

## Economic Development after Dark

By Allison Harnden

### MAKING THE CASE FOR A NIGHT MAYOR

The nighttime economy has special needs and considerations to assure safety, reverse and prevent negative impacts, and maximize economic benefit to the community. Mayors, business districts, and city councils worldwide are appointing “night mayors” and night economy managers to nurture and guide this booming economic sector. Pittsburgh, PA, hired their first nighttime economy manager in 2014 and added a project manager this year to become what is now called the Office of Nighttime Economy. This article focuses on what a night manager does, the partnerships required to develop and manage the “other 9 to 5,” and what to consider if your city is contemplating creating such a position.

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# economic development

## AFTER DARK

By Allison Harnden

When think-tank Responsible Hospitality Institute offered a first of its kind Nighttime Management Academy training at their annual summit this year, they expected a handful of cities to participate – ones that were poised to hire a night manager or “night mayor.” Instead, the training sold out with attendees from around the globe, signaling a growing trend of commitment to harnessing economic development after dark.

The nighttime economy has special needs and considerations to assure safety, reverse and prevent negative impacts, and maximize economic benefit to the community. Mayors, business districts, and city councils worldwide are appointing “night mayors” and night economy managers to nurture and guide this booming economic sector.

Pittsburgh, PA, hired their first nighttime economy manager in 2014 and added a project manager this year to become what is now called the Office of Nighttime Economy. This article focuses on what a night manager does, the partnerships required to develop and manage the “other 9 to 5,” and what to consider if your city is contemplating creating such a position.

### WHAT IS THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY?

To define nighttime economy, let’s play word association. What do you think of when you hear “nighttime economy”? Most likely, bars, restaurants, and nightclubs were top of mind.

While these are the core of the industry, there are a host of businesses that complement them: music and live performance venues, cafes, hookah bars, vape shops, and game arcades – even fashion,



*The Cultural District in Downtown Pittsburgh attracts theatre goers, diners, and music lovers of all ages.*

fitness, and personal services like nails, hair, tanning, threading, tattooing and piercing.

There are also public space delights such as street entertainers, sidewalk vendors, food trucks, street events, and night markets.

Additionally, a vast network of commerce provides a support system to nighttime economy. Think wholesale suppliers of food, beverage and uniforms, as well as mobility providers: valet parking, pedicabs, and transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft.

The revenue and jobs generated by these industry facets add up to significant economic impact. Several cities have conducted economic studies of the nighttime economy. San Francisco’s most recent

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study found that their nightlife industry generated \$4.2 billion per year and New York's study revealed a \$9.7 billion economic impact. (<http://rhiweb.org/resource/economic/nyc.pdf>)

Especially noteworthy are the symbiotic relationships between nightlife and related industry segments.

- Seattle's economic study of their music industry included nightlife venues.
- New York's report found residents spent \$908 million on transportation, dining, and "pre-nightlife" activities before going on to nightclubs and bars.
- 48 percent of New York nightlife attendees made purchases of wardrobe, personal care, and accessories specifically to go out at night, totaling \$693 million purchased in New York City stores.

Though Pittsburgh has not yet conducted a full blown economic impact study, the city anticipates one in the near future. However, initial data indicates the restaurant sector in Greater Pittsburgh currently generates over \$3 billion, and earlier this year claimed the prize as the region's largest employer, providing 87,000 jobs.

## THE PITTSBURGH STORY

When steel manufacturing in Pittsburgh closed down in the 1980s, the city lost half its population, which meant less tax revenue and decreased general fund for optimum city services. The Steel City found its resilience in large part from medical and educational institutions. The quality of life enhanced by these industries and revitalizing efforts of many other partners served to attract other sectors, such as the tech industry.

