

City of
Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA AFTER DARK

KEY DRIVERS AND TRENDS IN
THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY
2025

Report Brief

The nighttime economy is energizing Philadelphia.

This project has been made possible through the efforts of the following Philadelphia leaders:

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WHAT IS THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY?

NIGHT SHIFT INDUSTRIES

Night shift activities keep the city's economic gears turning 24/7. Behind the scenes, manufacturing and logistics sectors work tirelessly to keep the city's heartbeat around the clock.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Essential services keep the city running through the night, ensuring seamless access to healthcare, transportation, public safety, and utilities.

FOOD, BEVERAGE & HOSPITALITY

The food, beverage and hospitality sector drives the nighttime economy by providing diverse dining experiences, nightlife entertainment, and welcoming places to stay.

SPORTS & RECREATION

Sports and recreation activities energize the nighttime economy with evening games, fitness classes, and recreational activities.

ARTS & CULTURE

The arts and culture sector thrives at night, offering vibrant performances, exhibitions, and events that enrich the city's cultural landscape.

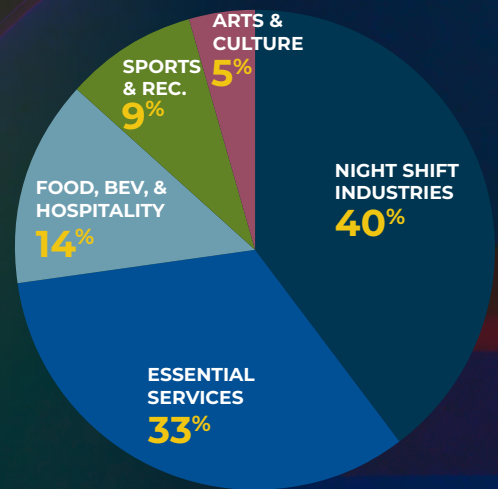
13% OF JOBS

in Philadelphia are part of the nighttime economy.

The nighttime economy is an increasingly important driver of urban growth, cultural vibrancy, and economic resilience. As cities across the world adapt to changing economic conditions, shifts in work patterns, and the demands of a 24-hour society, the focus on industries that operate beyond traditional business hours has become essential.

Philadelphia's nighttime economy is a dynamic and multifaceted ecosystem composed of industries and services that operate between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., contributing significantly to the city's economic prosperity. While much of the public associates nighttime economic activity primarily with nightlife

SIZE OF THE PHILADELPHIA NIGHTTIME ECONOMY BY SECTOR, 2023



The nighttime economy wraps in nearly all sectors that make Philadelphia pulse with energy.

and entertainment, the ecosystem extends far beyond these industries to include essential services, hospitality, arts and culture, and other sectors where night shifts are integral to operations. Together, these industries keep Philadelphia functioning around the clock, creating jobs, generating revenue, and enriching the city's cultural and social fabric.

Philadelphia's embrace of its nighttime economy reflects a broader national and global trend. Cities around the world are increasingly recognizing the value of a robust nighttime economy as a key to economic diversification and cultural expansion.

WHAT HAPPENS IN PHILLY AT NIGHT?

ECONOMIC FOOTPRINT OF NIGHTTIME ECONOMY SECTORS*

ARTS & CULTURE

BY THE NUMBERS

Performing Arts Companies Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports & Similar Events Motion Picture Theaters Independent Artists, Writers & Performers	280 ESTABLISHMENTS	5,600 JOBS	\$0.2B WAGES	\$0.7B OUTPUT
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FOOD, BEVERAGE & HOSPITALITY

BY THE NUMBERS

Hotels (except Casino Hotels) & Motels Caterers Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages) Full-Service Restaurants	3,920 ESTABLISHMENTS	25,700 JOBS	\$0.8B WAGES	\$2.2B OUTPUT
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SPORTS & RECREATION

BY THE NUMBERS

Spectator Sports Gambling Industries Fitness & Recreational Sports Centers	200 ESTABLISHMENTS	3,600 JOBS	\$0.9B WAGES	\$1.4B OUTPUT
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ESSENTIAL SERVICES

