

HOSPITALITY
ZONE



ASSESSMENT



Music & Entertainment



Community Policing



Security, Service, Safety



Multi-use Sidewalk



Late-night Transport



Quality of Life



Rock Island, IL Leadership Summit

Managing an Emerging Nighttime Economy

Roundtable Discussion Summary Report

HOSPITALITY ROUNDTABLE
SAFETY ROUNDTABLE
DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE
COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE
SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2007

LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
OCTOBER 17, 2007

Final Report – November 28, 2007

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HOSPITALITY
ZONE



ASSESSMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hospitality Zone Assessment Goals

The Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) conducted a Hospitality Zone Assessment (HZA) to determine trends and emerging issues relating to Rock Island's nighttime economy. There were five goals to be achieved:

- **Goal 1:** Engage the broadest range of perspectives in a process to assess the evolution of Rock Island's nighttime economy
- **Goal 2:** Define the priorities for creating the most accessible opportunities for dining and entertainment
- **Goal 3:** Facilitate the role of government as a resource and partner in business development and compliance
- **Goal 4:** Assist people before and after they open a hospitality business to understand their legal responsibilities and community standards in providing food, licensed beverages and entertainment, and nurture a trained and professional workforce committed to responsible hospitality practices
- **Goal 5:** Establish a balanced and on-going forum to maintain standards and resolve conflicts

The Process

A leadership team was organized as a steering committee to identify and recruit individuals to participate in The Hospitality Zone Assessment.

On July 17th, 2007, Allison Harnden, vice president, Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) visited Rock Island and conducted interviews with community stakeholders, a tour of the hospitality zone and presented an overview of the program to the steering committee and other key stakeholders.

On September 12 & 13, 2007 four focus group Roundtables were held with representatives from hospitality, safety, development and community perspectives (see Appendix for attendees). More than eighty participants were divided to have representation in each perspective Roundtable. Following a brief overview, participants were asked to focus on the six trends and six core elements associated with safe and vibrant hospitality zones, as identified by RHI's research:

- **Music and Entertainment:** Nurturing talent and venues for multi-generational entertainment.
- **Community Policing:** Adapting regulatory compliance and policing for an active nighttime economy.
- **Security, Service and Safety:** Internal policies and procedures in dining and entertainment businesses.
- **Multi-use Sidewalks:** Managing the sidewalks as a venue with more pedestrian activity and outdoor seating.
- **Late-night Integrated Transportation:** Assuring coordinated late-night transportation options.
- **Quality of Life:** Managing impacts from sound, trash, traffic, and disorderly conduct.

The comments and recommendations from the discussion were organized into each of the "Six Elements for a Successful Hospitality Zone." The information is divided into three sub-sections based on their presentation of current trends and issues, the long range vision for Rock Island, and short-term steps to achieving the vision. This is presented in the first section of the report.

Additional information generated during the discussions is presented in the appendix, including Resources, Perceptions and the Priorities determined by each of the groups.

The third RHI facilitated visit took place on October 17, 2007 for the Hospitality Leadership Summit. Five representatives were selected from each of the four Roundtables to review the draft report and discuss and make recommendations to prioritize the action steps in the report and finalize an implementation plan. At the top of the Leadership Summit, discussion centered on why the need for this focus on the intersection of Hospitality, Safety and Development now. Replies included:

1. "Because the competition is here and our businesses are dying."
2. "We need to build an edge and keep it."
3. "To restore better communication/collaboration we had in better times."
4. "To develop the amenities that residents and companies look for when relocating"
5. "To fill the perceived lack of leadership"

Summary

Rock Island has over a century-long history as a hospitable river city. Though the definition of hospitable has ranged over the years, a rowdy reputation lingers and with it a love/hate relationship by the region's residents and visitors. On the one hand, Rock Island is valued for its diversity and bohemian creativity. On the other, many perceive downtown, where much of this activity is located, as unsafe.

In the recent past, downtown retail was lost to suburban locations and shopping centers and has not returned on the scale it once had. Like so many American cities, the local economy has declined due to loss in manufacturing jobs. In the early 1990's downtown began to attract a younger clientele with the growth of late-night hospitality demand. As that customer base has grown, the behaviors of some of that clientele have deterred growth in other user markets, including young professionals, downtown workers and college students, many of whom vacate the District by midnight before the influx of raucous revelers. Not only is the customer base narrow, so is the window of time in which they're served.

Due to close proximity to Iowa and their required 2:00am bar closing, Rock Island is just a bridge away and the last stop for the night, leaving this Quad City with the dregs of bad behavior and potential DUI's. The heavy presence of well-needed DUI enforcement seems not to deter this type of patron, but does deter ones with good behavior, further entrenching this narrowly defined user group.

Hospitality businesses, the community and enforcement agencies would all benefit from a broader consumer group with longer and more consistent hours of service. But to accomplish this goal, first negative perceptions and gaps in addressing safety through policy development and enforcement strategies must be accomplished.

However, this goal requires collaboration, restoration of trust and improvement in communication that has become compartmentalized in recent years. Roundtable participants expressed desires to restore the spirit of collaboration. One well-needed way to do it is to define a vision for Rock Island's social opportunities for all ages, lifestyles and cultures and set community standards for acceptable and unacceptable behaviors by patrons and businesses. Identified gaps in systems such as Late-Night Transportation and no "teeth" for police to address loitering, perceived gang activity, BYOB, cruising and disorderly conduct need to be filled before closing time impacts can effectively be addressed.

Rock Island has long been the leader in innovation and creativity amongst the Quad Cities. Among the assets to Rock Island's hospitality community is the longevity of many of its venues, the variety of types of social and entertainment opportunities and well-loved special events and festivals.

Many efforts are in place to transition from a manufacturing economy to one that attracts residents and workers who support existing and draw more retail businesses. With 2009 producing the largest graduating high school class in U.S. history and Americans' expectations for later social options, greater numbers of young adults will inhabit cities like Rock Island nationwide. Now is the time to address current and future issues in creating safe and vibrant places for Rock Islanders to socialize.

Action Steps

An analysis of the information presented in the 6 Core Elements section as well as additional feedback and discussions was organized and consolidated into five action items. These are:

1. Establish Effective Communication Forums
2. Improve Vibrancy and Negative Perception of Safety
3. Define Community Standards
4. Address Late Night Transportation
5. Manage Closing Time Impacts

Next Steps

The Leadership Summit opened a hearty discussion as to the leadership, role and future of this task force. Who should serve as coordinator/facilitator? Who should this group report to? Will this working group sustain beyond the six month implementation period? If yes, what is their role beyond that point?