## WHAT IS THE NIGHTTIME SOCIAL ECONOMY?

Restaurants	Parking
Cafes	Taxi
Bars	Uber/Lyft
Nightclubs	Pedicabs
Nightlife	Valet
Theatre	Food Suppliers
Dance	Alcohol Distributors
Special Events	Uniform Companies
Concerts	Menu Graphic Design
Street Entertainment	Marketing/PR
Food Trucks	Bartenders
Sporting Events	Cooks
Cinema	Servers
Live Music	Hosts
Tattoo	Ushers
Hookah	Musicians
Fashion	Promoters
Beauty Services	

As a facet of nighttime economy, destination nightlife is most likely to cause negative impacts on neighboring residents. The visiting patrons, usually younger in age and not being invested in the area, tend to be less mindful of how their behaviors cause disturbance and disruption to the area and its residents. These impacts, in general, occur closer to bar closing time. Therefore, when compared to more dining-focused districts, late night destination nightlife nodes are saddled with the most impact.

All along, the hospitality industry was steadily and quietly swelling to accommodate the social needs of all these industries. Also feeding the growth of the hospitality industry was the presence of over 80,000 students, an age bracket that frequents nighttime food, beverage, and entertainment businesses at least three times per week.

Sociable cities have been characterized as having hospitality zones, defined as concentrations of businesses that nurture social relationships. Pittsburgh is a city of neighborhoods, 90 of them to be exact. They are peppered throughout 58 square miles. Of those 90, ten have developed more popularity as socializing hubs. Half of those hubs comprise the most dense or intense socializing uses which one might consider as hospitality zones: South Side, Lawrenceville, North Shore, Downtown, and Oakland.

While these communities have become centers for social activity, the intensity and nature of the activity in each differs. Downtown is the center of cultural arts and, like most cities, the gathering place for celebration of holidays, free speech events, and sports wins. Its socializing micro-economy feeds downtown day workers but also has a synergistic relationship with evening performing arts and special events.

North Shore is where the football and baseball stadiums are located, so economic activity here is also more event-driven. Oakland generally serves the medical and education institutions. Lawrenceville and South Side have evolved into destination nightlife.

Of the 507 alcohol licenses issued in Pittsburgh's 90 neighborhoods, 27 percent are located in South Side and Lawrenceville, two neighborhoods dense with longtime homeowners and an influx of younger renters and home buyers. New experiences continued to crop up, drawing night socializers on weekends not just from the city, but from the suburbs and beyond, even West Virginia and Ohio.

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Survey respondents associate the term “Sociable City” with moments of surprise, delight, and discovery.

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Over time, late night socializing in Pittsburgh shifted from the Oakland neighborhood and the Strip District where it was once popular to the current destination, South Side. Several issues complicated the situation: The South Side Local Development Corporation dissolved due to lack of support, along with its Main Street program. Without their guidance, the business mix got top heavy with bars and nightclubs which attracted large numbers of patrons, some of whom were noisy, messy, and disruptive. Without a business improvement district, city services were not sufficient enough to maintain safety and cleanliness. Like most cities, code enforcement, street maintenance, and trash collection did not happen beyond 5pm Monday through Friday. Without someone to coordinate all the players to manage “life at night,” the commercial district suffered from a negative perception.

City Council President Bruce A. Kraus had been raising the warning alarm for some time. As it reached a tipping point, residents joined in to advocate for action. In 2012, through Kraus’ leadership, the city’s Planning Department commissioned an assessment of Pittsburgh’s nighttime economy by the Responsible Hospitality Institute, a non-profit nightlife think-tank.

The study engaged a wide swath of stakeholders who weighed in on a collection of recommendations titled “The Pittsburgh Sociable City Plan.” One of the recommendations was to create a new position within the city, a nighttime economy manager. The first manager was hired in 2014; this year a project coordinator was added, doubling the effectiveness of what is now the Office of Nighttime Economy.

## A MAP WITHOUT A NAVIGATOR IS JUST A MAP

Pittsburgh’s Sociable City Plan is a blueprint to capture opportunities in the nighttime economy such as nurturing a music economy and generating revenue to

maintain nightlife infrastructure through the South Side Parking Enhancement District (see sidebar). It also highlights challenges that need to be addressed in order to get ahead of the impacts and harness the benefits.