BY THE NUMBERS

Waste Collection Supermarkets & Other Grocery Retailers (except Convenience Retailers) General Medical & Surgical Hospitals Police Protection	1,360 ESTABLISHMENTS	25,900 JOBS	\$1.8B WAGES	\$5.2B OUTPUT
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NIGHT SHIFT INDUSTRIES

BY THE NUMBERS

Construction Transportation & Warehousing Colleges, Universities & Professional Schools Manufacturing	5,250 ESTABLISHMENTS	33,600 JOBS	\$1.9B WAGES	\$6.2B OUTPUT
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*This list provides examples of sectors included in the analysis. The full list of industries is on page 11.

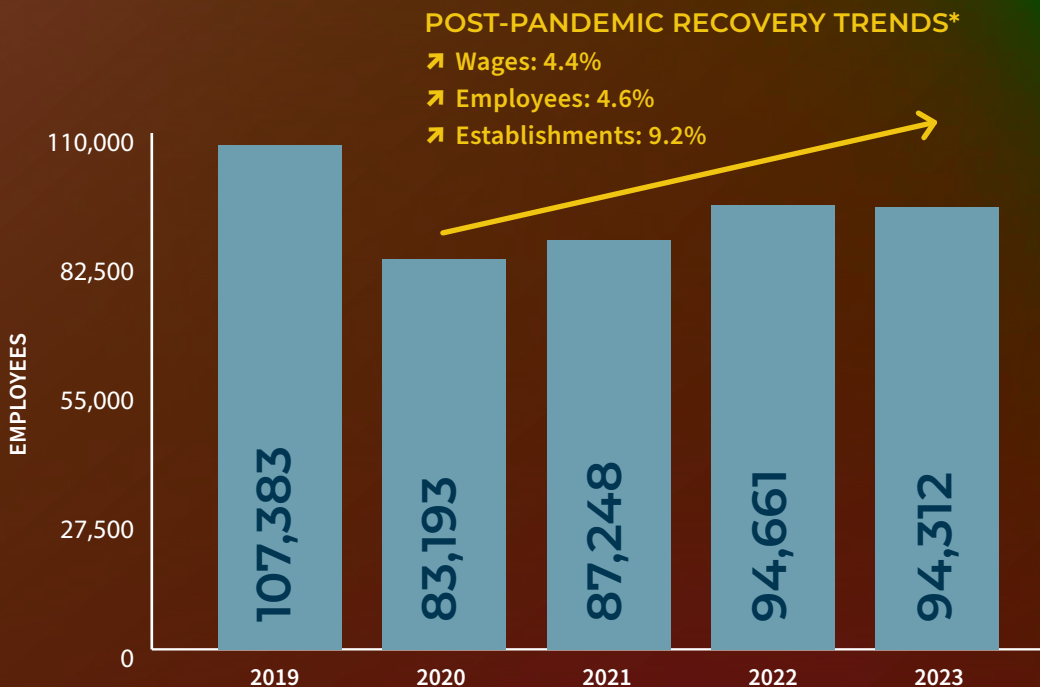
HISTORIC SNAPSHOT OF THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

As was the case for the overall economy, Philadelphia’s nighttime economy was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Employment and wages within nighttime industries saw a steep decline from 2019 to 2020, a direct result of public health mandates and widespread layoffs.

The recovery of the nighttime industry over the past four years has demonstrated the city’s overall, yet sometimes inconsistent, economic resilience. Establishments operating during nighttime hours, for example, has grown significantly in the aftermath of the pandemic, boasting annual growth of 9 percent since 2020. Meanwhile, the overall number of businesses in Philadelphia declined slightly during the same period.

Wages and total workers have also risen consistently since 2020 within Philadelphia’s nighttime economy, though the different industries have recovered at different speeds. In 2022, overall wages outpaced employment, which can be partly attributed to The Great Resignation and tightness in the labor market that led to significant demand for labor and competition in wages. Though employment within most sectors of the nighttime economy has yet to reach 2019 levels.

