and import, and motor vehicle licenses paid by nightlife establishments. The total tax revenue generated by the nightlife industry equates to $1,789 in annual local taxes per DC household.

Fiscal Impact of the DC Nightlife Industry

Nightlife Direct Fiscal Impact	$562,304,518 Annually
Percent of The District's Total Tax Revenue	6.03% Share

Detail: Direct Fiscal Impact of the District's Nightlife Industry

Tax	Tax Revenue	% of Fiscal Impact
Sales Tax	$463,244,190	82.4%
Personal Income Tax	$20,527,799	3.7%
Corporate Profits Tax	$10,548,000	1.9%
Miscellaneous Taxes & Fees	$67,984,529	12.1%
Total	**$562,304,518**	**100%**

Note: The chart above only reflects the direct fiscal impact of revenue at nightlife establishments and does not include indirect and induced fiscal impact figures. Miscellaneous taxes and fees include commercial motor vehicle licenses, personal motor vehicle licenses, severances taxes, special assessments, and other local taxes on production and imports. Analysis does not include personal property or commercial property taxes. IMPLAN estimates that the nightlife industry generates $233 million of additional property taxes (personal and commercial). If property taxes are included, the direct fiscal impact of the DC nightlife rises to $796,128,779. Estimated sales tax revenue based on IMPLAN estimate of performance venues' sales tax revenue collected at performance venues and the collected restaurant sales tax revenue from the DC Office of Tax Revenue (2019).

Source: DC Office of Tax and Revenue, IMPLAN, based on Nightlife Industry Data. Analysis uses FY2020 tax revenue and total household figures from the Government of the District of Columbia's FY 2020 Approved Budget and Financial Plan. Analysis uses DC FY2020 Budget estimate of 314,400 total DC households.

Industry Needs And Challenges

Zachary Smith

Needs and Challenges of the District's Nightlife Industry

As the District's nightlife economy surges with growth, businesses face increasing competition, rising expenses, a limited employment pool, regulatory hurdles, and new clusters of nightlife outside of the District.

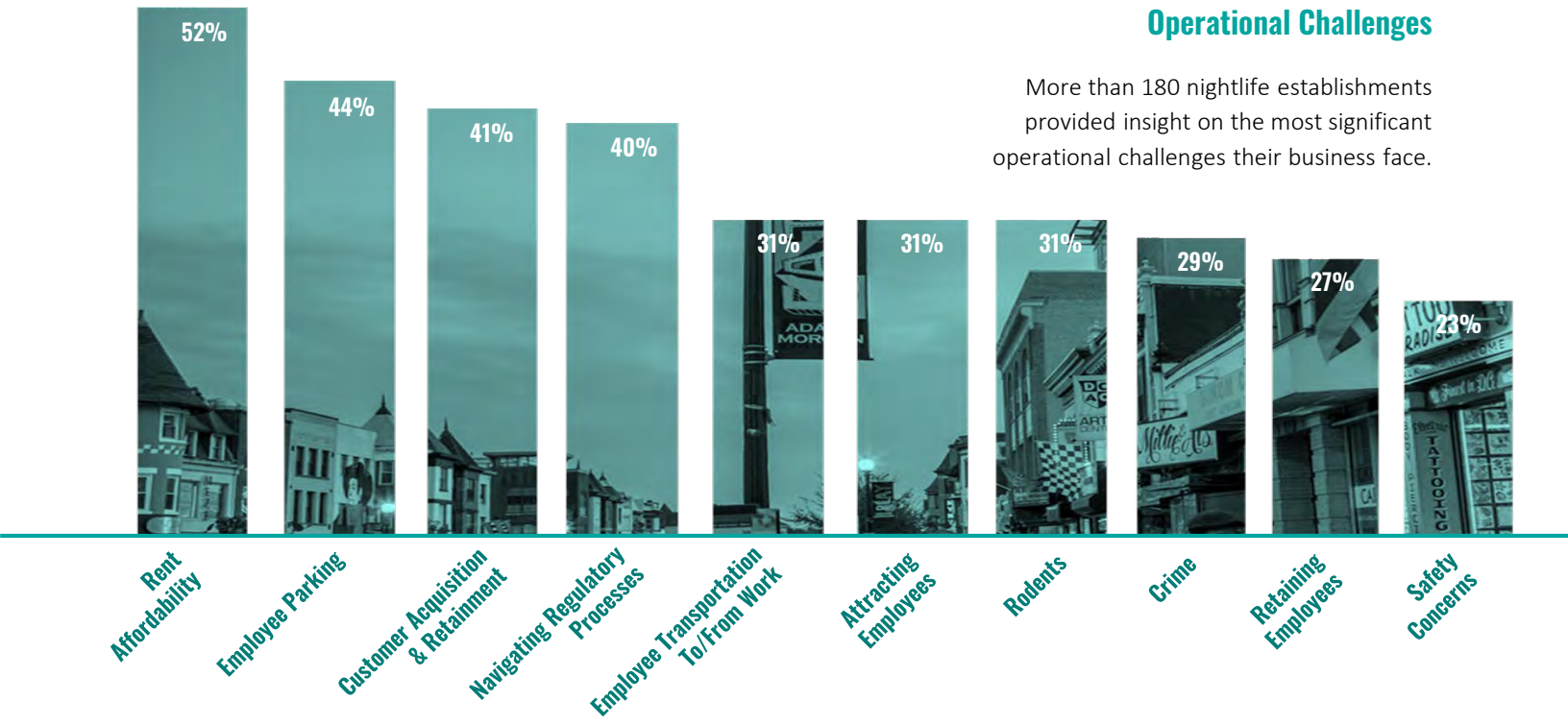
Based on industry survey feedback and focus group discussions, key issues facing the District's nightlife businesses include the following categories:

- Rising costs and diminishing profits
- Attracting and retaining employees
- Access for employees and customers
- Regulatory costs and timeframe
- Community approvals
- Safety, security, and cleanliness

These key concepts are interrelated, each impacting the others in different or overlapping ways. As the hours get deeper into the night, transportation access, employment, and safety become more pressing concerns in the nightlife industry.

Nightlife Industry's Biggest Operational Challenges

More than 180 nightlife establishments provided insight on the most significant operational challenges their business face.



Source: Nightlife Industry Survey (2020)

Rising Costs and Slim Margins

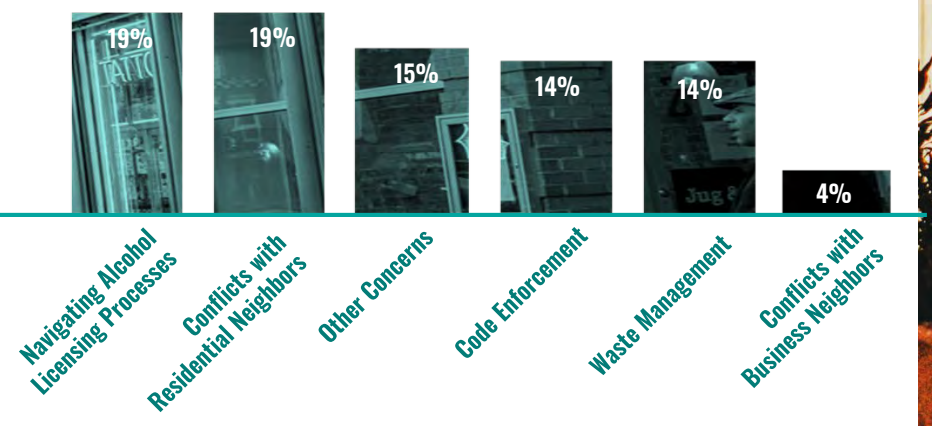
"It's about the costs. Labor and rent are the two biggest ones. And we can't keep charging the customer more."