Key to achieving the positive impacts is changing perceptions about the nighttime economy. To take a look at common perceptions about nightlife, let’s return to our word association game and dig a little deeper: when asking “what words or characteristics are associated with ‘nighttime economy?’” responses range but most often feature negative perceptions: drinking, noise, fights, and public urination. But when asked the same question regarding the phrase “Sociable City,” the responses nearly write a vision statement: welcoming; walkable; well-lit; vibrant; diversity of people; variety of experiences; moments of surprise, delight, and discovery; visible presence of police; and connection and engagement with other people.

The question is: how does a city go about achieving such a vision? How can a city anticipate and prevent potential negative impact, and attain the benefits of a sociable city?

Cities worldwide are recognizing the need for a staff person to steward the evolution of their nightlife. In fact, five of the seven continents have cities with a night mayor or night manager, or are formally seeking to hire one. In the U.S., a handful of cities have committed to an intentional focus on issues and opportunities of economic development after dark, and created a job for a liaison between night commerce, the city, and community. Some cities call this position a night mayor. Some create a commission like New York has just announced. In Pittsburgh, the position is called nighttime economy manager.

As much as titles vary, so do the entities in which the function is housed, which include both public and private.

- The night mayor of Iowa City is employed by the Business Improvement District.
- San Jose’s downtown manager, one of the earliest such appointments, is located in the city manager’s office.

## SOCIALE CITY VISION/MISSION

**Vision**  
Safe and vibrant places to socialize for visitors and Pittsburghers of all ages, cultures and lifestyles.

**Mission**  
Retain and grow the economic value of the social and nighttime economy while effectively preventing and addressing nuisance activities, managing public safety risks and alleviating quality of life impacts.

Pittsburgh  
**SOCIALE CITY**

## PARKING ENHANCEMENT DISTRICT: A SAFETY INITIATIVE DISGUISED AS A MOBILITY INITIATIVE

Up until recent years, steel mill workers lived on the slopes of the South Side neighborhood and used city-maintained steps to scale down the mountainside to work in the mills. On their way home, they would stop for a beer and maybe dinner in one of the neighborhood's bars on East Carson Street.

Today, that stretch of commerce still has bars, but the customer (and the person who serves them) comes with a car – many cars. Beyond a few small parking lots, there are roughly 650 on-street parking spaces on the 19-block stretch that constitutes the commercial corridor. While there are a couple of parking garages on the South Side, they are located at either end of Carson Street, a mile from the hub of late night activity.

As the South Side gained more and more popularity as a destination for younger late night patrons, they parked up the hill from the well-lit core, running the risk of victimization by assault and robbery as they walked through dimly lit side streets and dark alleys. Suburbanites unfamiliar with urban living and visitors from outside the region left items inside their cars within plain view, tempting criminals, causing a spike in vehicle break-ins as South Side's top crime. Police budgets spiked too due to overtime pay prompted by increased late night demand.

The sheer numbers of extra patrons meant more trash, yet numbers of receptacles and collection frequency had not transitioned to accommodate increased "life at night." In general, citizens should be able to expect that city services such as numbers of receptacles, trash collection service, power washing and police presence are delivered equally to all areas of the city. When a given area begins to attract more users and impacts outweigh the base level of service, commercial concentrations often opt for a Business Improvement District.

As volunteers, existing entities and community organizations did not have capacity or mission to deal with managing growth of the heightened needs of this intensely used commercial corridor. Recommendations were made that the city could create a Parking Enhancement District (PED).

The short term goal was to motivate patrons' and workers' parking and mobility habits towards well-lit and well-populated areas to keep them safe. The long range goal was to develop a funding mechanism to pay for services above and beyond what the city was able to provide, services and improvements that responded to the special needs of nighttime economy.

Until the PED's creation in 2017, parking meters were enforced only until 6pm. The process would involve extending meter collection hours past 6pm until midnight on Friday and Saturday only. The \$1.50 per hour collected between those hours would be sequestered into a trust fund dedicated solely to improving the safety, maintenance, and infrastructure of nighttime use in the area within the PED boundaries.