TRENDS IN NIGHTTIME JOBS AND WAGE



*Compound Annual Growth Rate

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

WHAT IS ECONOMIC IMPACT?

Philadelphia’s nighttime economy isn’t just a local powerhouse at night, it is a dynamic engine of economic vitality that reverberates throughout the day—and the region.

The vibrant mix of industries that come alive after dark generates impressive output, creates thousands of jobs, and drives substantial wage growth, but the story doesn’t end there. The ripple effects of the city’s nighttime scene extend beyond its boundaries and into the daytime, leading to job creation and wage increases in other sectors. From urban centers to rural areas, the economic benefits of Philadelphia’s nighttime economy are felt everywhere, showcasing its crucial role in the broader economic landscape.

Direct Impact

The jobs and economic output generated by nighttime economy subsectors.

Indirect Impact

The jobs and economic output generated by local businesses that supply goods and services to the nighttime economy subsectors.

Induced Impact

The jobs and economic output generated as a result of nighttime economy employees spending their wages locally.

Fiscal Impact

The tax revenues generated for Philadelphia and Pennsylvania from income, sales, and businesses taxes, as well as additional taxes.

TYPES OF ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM PHILLY’S NIGHTTIME ECONOMY



THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY IN PHILADELPHIA IS A BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY

Based on 2023 data, the nighttime economy in the City of Philadelphia, including its direct, indirect, and induced impacts, produces approximately \$26.1 billion in total annual output. The economic benefits of Philadelphia’s nighttime economy, however, are not confined to the city. Thanks to the “spillover effects” that lead to spending beyond the city’s borders, Philadelphia’s nighttime economy has a total economic impact of \$30.4 billion annually across Pennsylvania. This total economic impact is generated from the nighttime economy’s multiple sectors; the largest share is attributable to Night Shift Industries, which provides nearly 40 percent of total impact.

TOTAL NIGHTTIME ECONOMIC OUTPUT BY SECTOR

Arts & Culture

Philadelphia \$1.1B
Pennsylvania \$1.2B

Food, Beverage & Hospitality

Philadelphia \$3.7B
Pennsylvania \$4.2B

Sports & Recreation

Philadelphia \$2.7B
Pennsylvania \$3.1B

Essential Services

Philadelphia \$8.3B
Pennsylvania \$9.8B

Night Shift Industries

Philadelphia \$10.4B
Pennsylvania \$12.2B



Total Output

Philadelphia \$26.1B
Pennsylvania \$30.4B

Total Employment

Philadelphia 132K
Pennsylvania 151K

Wages

Philadelphia \$9.0B
Pennsylvania \$10.2B

SUPPORTING CITY SERVICES THROUGH SIGNIFICANT TAX REVENUE

The nighttime economy generates approximately **\$358 million annually in tax revenue for the City of Philadelphia**, with the largest portion coming from wage taxes totaling \$247 million. Philadelphia nighttime industries contribute approximately \$570 million in annual tax revenue for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

	City of Philadelphia	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Wage/Income (\$M)	\$247.2	\$214.4
Sales (\$M)	\$40.0	\$255.2
Business (\$M)	\$71.6	\$100.6
Total Tax Impact (\$M)	\$358.8	\$570.2

WHEN AND WHERE PHILADELPHIA THRIVES AFTER DARK

PHILADELPHIA'S NIGHTLIFE IS NOT A MONOLITH

Philadelphia's nightlife changes based on time and location. Examining mobile data from Placer.ai for 26 commercial corridors across Philadelphia, patterns reveal core characteristics regarding time and place of the city's nighttime economy.

October Leads with 6 Million Visitors

Cooler temperatures, cultural celebrations, and sporting events (MLB playoffs, start of NFL, NHL, and NBA seasons) all contribute to October's status as the busiest month last year for nighttime activity.