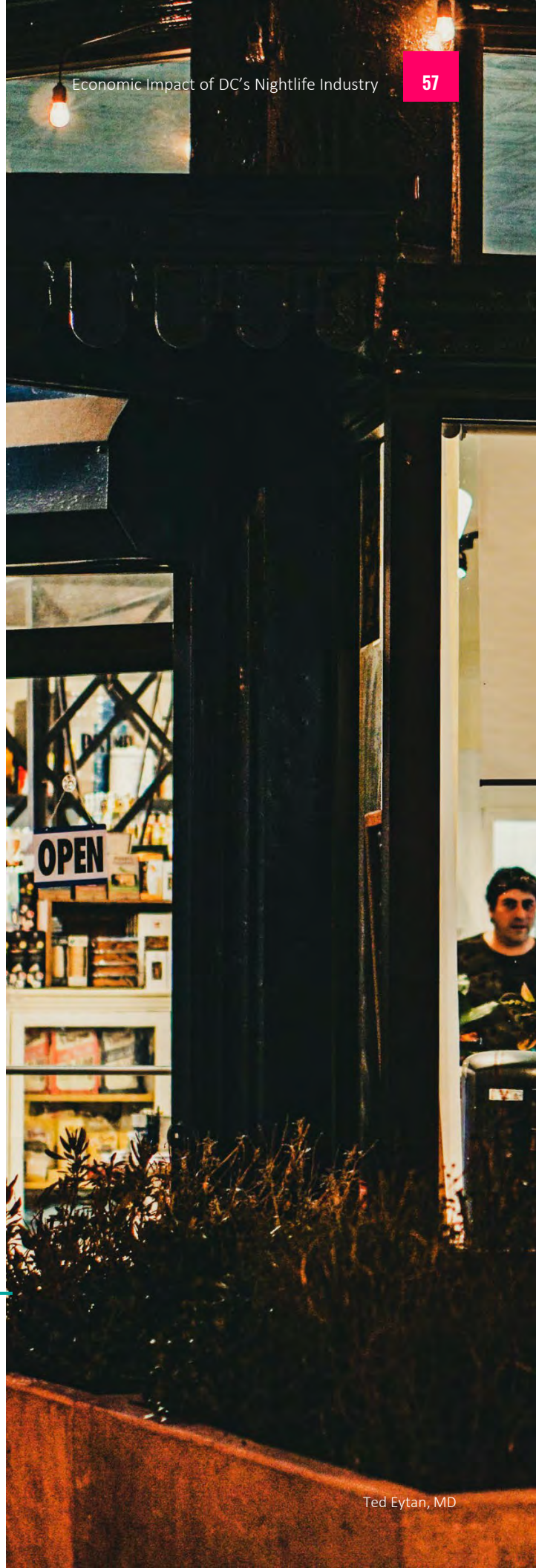
– District Restaurant Owner

One of the greatest challenges facing nightlife businesses is escalating costs. The largest factor cited is commercial lease rates. Rents in the District are notoriously high and continue to increase. In addition, a 30% increase in the minimum wage from $11.50 in 2016 to $15.00 starting in July 2020 has been particularly impactful on nightlife businesses, which employ a large portion of minimum wage workers. Supplies, maintenance, and build-out costs have increased as well.

There are some other cost burdens specific to nightlife businesses. Businesses can spend thousands of dollars on legal fees while navigating the alcohol license permitting process and resident protest process. Nightclubs often hire reimbursable detail officers (RDOs) to provide enhanced security, a cost that is heavily subsidized by the District. However, these off-duty MPD officers are not allowed to provide security within establishments and can be called away at any time to respond to emergencies.

Prices have not risen at a commensurate rate. The surge of new restaurants and bars have created a highly competitive market. And an influx in fast casual establishments and bar concepts with food pickup windows instead of servers set expectations for low prices. The result is razor thin margins, and many nightlife businesses are struggling to see a profit. The influx of new restaurants has started to level off and the number of business closures grown.





Ted Eytan, MD

Attracting and Retaining Employees

"Having a hard time keeping good employees is a reflection of how well the city is doing. There are other good [job] opportunities."

– District Theater Operator

A common challenge for all nightlife businesses is attracting and retaining employees. The District has a competitive labor market, low unemployment rate, and a growing number of businesses looking for night shift workers. It's an equation that allows workers to be selective and transient. One of the largest factors informing their job selection is transportation. Even though wages are higher in the District than in Virginia or Maryland, this competitive advantage is outweighed by how much it costs workers to commute into and within the city. As a result, the District is losing employees to the suburbs, especially as a lack of affordable housing has pushed many lower-wage workers out of the city.

Transportation Access

"The Metro is the single biggest factor to labor, especially nightlife labor. If transportation was better, in theory people would come to DC to work because we pay better. But we can't attract workers because of Metro's limited hours and parking difficulties."