A first step was to legislate Parking Enhancement Districts in general; to define them and the requirements to become one. The area had to have enough density of use, which was measured by a minimum of revenue generated by meters in the parking area. It was determined that the nighttime economy manager would accept applications and coordinate key stakeholders, including the Parking Authority; City Council; and the Mobility and Infrastructure, Municipal Budget, Public Safety, and Public Works departments.

Second came adjusting Residential Permit Parking (RPP). The Parking Authority, Councilman Kraus, businesses, and residents collaborated to craft an approach to adjust residential permit parking hours

to match the PED hours. The goal of this was to discourage parking in less active residential side streets and motivate patrons to stay where there were more eyes on the street and reduce crimes of opportunity.

The idea of a PED had been discussed for years during the Responsible Hospitality Institute assessment and the drafting of the Sociable City Plan. The business community had already provided input via the roundtable focus groups and through the Sociable City implementation workgroups.

Concerns were voiced that paid parking would drive customers to other commercial neighborhoods. Questions were raised about how to reduce vehicles on E. Carson Street without reducing customers? How do we save upfront parking for customers, rather than employees?

The mayor was adamant that during a pilot period a free parking option be available too. So, a park and ride system called the South Side NiteRider was developed. The Parking Authority offered free parking at a lot across the river with a five-minute shuttle ride to

the hub of action. Medical institutions provided sponsorship due to

their interest in reducing DUIs and patron injuries.

Shifting the mindset, especially around parking, is a slow culture change. Public education was crucial. A communications campaign was designed with creative direction donated by advertising experts at Brunner Creative. Lamar Outdoor Advertising donated ad space on bus shelters and billboards.

A 30-day grace period stepped up the public notice. For four weekends an "Oops Card" and a citation for \$0.00 was placed on every car parked on Carson Street to inform patrons that soon they'd have to feed the meter, the benefits to feeding the meter, and of the free parking and NiteRider shuttle. The mayor's community affairs team reminded businesses and distributed window posters and links to ssNiteRider.com to post on websites and on social media.

Simultaneous to this process, rideshare was ascending which prompted a re-ordering of infrastructure to accommodate Lyft, Uber, and other platforms. A five-block area carved out to expedite pickup/drop off led to a happy unintended consequence of clearing the district 30 minutes faster. Earlier departure meant reduced disruption to residents and reduced police costs.

After one year, PED generated \$220,000 in parking revenue. The city is currently re-investing back into the nighttime economy for safety and maintenance with the purchase of safety cameras, clean team ambassador service, and a litter vacuum dedicated to the nightlife district. Public Works has shifted some day staffing to weekend nights to clean up after bar closing time. As more night customers used Uber, Lyft, and others, the park and ride numbers decreased such that NiteRider is used now only for South Side events. While the correlation cannot be proved, as shared ride platforms gained traction (reporting a 20 percent increase) crime has been reduced by 37 percent. Parking usage remains near 100 percent at peak hours.



Photo Courtesy of Lamar Advertising

Lamar Outdoor Advertising helped promote a free park & ride for customers and nightlife employees.

- In Orlando the project manager for nighttime economy is part of the Redevelopment Authority.
- Pittsburgh's Office of Nighttime Economy is supervised by the Public Safety Department and reports weekly to the mayor's office.

The charge, however, is fairly consistent: to coordinate efforts of city departments; county, state and federal permitting and regulating agencies; community organizations; residents; and businesses to achieve a balance of safety and vibrancy in the nighttime economy.

## WHAT DOES A NIGHT MANAGER DO?

Pittsburgh's nighttime economy manager oversees and advises nightlife planning and management strategies citywide. This involves coordinating multiple city departments, services, policies, and resources needed to assure safe, vibrant, and sustainable opportunities to socialize for the city's citizens, businesses, and visitors. The Office of Nighttime Economy primarily focuses efforts on:

- Acting as a liaison to businesses and the community
- Monitoring the nighttime economy
- Guiding policy and development
- Managing projects

### Act as Business Liaison

To better understand the needs and challenges of nighttime businesses, the office convenes and facilitates meetings with the nightlife sector. Both issue identification and problem solving occurs in these sessions, which are sometimes businesses only and other times involve permitting, licensing, and enforcement representatives to answer questions, clarify misunderstandings, and foster collaboration.