It was proposed that Alan Carmen and Marsha Walker serve as interim coordinators/facilitators, but ultimately the task force be led by a steering committee comprised of one person each from Hospitality, Safety, Development and Community. Ms. Harnden also suggested that more insights might be brought home from RHI's Networking Conference.

The Leadership Summit stepped participants through the process of fleshing out an implementation plan for the five action steps. With limited timeframe, the group still succeeded in developing fairly comprehensive strategies for action steps #2 and #4 and a nearly complete strategy for the Smoking Ban Forum portion of action step #1. In order to finalize the action plan, the Summit participants will want to reconvene to complete task lists, task forces and timelines for the remaining items, then prioritize all into a six month deadline.

Note: In experience working with cities nationwide, RHI has found that for the process to be effective, it is important that the implementation strategy be planned by the group and not any one entity or person.

What follows is a summary of comments and observations made by individuals participating in the interviews, hospitality zone tours, Orientation, Roundtables and Summit, as well as supplemental materials provided by Rock Island's Hospitality Zone Assessment Steering Committee. This summary is based upon preliminary discussions, which have not yet been verified, and does not reflect the sponsors of this project.

ACTION STEPS

The following are the Action Steps recommended and supported by the remainder of the document.

1 Establish Effective Communication Forums

Businesses, residents and regulatory agencies are confused about roles, jurisdiction and boundaries of the region’s many agencies, including The District, Downtown, Security Area, DARI and Renaissance Rock Island, as well as some rules and regulations, particularly extended hours license requirements and smoking ban implementation. There is a need to create a more open and informative communication system between hospitality and government, as well as improve communication and coordination amongst hospitality businesses. Roundtable participants indicated that communication, trust and collaboration once existed at a better standard than currently exists today, and that restoration of communication and trust between the City, community and commercial interests is desired.

a. Hold a Forum to Clarify Who, What and How of Smoking Ban Implementation

Summit Discussion: Action Item 1a. was determined the top priority due to implementation date of Jan 1st, lack of clarity by all parties and rumored stay on ban, which if proves to not be true, could further confuse patrons.

The group agreed to Renaissance Rock Island taking the lead in coordinating this action step, culminating in a forum to be held between 2-4pm on Nov 1st or as much in advance of January 1 as possible.

Smoking Ban Task Force: Alan Carmen, Mike King, Jeff Rusk, City Attorney

The following resources were identified and tasks assigned to the following people:

<u>Tasks</u>	<u>Resources</u>	<u>Assigned Person(s)</u>
Convene City people first	Police, Public Works, City Attorney, Health Department	Alan Carmen
Distribute existing information	Website, Information Mike King has, FAQ Alan received	RRI, Mike King
Get info from State	Attorney General	City Attorney
Get info from industry	IL licensed Beverage Association	Jeff Rusk
Venue owners meet to: 1)create game plan; 2) rally those who want to oppose ban; 3) help to do so efficiently	ILBA, IL Restaurant Association	Mike King
Arrange invitational forum ASAP to get clarification on how ban will be implemented	Businesses, Regulatory Agencies, ILBA, police, State Attorney General, Health Dept, City Attorney, Public Works, Keep Rock Island Beautiful, Augustana Dean of Students, Cities of Moline and East Moline	RRI
Invite other IL cities to participate to strengthen initiative	Moline, East Moline	?

Priority #1

Market ban as a positive – market to lowa non-smokers		RRI
Widespread notification to inform media and general public	Media, Augustana Dean of Students Food & Beverage Distributors	RRI

b. Implement Hospitality Business Roundtables

- Convene licensees with regulators and experts to maintain open communication and to provide quarterly regulatory updates and informative sessions on hot issue topics such as smoking ban implementation, procedures for opening sidewalk cafés, etc.
- Convene licensees with agencies to clarify boundaries, roles and responsibilities of The District, Downtown, Downtown Security Area, TIF Zone, Renaissance Rock Island and DARI.

Milestones:

- Schedule of roundtables dates and topics
- Roundtable on Smoking ban prior to January 1
- A document outlining agencies and glossary of terms

c. Establish a Hospitality/Entertainment Business Ombuds Role

- Ombudsperson will be available to act as a liaison between the community, City and hospitality businesses to assist in resolving conflicts, clarifying inconsistencies in procedures, or intervention with dining, entertainment or event businesses impacting public safety or quality of life.

Milestones:

- Job Description
- Identification of appropriate sponsoring agency and funding source
- Ombuds person assigned

d. Reconvene Hospitality Group

- Identify subjects and issues that hospitality sector would want to be addressed by Ombuds and at Hospitality Business Roundtables.
- Discuss and agree upon Community Standards for patrons, the City and hospitality businesses (See action step #3).

Milestones:

- List of topics for which owners would be motivated to attend roundtables

2 Improve Vibrancy and Negative Perception of Safety

Downtown as a positive destination is being inhibited by various forces. Perhaps due to the influence of the media, miscommunication, or lack of awareness of improvements and existing amenities, there is a prevalent pattern of identifying negatives and highlighting risk and dangers. Additionally, lack of people on the street contributes to negative perceptions of safety. Filling in time gaps of vitality can help, as can expanding the customer base to broader age and cultural demographics. Shifting from a negative orientation and highlighting the assets of the nighttime economy could create incentives for an investment in positive change and create new talking points for enhancing the positives about Downtown.

Summit Discussion: The City, either through its strategic plan or other resources, is addressing some identified gaps such as lighting and disseminating knowledge about the use of Plaza for events. Awareness of these efforts helped the group prioritize the remaining concerns. Filling time gaps, surveying people about negative safety perceptions to identify hotspots and an ongoing pr campaign that frames statistics in positives were identified as concurrent priorities for this action step.

Task Force: Shea Doyle, Jennifer Fowler, Jeff Guthrie, Carolyn Krueger, Catherine Rodgers-Ingles

a. Report Compliance

While it is important to report violations it may be as important to highlight compliance.

Organize a public relations campaign involving press releases, news stories and public presentation using positive framing e.g. when providing information to media on compliance checks, report the number of businesses in compliance as well as those with violations.

- Each task force member provide one positive story opportunity to Jennifer to provide a variety of story perspectives
- Place stories in wide variety of publications, extending to other Quad Cities and beyond.
- Reframe current statistics to positives

Milestones:

- Strategy for campaign
- Placement of stories

- b. Promote existing hospitality businesses using Quad Cities Convention and Visitors website which has a wide reach and by revitalizing RRI webpage.