- DC Restaurant Owner

Many nightlife businesses find transportation access to be the most critical issue they face. Affordable parking is unavailable for many nighttime workers and most cannot afford to commute via taxi or rideshare. Businesses participating in the survey and focus groups overwhelmingly reported that business suffered as a result of Metro's reduced hours. In addition to reducing the available workforce, many businesses experienced a drop in customers– especially towards the end of the night after Metro closes. Four in five businesses believe that extending the Metro's hours – especially after closing time – would benefit their businesses.

Snapshot: Extending Metro's hours would help nighttime businesses.

54.4% of DC's nightlife workers live outside of DC and commute into the city. This is only a slightly higher rate than DC's full workforce (53.6% commute into the city), but there is one large difference: Metro is the predominant mode of commuting during daytime rush hour but is not available at the end of a nighttime worker's shift. Service ends at 11:30 pm Monday through Thursday, at 1:00 am on Friday and Saturday, and at 11:00 pm on Sundays, with the last train leaving their terminals about a half hour prior. Metro operations are expensive, and importantly, the reduced hours help provide system repair and preventative maintenance. However, the fact remains that nighttime workers do not have equal transit access as daytime workers.

"Since Metro cut its hours you can see a drastic change. It used to be the last two hours of the night were the busiest hours. Since reducing the hours, now people leave earlier. It's made us less of a nightlife city."

– District Bar Owner

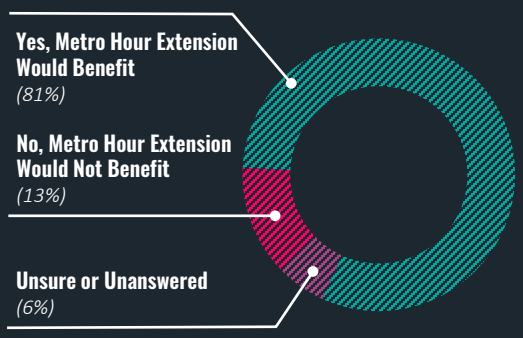
Regulatory Costs and Timeframe

"It comes down to where it is easier to do business. We need to help the businesses succeed."

-- District Nightclub Owner

Navigating regulatory processes is a common challenge for nightlife-oriented businesses in many cities. Forty percent of businesses surveyed said complying with the licensing, permitting, reporting, and inspections processes in the District is a significant concern. Many find these processes to be time-consuming, lengthy, confusing, and lacking a consistent timeframe. Owners frequently struggle to adhere to requirements, and penalties and fees stack up quickly even for well-intentioned operators. Many businesses pay extra to expedite the permit process or hire legal or regulatory experts. A number of stakeholders noted that these additional costs create a system that favors chains and business operators with more capacity and larger startup budgets over small and independent businesses.

81% of surveyed establishments reported that extending the Metro's hours would benefit their business.



Source: Nightlife Industry Survey (2020)

Community Approvals

"Every time we apply for a license we get protested. We have to use lawyers to navigate this process and they make you close an hour earlier on weekends. We still have to pay the same taxes and pay the same rent, but you're making us get less revenue than others. We can't remain in operation."

-- District Nightclub Owner

The District has an uncommon form of hyper-local community representation in Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) that play a role in alcohol license protests and other business approvals processes. ANCs, civic groups, and groups of five or more residents frequently protest alcohol licenses before they are issued and use "settlement agreements" to negotiate community approval with business owners in exchange for restrictions ranging from hours of operation, on-premise entertainment, trash removal, outdoor seating, and more. Many nighttime-oriented businesses feel compelled to make concessions that are not demanded of daytime businesses. These adjustments may undermine an establishment's business plan or reduce revenue streams and cut into already-narrow margins. Survey and focus group participants find that the settlement agreement process creates an adversarial relationship between businesses and community residents. Importantly, there is no evidence that these limitations promote compliance or support responsible business practices. In fact, they may do the opposite by forcing businesses into a defensive posture and making it more difficult to invest in more proactive strategies to mitigate community impacts.