Beyond meeting with bars and restaurants, the night manager also coordinates and improves communication among representatives of Uber, Lyft, and the night police staff to achieve optimum egress at bar closing time and for large events.



Photo Credit: Danielle Wickland



Photo Credit: Melissa Farlow, The Heinz Endowments Downtown Now Photography Project

*Nighttime Economy Manager Allison Harnden meets annually with the Student Government Council that convenes ten of Pittsburgh's higher education institutions.*

### Maintain Community Relations

The office helps businesses and neighbors to achieve peaceful and mutually beneficial co-existence. A good deal of the office's role centers on maintaining relations with community organizations, higher education, chambers of commerce, merchant and bar associations. The manager and project coordinator split this workload, which includes making presentations, hearing concerns, and conducting follow up actions on community requests. Such requests have led to the creation of a Social Host Ordinance, which holds landlords accountable for the disruptive activity of their tenants (i.e. noise or underage drinking at student house parties).

Residents play an important role in a healthy nighttime economy, as both patrons and monitors. Those who live in or near hospitality zones, given an effective outlet, can communicate early warnings of potential issues. Two neighborhood resident groups in Pittsburgh, Oakwatch in Oakland and Southwatch in South Side, meet monthly with city departments to focus on code violations, including noise, house parties, and other impacts. Through participating with numerous resident groups on a consistent basis, the nighttime economy manager can monitor trends, better understand root causes, and address situations before they become full blown issues.

### Monitor the Nighttime Economy

Staying up to date on nightlife trends and issues involves more than hearing from the community. Onsite observation of nightlife in various neighborhoods with skilled sets of eyes balances out the sometimes subjective opinions of residents. A common question of night managers is: "How much do you work at night?" In Pittsburgh, the manager and coordinator strive for onsite observation of hospitality zones at night two times per month. Generally, they start at 10pm to observe the "patron shift

### NIGHT MANAGER ROLE

Percentage	Job Duty	Frequency
30%	Community Relations	Daily
20%	Project Management	Daily
15%	Monitor Nighttime Economy	Weekly
15%	Business Liaison	Weekly
10%	Policy and Practices Advisor	Weekly
5%	Guide Economic Development	Weekly
5%	Improve Process Efficiency	Bi-Monthly

One thing that is consistently reported from cities across the country is, “We didn’t plan nightlife, it just happened.” In order to steward the evolution of life at night, Pittsburgh’s office works with neighborhood development corporations, Business Improvement Districts, community councils, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority to anticipate, plan, and guide responsible nightlife growth.

change,” when diners (typically boomers) are exiting the hospitality zone and when nightlife patrons (typically millennials) are arriving. The team looks for a host of things that might be cured with policy, education, marketing, or communication with other city departments:

- Is door security managing the lines outside businesses?
- Are there street lights burnt out?
- Where is litter tending to concentrate?
- How could closing time be less chaotic?
- Are there patterns to Uber/Lyft/taxi drivers who stop in the middle of the street to drop off/pick up customers?
- What patron behaviors are undesirable and what can be done to change them?
- Where and at what time are sidewalks unable to accommodate the number of patrons such that they spill into the street?

#### Policy and Practice Advisor

With a combined 35 years of experience in hospitality and in guiding nighttime economies in cities nationwide, Pittsburgh’s Office of Nighttime Economy is uniquely qualified to brief and advise elected officials on policy strategies and legislation related to the nighttime economy. Sharing strategies on a quarterly call with night mayors from other cities helps the team to stay abreast of best practices and remain a solid resource for the mayor, City Council, and city departments.

#### Guide Development

To stay ahead of the curve, the office works proactively to guide development in several ways. This involves leadership by the Office of Nighttime Economy, as well as participating in initiatives led by other public and private partners.