Milestones:

- Encourage hospitality businesses to post and link

- c. Work to bridge time gaps in vitality after work (5-6pm) and between dinner and start of entertainment (8-10pm) to attract and retain customers.

Milestones:

- Utilize arts commission to engage artists/entertainers

- d. Create connectivity in vitality with lighting in closed-for-the-night retail, art in vacant storefronts, street performers and food vendors in fine weather months and entertainment in storefronts during the winter months. To support The District's designation as an Arts and Entertainment District and to build vitality, the group proposes to:

- Engage Augustana's Art Club and Music Department, as well as Ballet Quad Cities located near The District to provide entertainment during these hours.
- Determine location for street entertainment or inside independent businesses.
- Review vending ordinances
- Explore new class or type of street vending permit or license, perhaps with a 6 month term.
- Schedule and rotate performances, sale of art/jewelry
- Determine how the street permit will be enforced.

- e. Roundtable participants requested a downtown newsletter to become more aware of hospitality business offerings and to stay current with events and entertainment.

Milestones:

- Street performances/art vendors fill in gaps by spring

- f. **Jennifer Fowler and Shea Doyle will take the lead** on facilitating a survey of The District and Downtown to identify “dead zones,” areas that might inhibit desirable nighttime pedestrian traffic. Alleys and the parking garage were identified by some participants as one such “scary” spot, despite parked police cars. Recognizing that perceptions of safety can be influenced by gender, generation and culture, it is important that the focus group be diverse.
- Organize a survey team representative of all class strata of Quad City residents, students and visitors and walk the areas at night during primary activity.
 - Use hotel guest reports and survey families moving into the area about their perceptions.
 - Prioritize areas with the most potential improvement with the least resources required.
 - Supplement recommendations made in Downtown Strategy Report and provide to appropriate organizations – Renaissance Rock Island, Public Works, property owners, businesses, etc.

Milestones:

- Produce newsletter
- Distribute to courts, government / private sector workers and students
- Map of downtown and district with dead zones identified
- Recommendations for improvement and timeline

Resources: Revenues to address lighting through Strategic Plan should be available in April 2008. Portion of parking meter revenues, 1% food and beverage tax and BID assessment are other potential resources to explore to apply towards these actions. Stakeholders should include: City Clerk, Mayor, The District, City Council, State Licensing, Arts Alley, Quad City Arts, Augustana Art Club, Dance Organization, Augustana Music Department

3 Define Community Standards

Hospitality, Safety, Development and Community stakeholders all have a role to play in creating community standards that can set the tone for what is desired in making a hospitable community with safe and vibrant social opportunities. They can also draw a firm line in what is and is not acceptable from patrons, business owners, the City and the community. Further, the collaborative effort of this project can improve relations amongst stakeholders. Complaints and disagreements come from unmet, and usually un-communicated, expectations. Clearly defining and documenting expectations of all perspectives is the first step. Reviewing ordinances, unwanted behaviors and violation types can point the way to areas that have gaps in education, policy or enforcement.

Summit Discussion: It was noted through discussion that there are three stages to address: Community desires (standards), rules (ordinances and other means) and enforcement. Discussion only touched on the surface. It was agreed that this action step is a big undertaking, but there was consensus on the need and desire to take it on. Though operating on a very small scale, gang activity was noted to exist contributing to perceptions that the Plaza is unsafe. There was a desire to address this to eradicate the current impact, but more importantly to prohibit it from reaching a larger scale and as a preventative measure for the future.

Task Force: Alan Carmen, Jeff Guthrie, Terry Tilka, Jeff VenHuizen,

- a. Brainstorm desired practices, behaviors or standards for hospitality management, customer behavior, development design standards, policing strategies, downtown living expectations for residents, etc. Each group (hospitality, safety, development and community) can meet separately and draft their own, then convene to discuss and gain consensus.

Milestones:

- A vision for creating safe and vibrant places for sociability

- b. Using this information and RHI templates, draft a document that outlines the desired outcomes and what the City, Hospitality and Community is willing to do to support them.

Milestones:

- A community covenant

- c. Analyze unwanted behaviors by patrons and businesses and assure there are means to address them.

- No public intoxication ordinance, but there is open container ordinance
- Public urination is under disorderly conduct
- There is a need to address drinking in parking lots
- Public urination and people who are not customers using businesses' bathrooms points to need for public restrooms or portable sanitation.

Milestones:

- List of gaps in addressing issues

- d. Review top violations related to the nighttime economy.

- e. Assess patron, business, City and Community's role in enabling unwanted behaviors and violations.

- There are known days of slower/higher activity e.g. Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Police staffing could be reduced on known slow days and increased on known busier days with no budget repercussions.

Milestones:

- Control points for patron, business and City

- f. Review ordinances for gaps/loopholes that may be preventing enforcement or enabling patron unruliness and nuisance business activity.

- Responding to gang issue needs to be explored.

Milestones:

- Updated ordinances that address contemporary issues and needs

- g. Research what other communities are doing
- Unruly patrons
 - Loitering
 - Hollywood gang injunction

Resources: (Stakeholders: All perspectives, but specifically need to have City Attorney and Gang Expert)

4 Address Late Night Transportation

Quad City safety agencies do a great job of collaborating on DUI enforcement. However, their presence is a deterrent to attracting broader age groups and well-behaved customers. A serious and large gap in Rock Island creating a safe social environment is the lack of late-night transportation alternative to driving one's own vehicle. All four groups identified this as a high priority to address.

Summit Discussion: This action step was designated high priority due to the range of its impact. Unanimously, DUIs were determined the greatest impact to be prevented with improved late night transportation. However, it was also noted that such an effort might also reduce public safety and quality of life impacts such as house parties, as well as making clearing streets at closing easier for police if a cab stand were designated. Economic impacts are of concern, too. Some believe the downturn in sales and tax dollars are due to patron fears of DUI enforcement. Late night transportation can be positioned as a bonus amenity to attract new residents.

Priority #2

Task force: Jeff Nelson, Amy Mynaugh, Terrence Tilka, Paul Rumler and Mike King

The following tasks were augmented:

- a. Convene public transportation, taxi and limo companies, Dial-a-Ride, College / University and City to discuss and plan how to expand existing options and create new opportunities to provide safe rides home, including increased number of cabs.
- b. Research Boulder, CO's HOP and Athens, GA's Watchdog's as college community models for town/gown collaboration.
- c. Create taxi stand outside plaza in well-lit location. Make provision for future maximized use and assign security to maintain order and organize shared rides.
- d. Convene focus group of students and young professionals to inform implementation, safety and marketing needs.

