

GLOBAL NIGHTTIME RECOVERY PLAN

CHAPTER 3 – INNOVATING FOR 24-HOUR CITIES

Introducing the **Global Nighttime Recovery Plan (GNRP)**, a practical guide for cities that are trying to determine the best way to design and safely execute a strategy to reopen and reactivate their creative and night-time economies. The guide was created in response to the severe vulnerability of nighttime industries caused by Covid-19, and in acknowledgement of this unique opportunity for improved, night-centric city planning offered by the crisis.

The GNRP is an international collaboration of some of the foremost minds in nightlife governance, planning and culture, spearheaded by nightlife advocacy agency, **VibeLab**. First conceived in June 2020, it has quickly grown to include the work of 130 practitioners, academics, public health experts, advocates and industry representatives from more than 70 cities spanning 6 continents – that network growing and strengthening with each new chapter.

Download and read the complete chapters via nighttime.org

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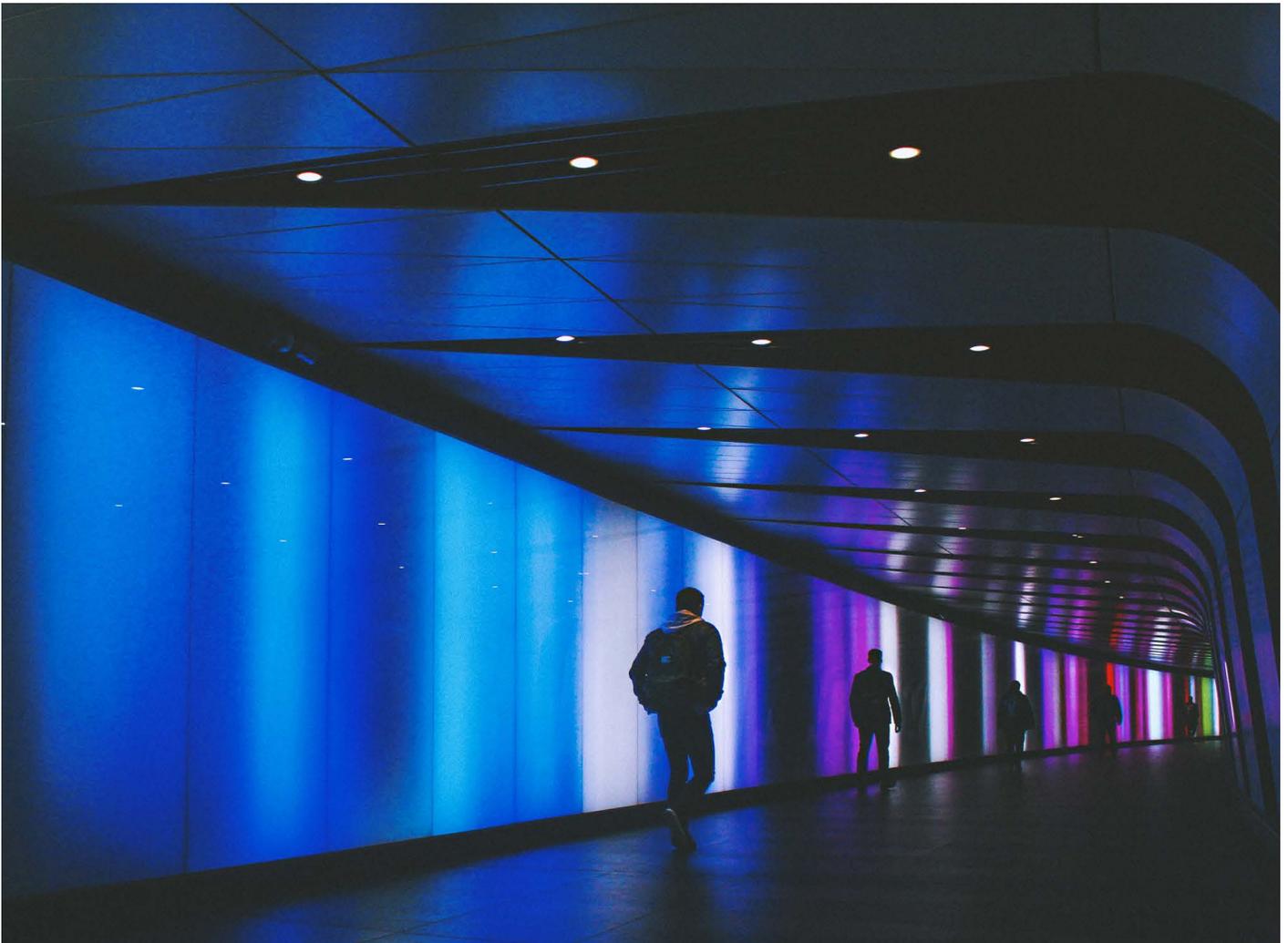
ISSUE STATEMENT AND KEY CHALLENGES

This chapter examines the problems faced in creating safe and welcoming cities at night in the time of Covid-19. When space for physical distance is in such high demand, creative time-based strategies that embrace the night hours can decongest valuable space and offer more economic and social opportunity.