Other Common Nightlife Challenges

Other important challenges for the District's nightlife establishments include the following:

- Safety, security, and harassment
- Insurance, risk, and under-age drinking
- Trash and rodents
- Venue loading and parking tickets

The Role of the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

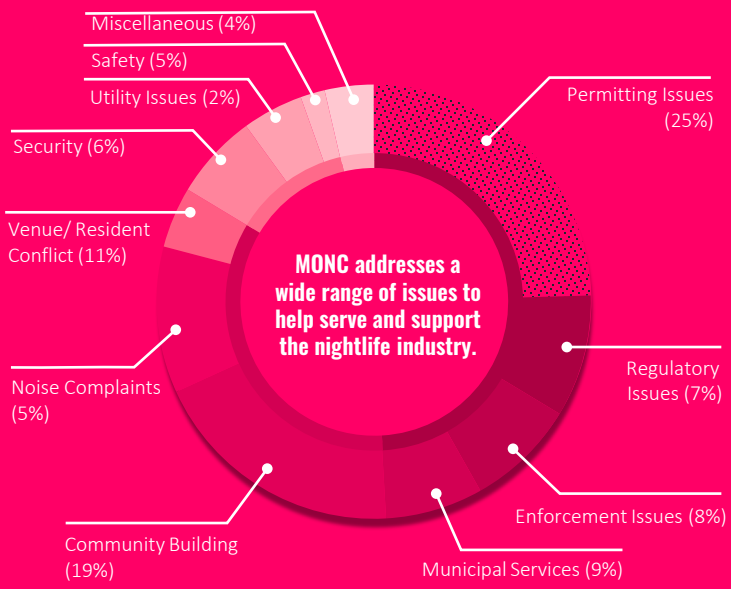
The Role of the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

In its first year of operation the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC) prioritized outreach, information gathering, and relationship-building.

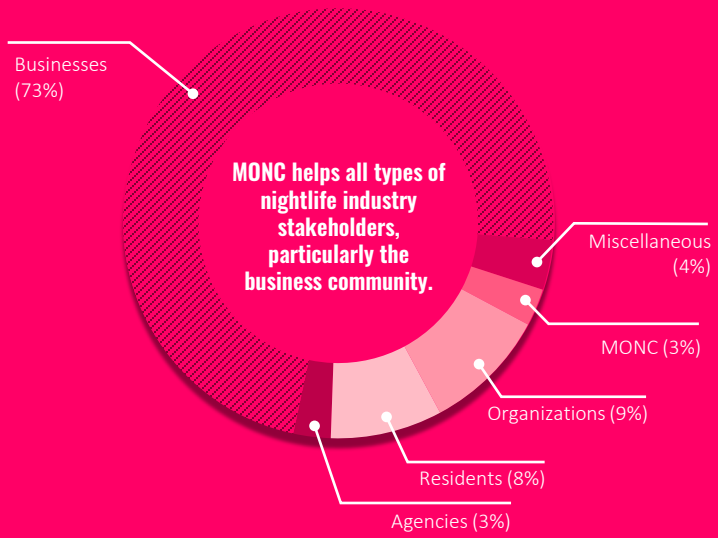
MONC has been largely successful in introducing itself to its residential, business, and agency constituencies and understanding the issues that impact each. Impressively, nearly three quarters of the nightlife businesses surveyed were familiar with MONC and its role. MONC keeps detailed records of stakeholder feedback and the types of assistance it has delivered (see charts to the right). It works extensively with business representatives, city staff and officials, and community members and leaders, with the business community initiating much of the dialogue. A large portion of the issues MONC deals with fall within the categories of community building and neighborhood conflict, permitting and regulatory issues, and municipal services and enforcement.

MONC's second year of operations should build off the formed relationships and developed knowledge to further define the office's role and create an approach that best addresses specific needs and opportunities to enhance DC's nightlife economy. Given the right resources, support, and buy-in from key agency partners, MONC can undertake a more proactive approach that emphasizes risk management and minimizing the nightlife's potential negative impacts on neighborhood stakeholders. This study recommends five guiding principles (see column to the right) to help MONC prioritize and refine its activities in the upcoming years.