Milestone:

- Late Night Transportation Plan
- Branding and Marketing Plan
- Taxi stand location identified and approved by required City agencies
- Trial Late night Bus Route between college and downtown

Resources: MetroLINK has late night ride template. Student id's already include a bus pass. Businesses can support by promoting and, if desired, by purchasing passes for patrons. Other stakeholders and resources: MetroLINK, Taxi Companies, Student organizations, Young Professionals Network, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, University President, Downtown Davenport, Public Works (or whoever would designate taxi stand), downtown late night businesses.

5 Manage Closing Time Impacts

With the majority of Rock Island's license owners holding extended hours licenses, the City attracts patrons at the end of their evening of entertainment from Moline and Iowa, whose closing time is an hour earlier. Some want to continue the party in parking lots, on the street, in their cars and in downtown residences, leading to high risk and high impact behaviors. Rock Island has years of experience producing safe special events that draw large crowds and require management of thousands of people. A similar approach can be applied to managing Thursday through Saturday nights.

- a. Convene all agencies involved in all aspects of planning for management of special events (EMS, fire, police, trash, traffic control, sanitation, risk management) and determine how an event approach can be modified for weekend management.
- b. Require parking lot owners (city too) to provide security presence.
- c. Use Hollywood gang injunction model to address perceived gang activity on Wednesday nights and potential gang activity in the future.
- d. Research anti-cruising ordinances in other cities as means to clear District and downtown at closing time.
- e. Assess what is needed to enforce ordinances and other controls on patron behavior developed in action step 3 and who besides police could perform this role (e.g. ticketing unruly patrons - use Minneapolis's example)
- f. Consider impact based security requirements that require greater controls by the owner in exchange for the privilege of potentially greater impacts that come with larger occupancies, higher beverage to food sales ratios and shorter and later hours.

Milestone

- Hospitality Zone management plan
- Strategy for eliminating undesirable customers
- Research on ordinances
- Staffing (numbers and types) requirements
- Recommendations from hospitality, safety and development

SIX ELEMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOSPITALITY ZONE

There are six core elements generally associated with a safe and vibrant hospitality zone. Overall there was a great deal of consensus about issues, resources and gaps from the four RHI facilitated roundtable discussions.



Music and Entertainment

Singles, Mingles (Young adult friends and couples), Families and Jingles (Retirees and business travelers with disposable income) demand lifestyle appropriate venues, as well as a variety of music, entertainment, food and beverage choices.

Music and Entertainment in Rock Island

Current Status

- **Regional Competition:** The combined population of the four metropolitan areas that comprise the Quad Cities is estimated to be more than 360,000. Essentially, all cities compete for the same base of arts, dining and entertainment customers. Rock Island's later closing time is a draw, unfortunately making The District the last stop on the patron's entertainment schedule. Further, due to the close proximity of the Quad Cities, management issues are often displaced from one Quad City district to another. For instance, as businesses fail or establishments that cater to niche or interest groups are shut down, the clientele finds another venue to feed their needs. With Illinois's upcoming state-wide smoking ban, participants fear that Iowa's half of the Quad Cities will tip the markets to their advantage.
- **Festivals a Success:** Rock Island has long been the Quad Cities' trend setter. Rock Island's success in events and festivals has led other regional districts to follow suit, contributing to the competition among the Quad Cities. The City's great success with special events and festivals has contributed to its status as a regional destination. With fun, family-friendly themes such as Irish and Israeli culture, reggae/Caribbean, and jazz, Downtown events celebrate a diversity of music, food and entertainment choices and have proven most successful in attracting a multigenerational crowd.
- **Live Music:** Rock Island's live music experiences, ranging from summer festival headliners to Thursday-Saturday music nights at the Rock Island Brewing Co., have been very successful in attracting residents and regional visitors to The District. Despite their success, however, many 40+ patrons seeking live music consider the late start times of music events a deterrent from attending. Some stated they felt edged out and were deterred from attending events due to the predominance of the 20-something age group.
- **Markets Served:** Although Rock Island may have relatively few options for each niche market group, it notably offers at least one venue for various age groups, interests and lifestyles (e.g. high school students, gay/lesbian, comedy sports club). Several late-night establishments cater to Mingles with ample seating and ambient music, while there are some venues that house multiple generations simultaneously, with ground-floor dining opportunities adjoined by a bar and entertainment area. On the whole, however, participants considered college-age singles to be the primary patrons of late-night entertainment amenities.
- **Gap in Age Markets:** Participants identified various potential markets that are not adequately addressed. For instance, social gathering places for high school students and for 18-20 year old college age individuals are in demand. Consistent family-friendly activities on non-event days are also highly sought. Meanwhile, more establishments

that cater to Millennials, and in particular, 35+ Generation X'ers and Baby Boomers, are potentially large markets.

- **Gap in Cultural Markets:** The diverse mix of music, food and entertainment choices offered by seasonal festivals and special events geared toward particular cultures has proven to be a successful and widely popular way of accessing diversity. Participants expressed desire for more consistent access to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Quad City region in Downtown's food venues and musical offerings.
- **Nurturing the Creative Class:** Rock Island is proactively developing systems to support its creative class of artists and musicians. For instance, the City has recently formed an arts advisory committee and has financially supported a live/work art space project during its construction phase. Participants have expressed interest in creating additional ongoing support mechanisms to draw more creative residents and workers to the City.
- **Lack of Awareness:** Participants who live, work and visit Downtown Rock Island reported a general lack of awareness about Downtown events as well as existing dining, retail and entertainment opportunities, indicating a need for more widespread promotion. Hospitality operators in particular expressed interest in being made aware of upcoming events and festivals so that they could partner with the City and other promoters to foster greater success for all involved parties.
- **Negative Media:** Local and regional newspapers commonly emphasize negative aspects of Rock Island's Downtown, with reports of crime and disorder at closing time. Although many participants considered the bad press to be over-exaggerated, it has contributed to negative perceptions about Downtown's safety.