**District Development** – One thing that is consistently reported from cities across the country is, “We didn’t plan nightlife, it just happened.” In order to steward the evolution of life at night, Pittsburgh’s office works with neighborhood development corporations, Business Im-

provement Districts, community councils, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority to anticipate, plan, and guide responsible nightlife growth.

**Business Development** – A key area of focus is informing businesses of requirements and tools to open, expand, and maintain safe and profitable ventures. Several how-to guides have been drafted to assist businesses to understand rules, regulations, and navigating city processes. A current focus is encouraging a live music scene and, to that end, making policies and regulations more transparent and user friendly.

**Public Space Development** – Of late, the office has been asked to weigh in on streetscape projects. With a deeper understanding of how public space is utilized at night, this team is aptly suited to provide suggestions to urban planners. For instance, night managers know that music venues need loading zones for musicians and their equipment and can advocate for them. The management team understands where within a hospitality zone the nightlife pedestrian flow creates bottlenecks and causes pedestrians to spill into the street and can suggest environmental design solutions to reduce risk.

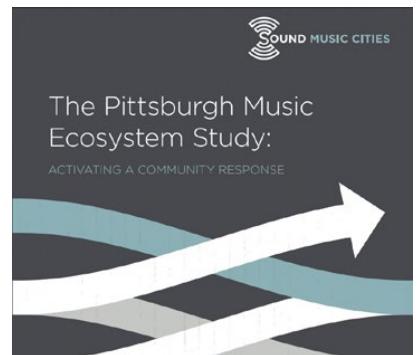
#### Project Management

When a topic of interest is related to nightlife or socializing and involves multiple departments, it makes sense for the Office of Nighttime Economy to manage the project. Sometimes it involves engaging a consultant and monitoring their progress; other times it means managing a pilot program. The office is currently managing or co-managing the following projects:

**Pittsburgh Music Ecosystem Project** – To address visitors’ disappointment with live music offerings, the challenge of musicians to make a living at their craft and barriers to venues offering live music, Mayor William Peduto assigned the nighttime economy manager to team with the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and local radio WYEP 90.7 to remove barriers and nurture a music scene. (See [phgMusicProject.org](http://phgMusicProject.org))

**Alternative Entertainment** – Bars and events with alcohol are a diversion for some, but others desire some other form of entertainment. Pittsburgh hosts a large population who are under 21 years old, some of whom are students. While universities provide many activities, students seek an off-campus experience. This group is exploring ways to encourage entrepreneurship and development of creative alternative diversions and entertainment without alcohol.

**Parking Enhancement District** – a mechanism for those who participate in nightlife to contribute to its sustainability, this initiative legislated the application and re-



Office of Nighttime Economy, WYEP Radio, and Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership facilitated a study to assess and grow a music economy.

It seems that every city is courting info tech, bio tech and other sectors to bring jobs and revenue to their communities. Many of these industries work internationally, which means work schedules around the clock. Socializing typically happens at night due to prevalence of a 9-5 employment. But as 24/7 economies expand, so will the hours of socializing.

quirements for such districts in 2016, then implemented a pilot on the South Side in 2017. The nighttime economy manager coordinated the efforts of a team of partners, both public and private.

### WHY YOUR CITY NEEDS A NIGHT MANAGER

Ask yourself: who within my city coordinates the full range of planning, managing, and monitoring detailed in this article? Most large cities and some small cities are experiencing greater night activity. Some have harnessed it; some are in reaction mode, responding with a piecemeal approach. For those who need more fodder to adopt an intentional strategy to embrace nighttime economy, consider the following demographic projections, market strength, and economic and community benefits.

#### Consumer Demand Will Continue to Grow

Consumer demand for social space is being buoyed by two demographic cohorts that have reached historic numbers. The population of baby boomers tagged in at 74 million in 2016. Trends show this generation is trading in suburban living for downtown condos and social options.

The generation that values “experiences” over “stuff,” the millennials (those 20-35 years old in 2016) swelled to 71 million. These are arguably the ages of most intense socializing, and the wave keeps coming.

