

9. A Comprehensive Strategy for Realizing the Full Potential of the Nighttime Economy in the City of Vancouver

At the Regular Council meeting on June 11, 2019, Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on June 12, 2019, to hear from speakers, with a start time of 3pm.

Submitted by: Councillor Dominato

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver's mission is to create a great city of communities that cares about its people, its environment, and the opportunities to live, work, and prosper;
2. Vancouver City Council recognizes that a resilient, diverse economy fosters dynamic businesses and sustainable employment, and helps to attract and retain professionals, families, and individuals who can live and work in our city;
3. The City of Vancouver has an Economic Action Strategy (2011), supported by Council, as well various initiatives that have been undertaken to promote and strengthen local business, to provide tools for Vancouver businesses to flourish (while incorporating sustainable practices), and to make Vancouver an attractive business locale and tourism destination for people from around the world;
4. The Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC), as the economic development agency for the City of Vancouver, works to strengthen Vancouver's economy by supporting local companies, attracting high-impact investment, and promoting international trade, with a particular focus on developing Vancouver's creative economy, knowledge economy, and green economy;
5. The City of Vancouver has embarked on a wide range of strategic initiatives, for example, the Music Strategy and Creative City Strategy which each seek to develop a comprehensive plan and vision for culture and creativity in Vancouver;
6. The City of Vancouver has a Healthy City Strategy that, among other goals and objectives, recognizes that a thriving, diverse economy, with opportunity for everyone, is the foundation of a liveable city, as well as recognizing that families with children are key to a diverse and vibrant society;
7. In recent years, cities around the world have begun to pay greater attention to the value and potential of the Nighttime Economy of their cities, whether it be the whole of a city's nightlife industry of dining and entertainment, various major nightlife components such as music and

craft beverages, or secondary economic activity from transportation and related nightlife spending by patrons;

8. A recent study undertaken by the City of Toronto concluded that the Nighttime economy is the “*new competitive edge for post-industrial cities*” and that Toronto should undertake a vision and action plan to advance the night-time economy;
9. To underscore the value of the Nighttime Economy to the city of Vancouver and the Metro Vancouver region, the Hospitality Vancouver Association (HVA), an association that advocates for clubs, pubs, and other businesses along Granville Street and the Davie Village, notes that the Granville Entertainment District (GED) – as the social hub of Vancouver – employs thousands of people and generates tens of millions of dollars in annual economic activity, including more than 900 jobs and \$43.5 million in annual revenue alone generated by the GED’s 14 liquor-primary businesses;
10. A June 2018 study of Vancouver’s “Music Ecosystem” commissioned by the Music BC Industry Association, outlines several specific impediments to a thriving Nighttime Economy, as faced by the city’s music sector, such as “obstacles with permits and curfews in high-activity areas” which has led to a paucity of music events, as well as “limited late transport options” available for music audiences in the city.”;
11. There is a general shortage of family-friendly, substance-free Nighttime Economy options and events in the city that are suitable for children, youth, and families, and despite the City’s support for many aspects of the Nighttime Economy, Vancouver has gained a reputation for being a “no fun” city in the minds of many;
12. Attracting greater numbers of people to a downtown social district can yield greater nightlife vibrancy and economic growth, as noted by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), but it can also place demands on public safety and other municipal resources and therefore requires a strong foundation and a dedicated, comprehensive focus on the part of local governments and other government levels to capitalize on the economic opportunities;
13. At the May 2, 2018, meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on City Finance and Services, Vancouver City Council supported a series of nightlife actions and recommendations stemming from a staff report entitled “Update on Liquor Policy Implementation and Upgrading the Granville Entertainment District”. These included an amendment directing staff, as part of the City’s Creative City Strategy, to establish a “Nightlife Council” that combines safety, security, transportation, economic development, and vibrant street life, as well as integrating lessons learned from the Granville Entertainment District Safety and Security Working Group;