Long Term Goals

- **Branding Rock Island:** Considering the competition and frequent "sharing" or "copying" of ideas among the Quad Cities, it is key for Rock Island to create a distinctive identity for the City and its Downtown. Moreover, for more than a century Rock Island has long proven to be the leader of the Quad Cities in regard to innovation and should therefore embrace its Bohemian spirit and diversity, and promote its unique and authentic environment as a primary distinguishing factor. The upcoming implementation of new wayfinding signage with different colors for each of the Quad Cities can be utilized to support "the brand," serving to further distinguish Rock Island as a city distinctly different than the other three.
- **Appeal to the Creative Class through Diversity:** According to Richard Florida's, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, cities that are tolerant of and embrace a diversity of cultures, ethnicities, lifestyles, and ideas are more likely to attract a creative class of residents and workers. Participants noted that Rock Island is arguably the most culturally diverse of all the Quad Cities and should therefore capitalize on this asset to help shape Rock Island as a unique, authentic destination or "small international community" within the Quad Cities.
- **Business Development:** Cultivating a business development climate that is user-friendly to a variety of cultures can attract minority business owners, entrepreneurs and residents, essentially establishing a permanent base of diversity Downtown and broadening the consumer spectrum.

Short Term Goals

- **Positive Promotion:** Positive promotion of Downtown achievements and existing amenities can help reframe perceptions about safety in a positive light. By highlighting the vibrancy of special events while emphasizing their safety can encourage potential patrons to overcome safety perceptions. Further, utilizing existing resources such as the websites for the District and Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote

special offers and live music events can also serve as incentives for residents and tourists to experience Downtown.

- **Newsletter:** Participants expressed interest in distributing a weekly or biweekly hard-copy and e-newsletter to local residents and regional visitors to inform them about upcoming events and specials to promote and make them aware of existing Downtown businesses and cultural amenities.
- **Earlier Start Times for Music Events:** By starting special events and concerts, and in particular, headline music acts, earlier in the evening, a broader base of clientele, including convention travelers and Baby Boomers, would be more inclined to partake in such cultural offerings.
- **Enhance Events through Local Collaboration:** Hospitality operators suggested several ways in which they could partner with the City for special events. First and foremost, greater communication about upcoming event dates could help ensure coordination of adequate venue security on high-impact event-days. Further, local dining operators and restaurateurs expressed interest in setting up their own food kiosks to promote Downtown dining opportunities, in addition to or instead of using outside vendors.
- **Fill in Business Development Gaps:** Current hospitality retail is suffering from inconsistent patronage and focus on a narrow customer demographic. Supplement existing surveys of hospitality retail with objective information from this report and consumer surveys (including on-the-street patron surveys) to identify gaps in community desires for dining, entertainment and socializing opportunities. Provide this information to existing businesses as opportunities for expansion or change, and then seek new entrepreneurs to fill the gaps.
- **Incentivize Music, Arts and Entertainment Development:** Musicians, dancers, artists and other members of the creative class require an intricate system of support in order to succeed. This can include development of creative spaces such as rehearsal halls and art studios that are strategically located so as to create minimal noise and quality of life impacts on surrounding areas. Some cities utilize initiatives such as utility cost discounts for live music venues and designated loading zones for musicians to load and unload equipment. Such strategies can help contribute to a comprehensive support infrastructure for music, arts and entertainment development and serve as an incentive to attract and retain a regional pool of talented and creative individuals.



Community Policing in Hospitality Zones

Community policing in hospitality zones is a collaborative partnership among police, enforcement agencies, businesses, community organizations and residents, each with something to offer and something to take. The purpose is to reduce risk to public safety and impacts on quality of life through traditional law enforcement, prevention, problem-solving and community engagement.

Community Policing in Rock Island

Current Status

- **Manage Thursday-Saturday as an Event:** Special events are managed with interagency cooperation and added services such as portable toilets, additional trash receptacles and crowd management and pedestrian flow strategies. Thursday through Saturday nights Downtown can produce numbers of people comparable to special events and need a broader service response than just dedicated police presence.
- **Downtown Security Area:** Food and beverage businesses that choose to have extended hours licenses in the designated District area pay a security fee to fund late-night police shifts that monitor and manage late-night crowds. Though some operators

do take proactive security measures, there is a general attitude by some that because they contribute to a “security fee,” they are not responsible for security outside their venues. An unintended consequence of the security fee required of extended hours licensees is that it is causing hospitality and safety stakeholders to work in silos rather than acting as partners in maintaining the safety and security of District visitors and patrons.

- **Confusion about Safety Requirements and Liability:** There was no clear consensus or understanding as to the conditions for safety measures that each agency, license type or location within boundaries requires. There is also a need for insurance companies and risk management to remove barriers to owners to maintain safety and order in the area outside their doorstep.
- **Food and Beverage Tax:** Some hospitality operators and community members are ambivalent about the benefit of this tax to hospitality patrons. Most understood it to be a temporary initiative to make up for a general fund deficit and were thus willing to partner with the City and community. Their understanding was that it was to end at some point, however, so its continuance is perceived as a broken promise from the City.
- **Off-Duty Officer Employment:** It is common for alcohol licensed businesses to hire off-duty officers for door security.
- **Gap in Safety Coordination at Closing Time:** Standards for the roles and responsibilities of club security for supervising activity in the immediate vicinity of their establishment are not clearly defined. Hospitality venues generally consider their role in security to be limited to getting customers out the doors and drinks off the table at closing time, leaving principal management of the crowds to the police.
- **Proactive Security Measures:** Several late-night operators have an unofficial policy in which door staff walks groups of female patrons in addition to female staff members to their cars to ensure their safety at closing time. Proactive city-wide initiatives include the installation of technology such as security cameras to help create a sense of safety Downtown and to curb incidents of public urination. Additionally, the city has implemented a curfew between 3:15 and 5:30 a.m. on the Plaza to reduce quality of life impacts associated with closing time loiterers.
- **Gap in Management of Nuisance Businesses:** Participants indicated that enforcement of ‘nuisance’ businesses, such as those with consistent calls for service and frequent violations such as over-capacity, over-service, service without a license and service to minors, is done arbitrarily, and in fact is inhibited by lack of clear guidelines for identifying and addressing such situations.
- **Gap in Management of Nuisance Behavior:** The presence of broken beer and malt beverage bottles on the street suggests uncontrolled drinking in public, which indicates the need for greater monitoring of high risk and illegal activities. There are also reports that intoxicated loiterers cause property damage and engage in noisy and unscrupulous behavior without being hindered or ticketed by police. Increasing popularity of pre-loading at house parties and in parking areas can make it difficult for enforcement agencies to determine whether these unruly individuals, some of whom are underage, arrived already intoxicated or were over-served in Downtown establishments. Regardless, the need for greater community controls over behavior in The District is apparent.