Types of Issues MONC Addressed in 2019



MONC Actions by Initiator

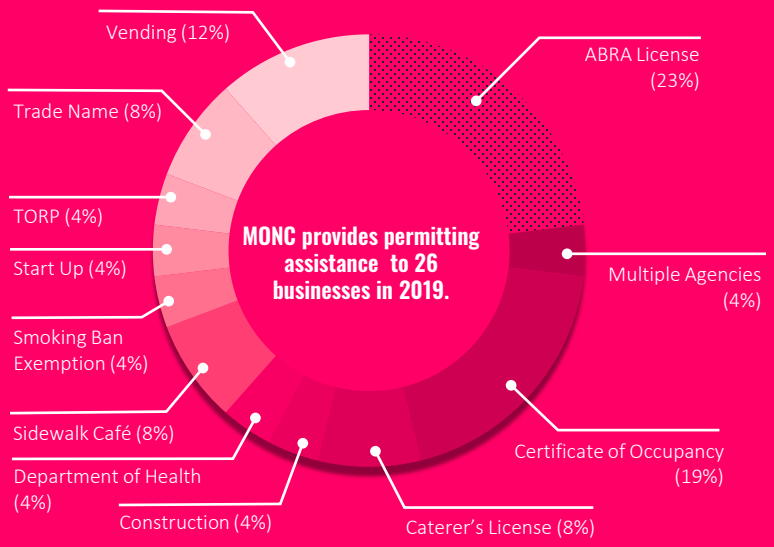


Source: Data in the adjacent figures are derived from detailed tracking of MONC activities from Q1 FY 2019 through Q1 FY2020.

73% of nightlife businesses are aware of MONC.

This high level of awareness speaks to the impressive work of MONC including its significant amount of engagement with area businesses and stakeholders.

Types of Permitting Assistance Provided by MONC



Types of MONC Activity

Guiding Principles for the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture

1 Values

A Diverse and Vibrant Nightlife Makes the District a Great Place to Live, Work, and Visit. The nightlife cultivates DC's identity, culture, economic base, tax base, and social connectivity. It has a distinct relationship with employment, city services, and the community.

2 Constituency

MONC Serves All Nightlife Stakeholders. MONC should work with DMPED and other partners to create equitable opportunities for the entire nightlife community including businesses, patrons, neighborhood residents, city leadership, and agency staff across all eight wards of the city.

3 Role

MONC Interventions Aim to Improve Compliance and Minimize Nightlife Impacts. Key operational functions should include proactive support, serving as a nightlife stakeholder advocate and key point of contact, stakeholder facilitation, and providing guidance for city processes and policy.

4 Priorities

MONC Activities Address the Most Pressing Challenges of the Nightlife Industry. Industry support should focus on late night transit access, regulatory support, reducing avoidable cost burdens, community facilitation, and coordinating city services such as safety, pest control, cleaning, and waste management.

5 Approach

Collaborative Relationships Best Serve Nightlife Stakeholders. Nightlife industry oversight must shift from an adversarial licensing process focused on restrictions to a collaborative process focused on addressing stakeholder needs.

Appendix

Victoria Pickering

End Notes

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Image courtesy of the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser

Limitations & Methodological Notes

With the diversity and expansiveness of DC's nightlife economy, it is difficult to fully capture all activity attributable to the nightlife. This analysis takes a conservative economic modeling approach to assessing the industries that most closely associated with the "nightlife economy" in the District of Columbia: (i) restaurants, (ii) bars, (iii) nightclubs, and (iv) theaters and performance venues. The inclusion of these four industries based on reviews of past nightlife studies and engagement with local stakeholders and District agencies. While these are the four industries assessed for this impact analysis, many other industries operate at night and meaningfully contribute to the city's nightlife economy and culture.

Economic Impact Projections. The economic impact of the nightlife economy was calculated using an input-output model run through a software called IMPLAN, the leading economic input-output modeling software. Economic and fiscal impact figures only reflect the impact within the District of Columbia, excluding surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. Employment figures include both part-time and full-time jobs. The employment count is not equal to the number of overall employees, as a person can hold more than one job. Employment figures are likely undercounted, given the informal nature official figures do not include workers not formally registered as employees of nightlife establishments. This is supported by industry surveys, in which many nightlife business owners said that the food and beverage industry has an above-average share of part-time and temporary employees who are not officially registered or reported as employees. This analysis relies solely on reported employment data, in order to maintain methodological consistency with other recently completed studies and leading data sources.