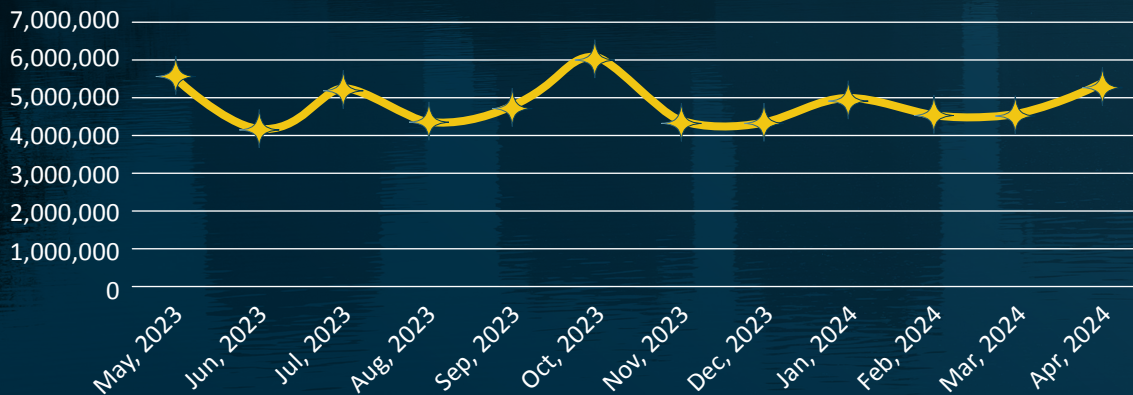
Winter and Early Spring Activity Remains Stable

From November through March, activity stabilizes, with a slight increase in January due to post-holiday events and renewed engagement.

Spring Marks Growth

Warmer weather in April and May drives an upward trend, making this a key period for outdoor events and increased nighttime participation.

VISITATION TRENDS BY MONTH



Placer.ai data provided by Center City District

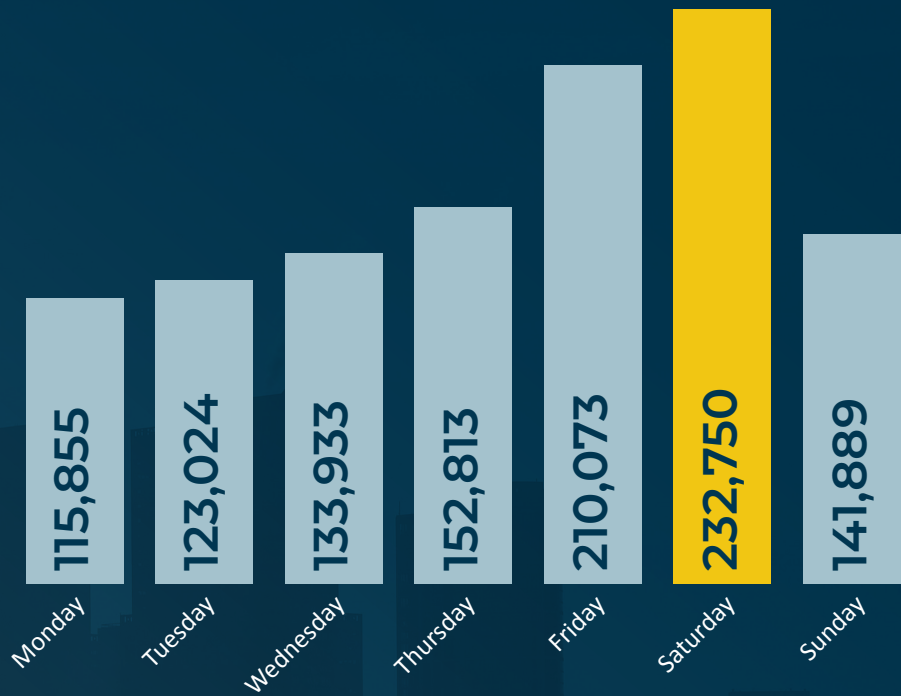
WEEKEND VISITATION DRIVES NIGHTTIME ACTIVITY