Long Term Goals

- **Collaborative Safety Presence:** Participants indicated that they would like a more coordinated safety presence with a concierge service orientation to monitor Downtown’s main streets and parking areas. Re-orienting owners and police as partners in assuring safety of businesses’, District’s and City’s guests can foster greater collaboration among

venue security and police. Clarifying roles and two-way information sharing can lead to better safety management within individual venues and the district as a whole.

- **Extend Responsibility Outside Doors:** Cities and states that require alcohol licensed businesses to maintain orderly conduct within a certain number of feet outside the establishment often encourage better cooperation between police and businesses' security staff. There is need to clarify legal responsibilities of security staff and determine collaboration opportunities between venue security and police.

Short Term Goals

- **Communication Forum for Hospitality and Safety:** A forum for two way communication between hospitality businesses and permitting and regulating agencies can clarify areas of misunderstanding, address issues, hot topics and hotspots.
- **Regularly Scheduled Inter-agency Meetings:** Establishing regular communication among the police department, fire department, health department, and other relevant agencies to managing a nighttime economy can help facilitate more proactive management of trends and issues.
- **Last Drink Data:** Data collection on DUI arrests can help determine which venues and/or districts are at the highest risk for over-service and intoxication, providing focus for hospitality management education and enforcement. Focusing on problem businesses rather than blanket punitive actions to all businesses is a more efficient use of resources and incentivizes good business practices.
- **Address Nuisance Businesses:** There is a need to define a 'nuisance' business and establish guidelines and procedures for intervening with problem operators to more effectively address gaps in compliance.
- **Early Assistance Team:** This RHI Template provides coordinated and direct assistance to intervene with at-risk dining, entertainment or event businesses before more extreme regulatory and administrative action is required. Members can include representatives with direct involvement with the businesses such as beat police officers, agency inspectors, neighborhood organizations and local hospitality association representatives. Current or former business owners with a good track record can serve as mentors to new and at-risk businesses. Peer-to-peer interventions often prove the most effective.
- **Top Violation Types:** Frequent violations by hospitality businesses can inform regulatory agencies and the city as to why gaps in compliance are occurring. Some may be due to a lack of knowledge and understanding, which may require clarifying rules and regulations. Others are due to high-risk operators or laws that lack "teeth." Analysis of violations types can determine what response is needed.
- **Disorderly Conduct Regulations:** The prevalence of disorderly conduct and public intoxication indicates a need to assess current disorderly conduct regulations and systemic gaps that hinder enforcement. Proactively ticketing individuals for relatively benign acts of disorderly conduct, such as public urination, can help establish behavioral standards for late-night crowds.
- **Clean and Safe Ambassadors:** Volunteer safety ambassadors who have a concierge orientation and training in conflict resolution can contribute to a visible safety presence by monitoring behavior at closing time to discourage disorderly conduct. Further, ambassadors can escort patrons and employees to their automobiles to enhance security en route to and within parking areas.



Security, Service and Safety

With an increasing number of young adults seeking places to meet and socialize, there is increased pressure for licensed beverage establishments to better regulate sales and service to underage and intoxicated persons, as well as assure the safety of patrons leaving their establishments.

Security, Service and Safety in Rock Island

Current Status

- **New Generation of Consumers:** Compared to the recent past, current patrons are not as respectful and are more rowdy than they used to be. Further, this new consumer base is noted for its “fickle tendencies” in that they frequently want to try something new. As a result, current operators are challenged to keep up with new trends, and are therefore forced to close or reinvent their operations every 3 to 5 years.
- **TIPS Training Mandatory:** Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) training is mandatory for bartenders, servers, management staff and doormen, in venues with extended hours licenses.
- **Voluntary Code of Conduct:** Prior to the establishment of the Downtown Security Area, hospitality business owners signed a voluntary code of conduct with the liquor commission, which among other things required a uniform patron dress code and consistent business hours. Although the document itself is now defunct, it is indicative of the precedence for Rock Island hospitality operator collaboration and cooperation.
- **Gap in Security Standards:** Late-night hospitality venues are currently held to blanket security standards regarding door and internal security staff, despite varying license types. However, this approach does not take factors such as occupancy, food service and alcohol sales into consideration, which can contribute to differing levels of impacts within the venue itself and in the District. Venues that potentially generate higher impacts should have higher levels of security than low-impact venues.
- **Gap in Communication:** Hospitality operators report a perceived gap in communication and collaboration with City agencies for both problem resolution and opportunities to enhance the District’s vibrancy. They also identified the following issues in need of clarification: (1) The upcoming smoking ban; (2) The distinction between the roles and/or boundaries of the District, the City, Renaissance Rock Island, DARI, Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) and the Downtown Security Area; and (3) Application of security rules and regulations to different license types e.g. which license types are required to provide door security.
- **Over-service:** Despite staff training, participants identified over-service to patrons and subsequent intoxication as issues in some hospitality venues.
- **Drink Specials:** Given the constant state of competition among the Quad Cities’ hospitality zones, to attract regional visitors, various businesses have engaged in extremely low-priced drink specials, a practice which is often associated with over-service and intoxication.
- **Safety Perceptions:** Downtown is seeking to overcome perceptions about the lack of safety in The District and in alcohol licensed venues. For instance, there is a prevalent notion that a high number of gang members congregate in a few particular late-night establishments on Wednesday nights due to the use of drink promotions. Some college students reported that it is commonly understood to clear out by midnight on weekends before the high risk patrons arrive.

Long Term Goals

- **Industry-wide Collaboration:** By collaborating as an industry, hospitality operators can achieve greater success throughout the Downtown arts and entertainment district. Research shows that better behavioral controls on the streets at closing time starts with a tone of control inside the venues themselves. Just as maintaining high standards for professionalism and patron conduct in Downtown businesses helps all to thrive, one problem business can lead to negative perception of an entire district. Greater collaboration and peer-to-peer intervention can keep businesses on track and in compliance.
- **Partnerships with City Agencies:** Consistent, streamlined communication with city agencies from the application process through the lifespan of the business can help operators achieve greater success by helping them remain in compliance through education, clarification and problem resolution.