It is vital that municipalities, licensing and planning authorities, business groups and transit operators are proactive in addressing the three key areas of activation, illumination and movement in what is a fast-changing landscape of user behaviour and social norms.

METHOD

Through interviews, research and strategy development, this chapter has drawn on recent case studies in **New York, Vilnius, Berlin, Paris** and **Orlando**, to discern possible challenges and advantages, assess existing trials, and produce best-practice recommendations.



ACTIVATION OF OUR STREETS & SPACES IN THE NOCTURNAL HOURS

Key takeaways/recommendations:

Nearly every city around the world is suffering from lower footfall, often up to 70% lower than pre-Covid-19 – especially in urban centres and nightlife districts.

We need innovative activation strategies that draw people out of their living rooms and back to the city, **alongside communication plans** about what's going on and how it's safe.

Consumer, resident and worker attitudes and behaviour should be surveyed on a regular basis in order to tailor communications.

- **Animation**

- Landowners with empty retail or office units can offer discounted spaces for artists, pop-up food and retail and community groups, who play a key role in activating the evening.
- Create socially-distanced place-based events, night walks and tours to bring culture outside.
- Develop collective voucher schemes and promotions to drive trade on quieter weeknights, e.g. UK's Bermondsey Neighbourhood Marketing Campaign, where local restaurants, bars, shops, services come together to offer discount evenings.
- Use ambassadors, rather than police, to manage foot flow and physical distancing. This creates a more inclusive and approachable city.

- **Flexing regulations for longer opening hours** - to cater for both nightlife patrons and essential night workers
- Relax temporal licensing and planning restrictions so retail and leisure can open later to aid physical distancing and promote business viability.
- Relax regulations on permitted activities for nighttime businesses so they can pivot to alternative business models (e.g. letting a concert hall sell retail merchandise, takeout food, or become an art gallery).
- Open health centres and municipal services later as well as retail, to encourage consumption and allow community participation in socially distanced settings – a key part of the Chinese government's recovery strategy.

Case study: **Sydney**. Sydney is implementing a 24-hour-economy strategy which includes relaxation of licensing for: late-trading retail and venues, outdoor use, performance activations etc.

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF ILLUMINATION

Key takeaways/recommendations:

Light is a powerful magnet; public light-art and media displays act as landmarks, aiding community identity. Light can create a friendly environment, aid physical distancing, and augment wayfinding and boundary-setting to direct people through public and private spaces.

- **Welcoming**
 - While health controls inherently dampen late-night spirits, lighting can help counteract these psychological barriers, by defining and connecting places in the dark and heightening visitor confidence.
 - Utilise strings or beams of light to reinforce physically distanced markers.
 - Use pilot projects to test for future permanent installations. Temporary installations may bypass regulations when labelled art or installed with a date for de-installation.
 - A public art project from Montreal comprised a playful series of illuminated see-saws. The works allow a distanced relationship between users, who become light and sound artists while playing on the installation.
 - Strategic emphasis on district character such as ‘city of light’ or and regular light festivals can aid long-range plans for increased footfall.

Case study: **Kings Cross, London.** Creative, varied and punctuated light patterns aid pedestrian navigation and create an appealing environment.

- **Adaptability** - deploy light for moving and dwelling
 - Providing secure places to rest or move through a city after dark is especially critical for women and late-night shift workers.
 - Food trucks can provide safe illuminated spaces combined with access to nourishment late at night.
 - Create illuminated urban ‘rest stops’ which can be transit shelters or structures for pedestrians. E.g. smart shelters in Seoul with emergency phones and charging stations and Covid-measures such as UV sterilisers and thermal cameras (to detect fever).
 - Use lighting to define paths and directionality to decrease movement conflicts with vehicles or micro-mobility.
 - An ‘existing conditions’ study tracking light levels, nighttime activities, needs of shift workers and community priorities should be used to inform future lighting design.

DEVELOPING MORE INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO MOVEMENT AROUND OUR CITIES AFTER DARK

Key takeaways/recommendations:

As the pandemic developed and ridership plummeted, many cities specifically targeted nighttime transit services for reductions. Using these services became more difficult, expensive or impossible: yet some of our most important key workers relied upon them.

Transit must be safe, affordable, inclusive and reliable, particularly at night, when issues of security are at the forefront of users’ minds.