14. Vancouver City Staff, in collaboration with students from Simon Fraser University and input from the VEC, recently commissioned a literature review and jurisdictional scan of Vancouver's nightlife economy, identifying the key themes of transportation, safety, access, and nightlife development, while acknowledging that the scope of the project was limited to nightlife, and not to the broader Nighttime economy, with recommendations for further investigation of the city's night economy;
15. The Nighttime Economy is more than just entertainment, leisure, and social events, it encompasses cultural, retail, tourism, and various corporate sectors, as well as nighttime workers who do not work in nightlife venues (e.g., health care workers, first responders, and police);
16. At the September 21, 2018, Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, TransLink staff reported on the NightBus service, including discussion of TransLink's engagement with the Province on ride-hailing, and TransLink's interest in partnering with ride-hailing services – particularly for first mile/last mile and late night services;
17. TransLink – at the recommendation of its Late Night Stakeholder Committee – recently piloted the NightBus service from a central hub located on West Georgia Street at Granville, where patrons can wait comfortably in a central, well-lit environment to help improve safety along the busy GED nightlife corridor, amid frequent calls for extended SkyTrain service hours and ride-hailing options;
18. In June of this year, TransLink will be releasing a report on late night transportation that will look at a range of seamless transit options for Metro Vancouver residents to return safely to their communities;
19. Ride-hailing has yet to become legal in British Columbia, and despite legislation introduced by the provincial government on November 19, 2018, that will ostensibly allow ride-hailing companies to enter the B.C. market in the fall of 2019, it remains to be seen how, when, where, and if ride-hailing will arrive and whether it can thrive and succeed in B.C.;
20. Cities such as Sydney and London have adopted night-time strategic plans, while other cities have created dedicated commissions and staff and global cities around the world are generally adopting strategic measures to grow their Nighttime economies to create local jobs and support a wide range of economic activity;
21. Despite the City of Vancouver's ongoing interest (past and present) in developing the potential of the city's Nighttime Economy, obstacles and impediments continue to exist, not the least of which relate to transportation, public safety, access, and regulatory restrictions, and the City lacks a comprehensive overarching strategic policy framework that could bring the fullness of the city's Nighttime Economy into focus.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT the current Vancouver City Council – sworn in on November 5, 2018 – affirm its unequivocal support for realizing the full economic potential of a Nighttime Economy and the role it can and does play in a strong, diverse local economy, one that supports small businesses and jobs, the local arts and culture sectors, and the goal for Vancouver to be a sustainable, liveable city with opportunities for everyone.

- B. THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to work with the Vancouver Economic Commission to develop recommendations for a comprehensive citywide Nighttime Economy Strategy, one that encompasses all aspects of the Nighttime Economy and serves to focus the range of necessary actions required by Council and the City to remove obstacles and impediments to realizing the economic and other potentials of Vancouver’s Nighttime Economy, in consultation with all appropriate stakeholders, with work to begin in 2020, and for a draft strategy to be presented to Council for its consideration on or before June 2021; and

FURTHER THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to apply a child, youth, and families’ lens in formulating recommendations for a comprehensive Nighttime Economy Strategy to ensure that family-friendly, substance-free events and street activations that foster social connectedness are included and well-represented in the strategy; and

FURTHER THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to apply a gender diversity and inclusion lens in formulating recommendations for a comprehensive Nighttime Economy Strategy to consider issues of safety generally, but also specifically for women and the LGBTQ2S+ community, as well as accessibility for people with disabilities.

- C. THAT Vancouver City Council affirm its support for a regional Night Transit Strategy that seamlessly connects Metro Vancouver communities, in support of the Vancouver and regional Nighttime Economies, including affirming Council’s support for TransLink to explore transit options for Metro Vancouver residents to return safely to their communities whether that be within the City of Vancouver or for residents of Surrey, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Richmond and other Metro Vancouver municipalities or for underserved residents of the UBC Endowment Lands.

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