Short Term Goals

- **Hospitality Business Orientation (HBO) for New Businesses:** Food and beverage businesses are subject to more regulation and have more opportunity for risk to the community than many other retail businesses. An orientation to the rules and regulations, community standards and policies can open communication between businesses and regulatory to assure setting out on the right foot. Owners and managers can also learn about training, peer associations and neighborhood and resident groups. Such an orientation can lead to better self regulation and less need for enforcement.
- **Ombudsman to the City:** Establishing one direct contact to the City for hospitality business owners can streamline communication and problem resolution, bridging the perceived gap in collaboration between hospitality operators and the City. Additionally, the provision of assistance to help businesses remain in compliance can provide a cultural asset to the City.
- **Hospitality Business Roundtable (HBR) for Existing Businesses:** The HBR provides a forum for government agency representatives and existing hospitality businesses to interact, disseminate regulatory and community updates, communicate emerging issues and problem areas, and encourage cooperative problem solving. Outcomes include increased trust between business and regulatory, improved communication and greater business success and regulatory compliance. Given the presence of representatives from multiple departments, agencies and entities, this periodic forum is also an opportunity to tackle specific hot-button issues such as the smoking ban and other topics in need of clarification.
- **Impact-Based Security Requirements:** Uniform security requirements across all venue types typically do not address the greater impacts generated by those deemed “high risk” in contrast with those that are only “low” or “medium” risk. Businesses with larger capacities with beverage sales that exceed food sales and depend upon a high volume of patrons in a limited window of time such as weekend nights are generally considered higher risk than venues with a higher percentage of food sales. An example requirement is having one internal security person per 50 patrons in venues with a 300+ capacity.
- **Re-Establish a Voluntary Code of Conduct:** Re-instituting a voluntary code of conduct may help address current management issues. Consistent business hours, uniform patron dress codes, standard security staff dress codes, and setting limits or bans on drink specials can contribute to District-wide professionalism and help deter the presence of gangs.
- **Advanced Training for Servers and Door Staff:** The prevalent perception of patron intoxication and unruly behavior could indicate need for a more advanced training

program for servers and door staff, particularly intervention and conflict resolution for monitoring and management of nuisance conduct.



Multi-use Sidewalks

The role of the sidewalk has expanded from a mere pathway for pedestrians to a new and vibrant venue that serves various social and cultural functions. The sidewalk of modern times, the 'multi-use sidewalk', offers unique opportunities for dining, street entertainment, vendor shopping, and most importantly, people watching.

Multi-use Sidewalks in Rock Island

Current Status

- **Events as Height of Street Activity:** Rock Island has demonstrated its ability to create vibrant street activity during special events, yet it struggles to maintain consistent street vitality and pedestrian activity during the daytime and evening on non-event days.
- **Limited Daytime Activity:** Participants generally attribute the sparse daytime activity to the lack of retail opportunities, which participants believe would attract more daytime dining customers and could potentially contribute to more pedestrian usage. Courthouse users, senior dwellers, regional visitors and downtown workers are potential markets.
- **Time Gaps:** There is a need to bridge the gaps in hours of vitality utilizing current market users. Downtown workers complain that there is nothing to fill the gap between the end of the work day (5:00-6:00 p.m.) or the end of dinner (7:00-8:00 p.m.) and the start of evening entertainment (10:00-11:00 p.m.) Bridging this 2 to 6 hour gap in activity could help keep dining and arts patrons Downtown to enjoy late-night music and entertainment. Diluting the young age that patronizes businesses later at night with a broader mix of ages can change the tone of The District and positively influence patron behavior.
- **“Dead Zones”:** Areas with vacant property and empty storefronts often lack connectivity lighting, contributing to perceptions of lack of safety, which holds particularly true for female residents and nighttime economy patrons. Participants report that these dead zones discourage pedestrian traffic from job sites to home or from venues to parking lots, even if they are located within just a few blocks.
- **Dark Facades:** Participants report that ground floor businesses, including the few existing retail shops, are struggling. The use of tinted black windows and heavy awnings make it difficult to determine whether businesses are in fact open or closed, while the limited lighting contributes to negative perceptions about safety.
- **Walkability:** Once greater pedestrian flow is achieved through the current efforts of economic, tourism and residential development, visitors and residents will be able to take advantage of Downtown Rock Island’s distinctive walkability and pedestrian-friendly streets and plaza.
- **Food Vendors:** The hot dog food stand located in the Plaza has been very successful with local residents and workers; however, restaurateurs located in the vicinity consider the central placement of the vendor as unfair competition.
- **Weather Constraints:** Development of multi-use sidewalk activity such as outdoor seating areas, vendors/kiosks and entertainers will need to take into account the region’s harsh winter and fall seasons.
- **Anticipated Demand for Outdoor Spaces:** With the upcoming smoking ban expected to impact bar and club revenues the most, participants anticipate that many hospitality

operators will express interest in extending their operations to outdoor seating areas and sidewalk cafes.

Long Term Goals

- **Dynamic Sidewalk Activity:** Generating greater pedestrian activity and ‘eyes on the street’ can enhance both the perception of safety and vibrancy Downtown. When well managed and regulated, sidewalk activities such as street entertainment, vendors, kiosks and outdoor dining can enhance the overall street vitality of a district and can help bridge gaps in activity at various times of day. In addition to strategic placement of pedestrian lighting, these activities can fill in “dead zones” caused by vacancies or dark storefronts, encouraging pedestrian travel through these areas.
- **Accessibility for All:** An assessment of current Rock Island facilities and the City’s overall compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations can help determine areas where accessibility can be improved for the city’s large elderly population, and in particular for those who are handicapped and/or have special health needs. This can help broaden the base of clientele seeking Downtown arts, culture, dining and entertainment amenities so that all feel welcome and safe.

Short Term Goals

- **Fill “Dead Zones” with Light and Activity:** The perception of safety in “dead zones” can be improved by installing pedestrian-level lighting in alleyways, side streets, parking lots and in storefront windows and doorways. Further, strategic placement of vendors, kiosks, and outdoor art can enhance streetscapes and mask empty facades. This can also help guide pedestrian flow, increasing ‘eyes on the street’ in areas in most need of them.
- **Review Sidewalk Encroachment Regulations:** An assessment of current sidewalk encroachment regulations can help facilitate the application and permitting process for outdoor seating areas and sidewalk cafes as they become in greater demand by hospitality operators.
- **Review Codes for Street Entertainers:** Determine how to incorporate street entertainers into the mix of activities and designate areas for performance in the Plaza and throughout Downtown. Establishing time and place restrictions can also help regulate performance activity once greater supply is achieved. Consider reviewing other cities’ codes.
- **Attract More Vendors:** The success of the hot dog vendor indicates demand for unique and on-the-fly dining experiences, as well as something to do on the street. As a response to retail that is unwilling to stay open past 5 or 6 p.m., attracting more vendors and strategically placing them in areas in need of greater pedestrian flow can enhance street vitality and perceptions of safety.
- **Street Activity during Winter Months:** Participants suggested manufacturing the vibrancy associated with “street activity,” such as musical performances, inside storefront windows during harsh winter and fall seasons to attract passersby.