- **Night-proofing:** making movement strategies work at night
 - Immediate responses to reduced transit services could include free or low cost bike leasing, fast track micromobility permitting, buddy-system walks to transit, installation of on-street emergency call systems.
 - Consider discounted transit at night when it can stimulate non-essential travel and decongest the peak hours.
 - Ramp up services in line with the reopening of nighttime districts and consider ways transit can help kickstart city centres.
 - Deploy better and more persuasive information to increase the probability of using these travel modes by communicating risk-reduction measures and transit utility.
 - Undertake studies that fully examine nighttime travel requirements of visitors and workers, so movement plans can be updated to reflect the 24-hour city.
 - In Abu Dhabi, UAEHealthcare Link is a free, on-demand microtransit service set up to help key healthcare workers, including at night, whilst in Bogota, Colombia, NUMO Mobility Pilots supported 400 free e-bikes for healthcare workers since March.
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- **Multi modality** - maximise choice and access after dark
 - The pandemic has offered a flavour of how an alternative future for neighbourhoods and city centres could look with fewer vehicles. Cycling and bike sharing are surging in cities worldwide, particularly at night where outside dining and socialising has been an early beneficiary of road closures.
 - Reallocate road space to aid standing, walking, using bicycles and other forms of micromobility in the evening to facilitate responsible socialising.
 - Use car parks for socially distanced events, night markets and dining and integrate with temporary and festive lighting
 - Mayor of London's Streetspace Plan promotes active travel, low traffic neighbourhoods, temporary and permanent sidewalk expansions.
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- **Communicating** movement is open and safe
 - Promote walking and cycling as activities with a particularly low risk of contagion of Covid-19 and health benefits.
 - Target key messages to a segmented population (high risk individuals, night workers, consumers) based on user research.
 - Use onboard wi-fi, public announcements, real-time information boards, transit apps, social media to reinforce transit sanitation measures and passenger requirements.
 - Extend messaging to existing and new wayfinding and navigation systems—both physical and online—create games and engagement tactics that promote the experience of travel.

CONCLUSION

A healthy nighttime economy requires vision and design, planning, ongoing measuring and targeted communication campaigns. It must consider the needs of nightlife culture creators, participants and night workers alike.

By addressing the three key areas of activation, illumination and movement – and accompanying them with ongoing surveys and communication campaigns – cities can not only bolster their night's cultural offering, but increase the safety, desirability and economic viability of the city overall, so that the hours after dark are no longer feared or neglected, but embraced as a competitive edge.

Now is the time for global cities to pick up the examples in this chapter and to adapt them to create their own solutions.

AUTHORS

Chapter lead:



Alistair Turnham is the founder of nighttime city experts MAKE Associates. He has been creating nighttime strategies for over 20 years. He helped develop the Purple



Flag accreditation scheme 'for better cities at night' and is a former Special Adviser on the nighttime economy to the UK Government. He is currently working on a project for the Mayor of London measuring the costs and benefits of 'later opening London'.



Leni Schwendinger is a published, award-winning authority on issues of city lighting, with more than 20 years of worldwide experience creating illuminated environments for infrastructure and public spaces.



Her focus on the darkened hours includes innovative, community involvement methodologies such as "NightSeeing™, Navigate Your Luminous City" programme. She directs the International Nighttime Design Initiative which is establishing an interdisciplinary profession. She is a Visiting Research Fellow at the London School of Economics' Configuring Light and a Design Trust for Public Space Fellow in New York City.

Contributors:



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personal experiences of sexual violence and abuse in public spaces. Since SafeCity started in December 2012, it has become the largest crowd map on the issue in India and abroad.



Carlos F Pardo is a Colombian urbanist who, through his work with international multilateral and bilateral agencies and development banks and NGOs, has supported and led sustainable transport projects in Latin America, Africa and Asia for more than 15 years. He is the founder of Despacio.org and is Senior Advisor to the New Urban Mobility Alliance (NUMO).

Interviewees:



Cornelius Harris is the Label Manager at Underground Resistance and the Vice President at Detroit Berlin Connection. He is a cultural advocate, currently focusing on Detroit culture and its relation to the state, country, and world.



Dimitrios (Jim) Mastoras has served for over twenty-three years and is a Master Police Officer in Arlington County, VA, USA. He developed and implemented strategies to reduce alcohol related harm while establishing trustful relationships with restaurant owners. Using Proactive Alliance as the foundation, he created the first restaurant accreditation program in the U.S. In 2019, the DOJ COPS Office published a toolkit he authored titled, The Arlington Restaurant Initiative - A Nightlife Strategy to Improve Safety and Economic Viability, to be used by departments across the US.



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GNRP team:

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Berlin Clubcommissioner **Lutz Leichsenring** + former Amsterdam night mayor **Mirik Milan** are co-founders of *VibeLab*, which engages, connects, and counsels cross-sector stakeholders to keep cities vibrant and flourishing after dark. VibeLab has consulted on the formation of nightlife offices and commissions in London, Madrid, New York, Tokyo, Vienna, Los Angeles, and more, and continues to facilitate idea exchange and implementation for communities, institutions, government agencies and brands worldwide.

Diana Raiselis is a German Chancellor Fellow with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, researching the role of nightlife in sustainable cities. She is a founding member of the Los Angeles Nightlife Alliance.

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THE NEXT CHAPTERS OF THE GNRP WILL ADDRESS:

- Building nocturnal governance capacity
- Financial support models for creative industry workers, individuals and vulnerable populations
- Support models for independent nightlife businesses
- Gathering data and measuring nightlife's impact