WEEKEND NIGHTS

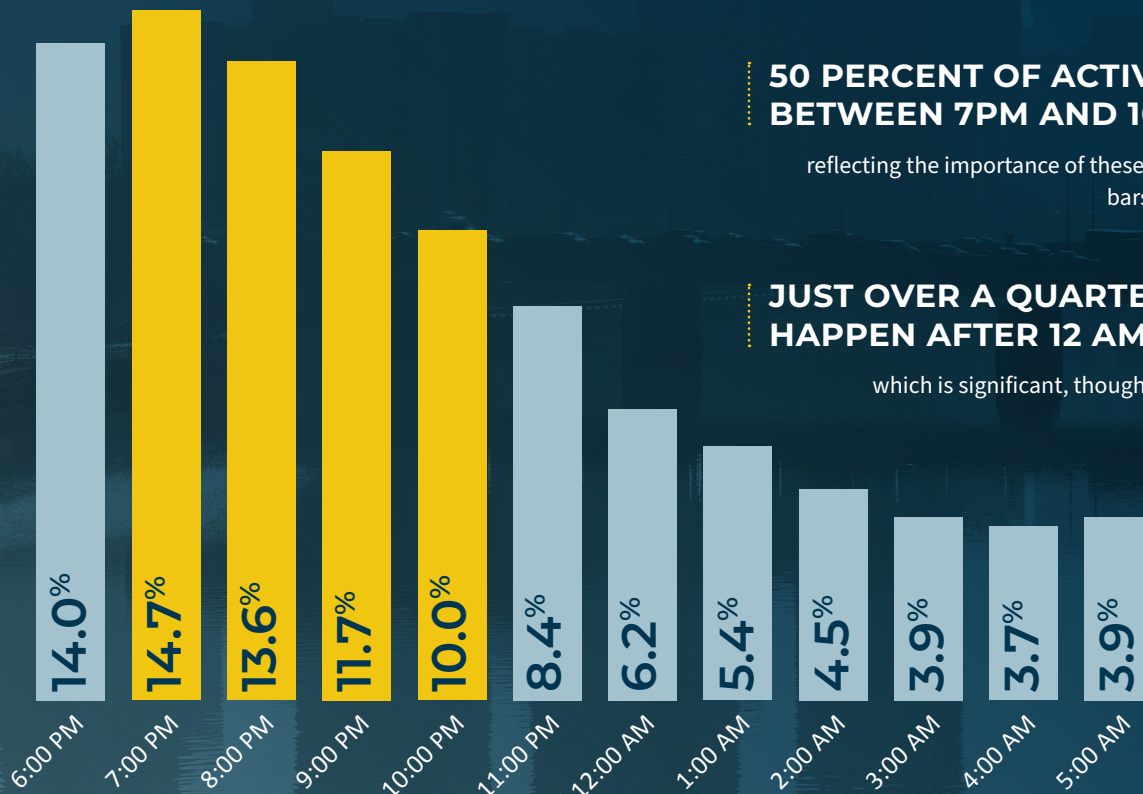
(Friday and Saturday) dominate visitation, accounting for nearly **40 percent of weekly visits.**

SATURDAY

sees double the visitors compared to Monday, driven by nightlife attraction, dining, and events.



NIGHTTIME ACTIVITY CENTRALIZES IN THE EVENING



50 PERCENT OF ACTIVITY OCCURS BETWEEN 7PM AND 10PM

reflecting the importance of these hours for restaurants, bars, and cultural venues.