Fiscal Impact Analysis. Fiscal impact figures reflect only direct impact within the District of Columbia. Fiscal impact figures exclude the tax revenue generated by the indirect and induced impact of the nightlife industry, or any tax revenues collected outside the District of Columbia. Total fiscal impact figures exclude expected property tax revenue generation. Analysis uses total General Fund Revenues from DC FY2020 Approved Fiscal Budget to calculate share of total DC tax revenue generated by nightlife industry. The analysis used IMPLAN estimates for expected personal income and other miscellaneous taxes generated by the nightlife industry and sales tax revenue data from the DC Office of Tax and Revenue for the expected tax revenue generated by restaurants, bars, and clubs

Refer to page 13 for additional methodological information.

Industry Classification and Data Alignment

Industry	DC City License	ESRI Classification	NAICS Code	SIC Code	IMPLAN Sector
Restaurants	DCRA - Restaurant	Restaurants	72251117	581208	509
	DCRA - Restaurant	Foods-Carry Out	72251301	581208	510
	DCRA - Restaurant	Delicatessens	72251302	581209	510
	DCRA - Restaurant	Sandwiches	72251303	581219	510
	DCRA - Restaurant	Deli-Bakery	72251304	581229	510
	DCRA - Restaurant	Coffee Shops	72251505	581228	511
Bars	ABRA - CT and DT	Bars	72241001	581301	511
	ABRA – CT and DT	Cocktail Lounges	72241003	581303	511
	ABRA – CT and DT	Pubs	72241008	581305	511
Performance Venues	DCRA - Live Theater	Live Theaters	71111007	792207	495
	DCRA - Motion Pic.	Movie Theaters	51213101	783201	429
	DCRA - Public Hall	Concert Halls	71131001	792213	500
	N/A	Comedy Clubs	72241004	581307	511
Nightclubs	ABRA - CN and DN	Night Club	72241006	581304	511

About the Project Team

District of Columbia Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC) In October of 2018, Mayor Muriel E. Bowser signed the "Office of and Commission on Nightlife and Culture Establishment Act of 2018," establishing the District's first Office of Nightlife and Culture. Guided by the Commission on Nightlife and Culture and other nightlife stakeholders, the primary function of the MONC is to serve as an intermediary between nightlife establishments, residents, and the District government.

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) assists the Mayor in the coordination, planning, supervision, and execution of economic development efforts in the District of Columbia with the goal of creating and preserving affordable housing, creating jobs, and increasing tax revenue. DMPED pursues policies and programs that create strong neighborhoods, expand and diversify the local economy, and provide residents with pathways to the middle class.

Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) The Washington DC Economic Partnership is a non-profit, public-private organization that drives inclusive economic growth and job creation, supports business and promotes Washington, DC as a leading global city. The mission of WDCEP is to promote DC's economic and business opportunities and support business retention and attraction activities. WDCEP helped MONC oversee this study.

The Economic Impact of DC's Nightlife Industry 2020 Report was conducted by a three-firm team, led by Jon Stover & Associates.

Jon Stover & Associates (JS&A) is an Economic Development Consulting firm and Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) located in Washington, DC, specializing in economic impact analysis, economic revitalization strategy, and real estate feasibility and enhancement strategy. JS&A works to bridge the gap between the very different worlds of the private, nonprofit, and government sectors to create thriving local economies.

The Javera Group helps city agencies, BIDs, business and community groups build safe, sustainable and vibrant urban neighborhoods where people and place matter. The Javera Group creates imaginative solutions to the challenges that face city neighborhoods. Managing neighborhood nightlife issues has been a growing focus for the firm, which assesses the economic, cultural and social dynamics of nighttime activity to help create culturally vibrant and safe neighborhoods 24 hours a day.

Brick & Story is an urban consultancy practice focused on telling the stories of the built environment and the people who live, work, and play within its spaces. In finding creative ways to tell these stories, Brick & Story provides engagement strategy, implementation, planning, and project management to government agencies, non-profit organizations, and the business community.