The Pew Center reports that, in 2019, millennials are projected to overtake baby boomers as the largest generation. (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/01/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/>)

#### Market Response Is Growing

Demand is growing and industry is responding. Food and Beverage was one of the few industries to weather the storm of the last decade's economic downturn. The National Restaurant Association projected for 2017 a national average of 4.3 percent in sales growth.

Sales spur job growth. In Pittsburgh, while other industry jobs increased just .4 percent in the last five years, restaurants and eating places enjoyed a 3 percent increase in jobs. And that's all good, but it does bring other problems. Unless public transit service hours shift to accommodate nighttime economy (most cities have not), all those workers who serve your food and drinks can get to work but they're stuck for a ride home after the bars close.



Photo Courtesy of City of Play

Alternative recreation resonates with millennials. City of Play hosts Monday Night Dodgeball at the Ace Hotel.

#### Quality of Life

More attention is centering on the benefits of social interaction on the well-being of our citizens and communities. Gallup teamed psychologists, economists, and other acclaimed scientists to identify common elements of individuals' well-being. They discovered that an optimum dose of socializing is one of five points that constitute a life well-lived.

Nighttime economy can attract and retain engaged residents. In 2008 Gallup teamed with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's Soul of the Community study project, interviewing nearly 43,000 people in 26 communities over three years. Social offerings, such as entertainment venues and places to meet, were ranked as the most important quality that attached people to community. The study also found a positive correlation between attachment to community and local GDP growth.

#### More 24/7 Industries

It seems that every city is courting info tech, bio tech and other sectors to bring jobs and revenue to their communities. Many of these industries work internationally, which means work schedules around the clock. Socializing typically happens at night due to prevalence of a 9-5 employment. But as 24/7 economies expand, so will the hours of socializing.

Socializing enhances quality of life. More and more this is what relocating companies seek in a city to attract and retain employees. The question is: Do you want to present a sociable city with managed life at night or one where nightlife “just happened?”

#### LESSONS LEARNED

Some basic tenets have held true for Pittsburgh's work on life after dark and have been commonly expressed by colleagues from other cities who manage this specialized discipline and economic niche.

**Create a Balanced Team** – To tap into the nighttime economy requires dedicated attention, advocacy, and change making. Start by building a team comprised of a balance of public and private entities and with equal representation of hospitality, safety, development, and community interests. This alliance will give you the full scope of identifying and addressing issues, as well as deciding if you want or need a night manager. Balanced representation will assure no one interest reigns.

**Focus on Socializing** rather than nightlife: it's more palatable to a broader audience and will serve to diffuse polarizing attitudes and galvanize stakeholders toward a common goal. The vision of Pittsburgh's Office of Nighttime Economy intentionally focuses on socializing and doesn't even mention the word "night" in its Vision Statement:

To create safe and vibrant places to socialize for Pittsburghers and visitors of all ages, lifestyles and cultures.

**Give Organizational Structure Careful Consideration** – For those cities that want to pursue a nighttime economy manager, deep discussion should take place to consider in what organization or city department will the manager reside. Managers outside city government may have difficulty affecting changes needed inside the institution. That said, managers' places inside municipal government need access and support of top level decision makers.

**Maintain Momentum** – Building trust, collaboration, and a common direction among the diverse interests of your alliance will take time. A night manager can serve to continually move the needle forward. Absent that, tasks can be shared by a balanced alliance. Look for some easy agreed upon wins. If momentum is lost, participants will drop out and the group's balance will be lost.

## CONCLUSION

Nightlife and socializing is a sleeping giant with great potential to provide economic benefits and heightened quality of life for citizens, visitors, and relocating industries. It is a complex ecosystem with many facets: Nurture it and reap the benefits; ignore it and it will grow anyway.

Very few cities have had the luxury of planning for nightlife, Pittsburgh included. It quietly grew after dark while everyone was sleeping. But this city and a handful of others with night managers have awakened to a new day, one that begins after dark. There is much catch up work to be done to address the current reality while working steadily to the future sociable city.

If your city has not planned for life at night, heed this: It's here now. More is coming. Are you ready? ☺

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