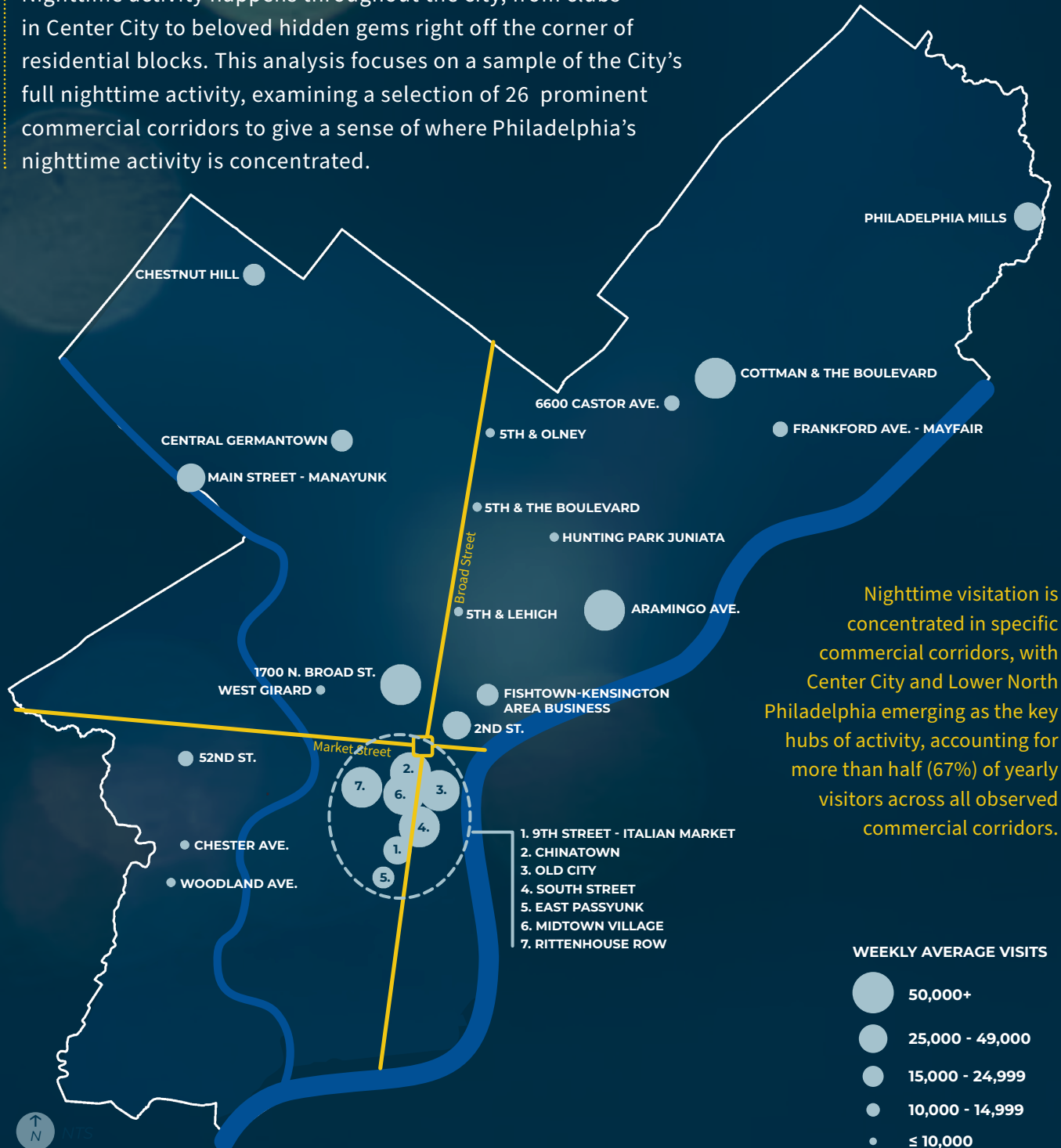
JUST OVER A QUARTER OF VISITS HAPPEN AFTER 12 AM

which is significant, though comparably less than the evening hours.

Placer.ai data provided by Center City District

THE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF NIGHTTIME VISITS

Nighttime activity happens throughout the city, from clubs in Center City to beloved hidden gems right off the corner of residential blocks. This analysis focuses on a sample of the City's full nighttime activity, examining a selection of 26 prominent commercial corridors to give a sense of where Philadelphia's nighttime activity is concentrated.



Nighttime visitation is concentrated in specific commercial corridors, with Center City and Lower North Philadelphia emerging as the key hubs of activity, accounting for more than half (67%) of yearly visitors across all observed commercial corridors.