Ted Eytan, MD

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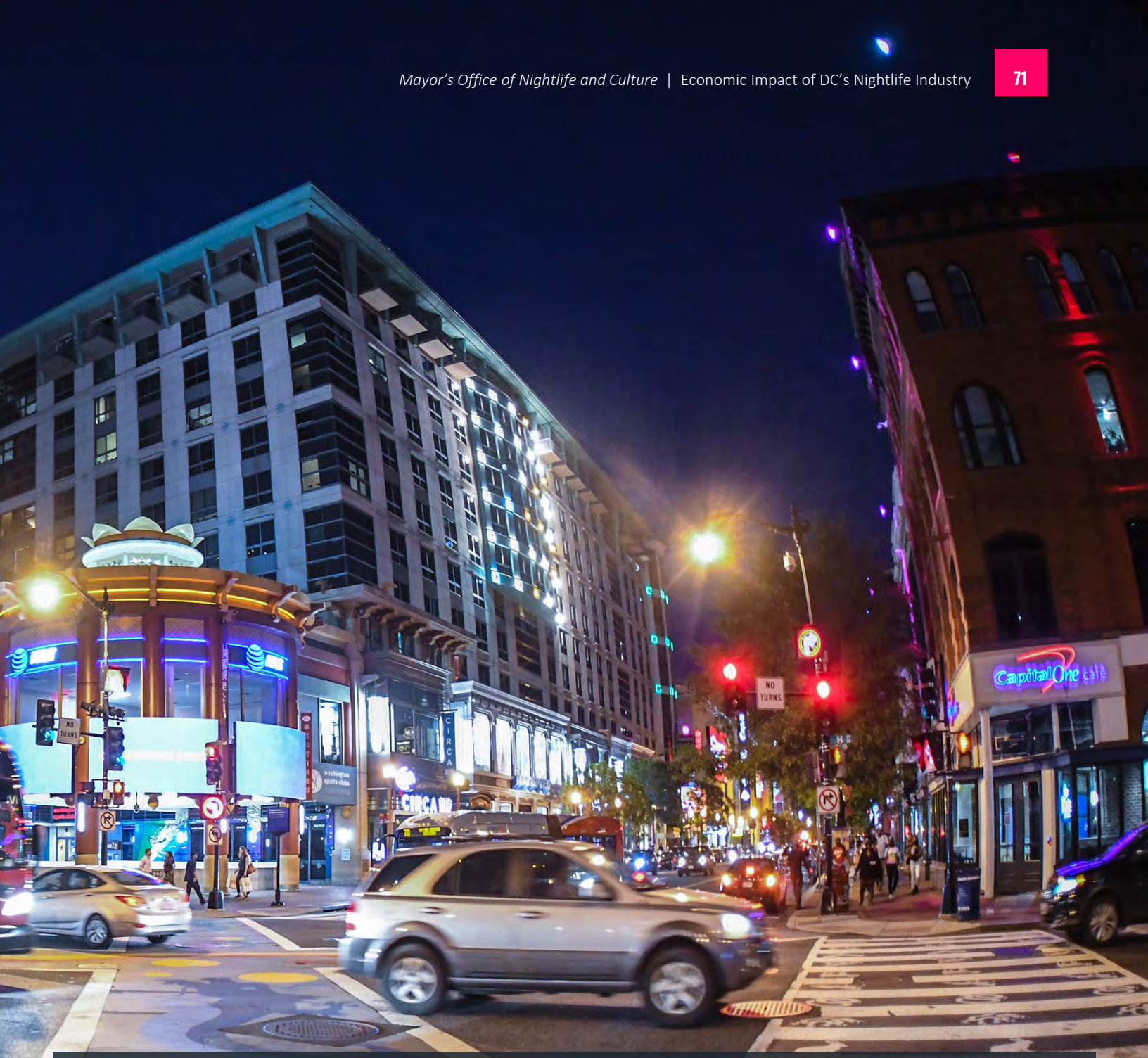

Special thanks to the founding members of the Commission on Nightlife and Culture:

Chairperson Vinoda Basnayake, Nightclub Owner
Anwan "Big G" Glover, The Backyard Band
Maggie O'Neill, Visual Artist
Ian Callender, Performing Arts Director
Kenneth Holmes, Howard University
Colleen Hawkinson, Dupont Circle BID
Ris Lacoste, Restauranteur/Sexual Harassment Advocate
Nick Nayak, DMPED
Keith Slade, DCRA
Fred Moosally, ABRA
Christina Amoruso, DSLBD
Jeff Scott, Commission on Arts and Humanities
Chinyere Hubbard, Events DC
Keith Sellars, Washington DC Economic Partnership
Theresa Belpulsi, Destination DC

Image courtesy of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership.

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For more information on the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture, visit moca.dc.gov/monc.