Placer.ai data provided by Center City District

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING PHILADELPHIA'S NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

Philadelphia's nighttime economy presents significant opportunities for growth, supported by data-driven insights and lessons from global best practices. To ensure sustainable, equitable, and safe development, these five strategic recommendations are proposed.



EXPLORE EXTENDED NIGHTLIFE OPERATING HOURS IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMONWEALTH

A citywide program for extended nightlife hours could generate **\$1.5–2 million in additional annual liquor tax revenue** while fostering cultural and economic growth. The program, which would require coordination with state-level policymakers, should prioritize safety, geographic balance, and robust monitoring to maximize benefits while mitigating risks.



EXPLORE ENHANCED NIGHTTIME WORKER RESOURCES

Dedicated resources may be critical for managing the growth and programs of Philadelphia's nighttime economy. The City should explore how expanded staffing focused on the nighttime economy could support business **assistance**, **safety coordination**, and **policy implementation**.



COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY PROGRAM

Continued advancement of safety measures, such as the **Liberty Bell Safe Certification Program** and improved street lighting, will protect patrons and promote confidence in nightlife venues, supporting both visitors and businesses.



TARGETED BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Identifying growth corridors and tailoring support to specific business needs will expand Philadelphia's nighttime economy. **Simplified processes and technical assistance programs** will help businesses adapt and thrive, ensuring equitable growth citywide.



DATA-DRIVEN GOVERNANCE

A **standardized data framework** will enable the city to monitor foot traffic, economic contributions, and safety trends. **Regular reporting and evaluation** of pilot programs will ensure resources are effectively allocated and strategies remain adaptable.

COMPLETE LIST OF INDUSTRIES INCLUDED IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

The economic impact analysis of this study examines the nighttime activity occurring in Philadelphia for the following industries, which are standardized and defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). To assess the share of each industry’s activity that occurs at night, analysis of commuter data, time use surveys, and industry sources was conducted. For additional methodological details and the portions of economic activity attributed to each industry, please see the complete companion report.

Arts & Culture	Essential Services	Food, Bev, & Hospitality	Night Shift Industries	Sports & Recreation
Performing Arts Companies Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports Art Dealers Motion Picture Theaters Independent Artists, Writers & Performers	Electric Power Generation, Transmission & Distribution Urban Transit Systems Other Transit & Ground Passenger Transportation Waste Collection Community Food & Housing Other Relief Services Supermarkets & Other Grocery Retailers Limousine Service Convenience Retailers Interurban & Rural Bus Transportation Taxi & Ridesharing Charter Bus Industry Ambulance Services General Medical & Surgical Hospitals Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Hospitals Police Protection Fire Protection	Hotels & Motels Food Service Contractors Caterers Mobile Food Services Drinking Places Full-Service Restaurants Limited-Service Restaurants Cafeterias, Grill Buffets & Buffets Snack & Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	Construction General Freight Trucking Specialized Freight Trucking Investigation & Security Services Technical & Trade Schools Other Schools & Instruction Physical, Engineering & Life Sciences Professional & Management Commercial Banking Janitorial Services Junior Colleges Colleges, Universities & Professional Schools Educational Support Services Manufacturing Transportation & Warehousing	Spectator Sports Amusement Parks & Arcades Gambling Industries Fitness & Recreational Bowling Centers

PHILADELPHIA AFTER DARK



Department of
Commerce

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

This report was commissioned by the City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce is the economic catalyst for the City of Philadelphia. Commerce helps businesses thrive and increases economic opportunity for all. We envision Philadelphia with a globally competitive economy that benefits all people who live, work, and do business in our city.

Our strategic priorities include:

- Attract and retain businesses through customized support and incentives.
- Build workforce development strategies that connect talent to growth industries and to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.
- Leverage partnerships and research to drive policy, strategy and ease of doing business.

Find out more: phila.gov/commerce

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This report was produced by Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI). ESI provides businesses and public policy makers with consulting and thought leadership services in urban economics, real estate, transportation, public infrastructure, economic development, public policy and finance, strategic planning, as well as expert witness services for litigation support.

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KEY DRIVERS AND TRENDS IN THE NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

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