Late-night Integrated Transportation System

Planning for a comprehensive network of transportation services that complement and maximize the safety of each, cities can ensure safer and more efficient access and exiting of the hospitality zone for those who socialize and work there, and reduce alcohol-related crashes.

Late-night Integrated Transportation in Rock Island

Current Status

- **Limited Transportation Network Deterrent to Vibrancy Potential:** Participants considered the lack of coordination and reliability of the city's nighttime transportation system as a deterrent to both tourists and residents seeking cultural, arts and entertainment opportunities.
- **Current Late-night Transportation Options:** There are few transportation options available to the general public late at night, resulting in a heavy reliance upon the personal automobile. Public buses stop running at 10:00 p.m. Meanwhile, taxicab service, the only alternative form of late-night transport, is considered extremely limited in number and unreliable at best, with wait times ranging from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. Several late-night business operators are to be commended for going so far as to give their patrons a ride home due to the long wait times for taxicabs, especially in the wintertime.
- **Gap in Centrally Located Late-night Transport Hub:** Participants noted that at closing time, the tendency is for patrons to congregate in the Plaza while waiting for cabs or rides home, however the police force them to leave the area for the sake of crowd dispersal.
- **Young Adults Seek Safe Transport:** A prevalent perception is that the new generation of patrons tends to seek out safe transportation home, often opting to call a cab or designate a sober driver rather than risk driving under the influence. As one participant noted, "This youth generation is more responsible. They're demonstrating that they prefer to and are willing to use alternative transport. They don't want to drive drunk but they don't have other options." In contrast, participants report that older patrons are more likely to take the risk of driving while impaired.
- **DUI Checkpoints:** Although the use of DUI checkpoints helps to keep impaired drivers from injuring themselves and others, this state-funded initiative would be more effective if operated in conjunction with nighttime public transportation alternatives, the lack of which forces borderline and intoxicated patrons to rely solely on their personal automobiles.
- **DUI Conviction Rate:** The DUI conviction rate in Rock Island is 4 times higher than any other Quad City. Whether this incidence rate is due to Rock Island's later closing time, the high number of DUI checkpoints surrounding Rock Island or because of a higher number of intoxicated drivers is uncertain.
- **Incentives for Designated Drivers:** Various operators have reported that they offer free water and soft drinks to designated drivers. Promoting these incentives can help encourage the increased use of designated drivers among patrons.
- **Plaza Parking:** In an effort to compromise the need to reduce traffic congestion at closing time with the need to provide parking for dinner and other early evening patrons, cars are allowed to park along the western part of the Great River Plaza until 10:30 p.m. Thursday – Saturday. However, many unwitting visitors who arrive later for entertainment amenities end up with their cars relocated to another location downtown.
- **Gap in Parking Lot Monitoring:** Unmonitored parking lots are increasingly becoming locations for underage reveling, "pre-loading" alcohol before entering licensed establishments and continuing the party after closing. These venues lead to intoxication, disorderly conduct and create a risk to the City.
- **Promotion of Transport Options:** The Young Professionals Network distributes key chain cards with information on existing taxi cab options and provides discount offers.

Long Term Goals

- **Enhancement of Transport Options Key to Vibrancy and Impact Management:** The provision of a variety of daytime and nighttime transportation options can serve as both an incentive for residents and tourists to better utilize cultural and entertainment amenities and also reduce late-night quality of life impacts by facilitating more efficient egress of the district at closing time. Enhancing the perception of safety around public transportation can also encourage increased ridership.
- **Safe Rides for All:** Participants indicate that the new generation of patrons actively seek and are willing to pay for safe transportation home. Offering safe, reliable and affordable alternatives to the personal automobile is a powerful incentive for residents and tourists to patronize Downtown Rock Island. Current residents who choose not to patronize Downtown in the evening because of the potential for intoxicated drivers on the road may also be more inclined to do so because of new transportations options.

Short Term Goals

- **Designated Taxi Stands and Late-night Transport Hubs:** The City can help facilitate more efficient egress and ingress of the District by designating specific, low-impact areas for taxi pick-ups and hubs for other late-night transport options. Taxi stands can also help reduce pedestrian and traffic congestion and help enforcement officers distinguish between loiterers and people waiting for their rides home.
- **Incentives for Taxis:** Taxi drivers are most often independent contractors who choose what hours they work and who they pick up. To motivate drivers to service the District at closing time, it must be worth it financially. Strategies, such as shared rides and flat rates need to be explored
- **College-Run Shuttles:** Augustana and Saint Ambrose students make up a significant percentage of Rock Island's patrons. Ensuring their safe transportation to and from Downtown should be a top priority for these institutions.
- **Convert Day-Use Vehicles to Night Rides:** Shuttles that transport the elderly during the day (such as Project NOW) can be converted into fee-for-service shuttles for District patrons at night.
- **Jitney among the Quad Cities:** Participants indicated high demand for Rock Island's late-night venues from Iowa residents; however, bus service from Illinois to Iowa ends at 9:00 p.m. A jitney with pickup points in the Quad Cities can safely move bar patrons, and also bring more business into Rock Island earlier in the evening.
- **Anti Cruising Ordinance:** An anti cruising ordinance can help cut down traffic gridlock, pedestrian risk and associated noise impacts. Some cities define cruising as passing a designated point three times in an hour.
- **Parking Lots:** Parking lot management can collaborate with community and police partners to enhance monitoring and intervention opportunities in order to prevent impairment, underage drinking and quality of life impacts.



Quality of Life

Mixed-use development places residents and commercial businesses in close proximity and raises new issues for policymakers, managers, businesses and residents. Impacts include noise, deliveries, trash, litter, public urination, traffic and vandalism, as well as unintended outcomes of smoking bans.

Quality of Life in Rock Island

Current Status

- **Gap in Residential Amenities:** Participants identified gaps in Downtown amenities such as retail, grocery stores as well as more variety in affordable dining options.
- **Upcoming Smoking Ban:** The state-wide smoking ban initiative will officially begin on January 1st, 2008. Participants unanimously expressed concerns about a lack of clarity regarding how to implement the smoking ban within establishments, how business operators and government agencies will be taking responsibility for enforcement, who to call regarding violations of the ban, and how to educate the public about the policy change. Additionally, higher incidents of quality of life impacts are anticipated, such as increased noise in the Plaza from smokers and increased cigarette butt litter.
- **Late-night Impacts:** Whether from patrons returning to cars parked in residential neighborhoods or patrons walking home, residents are experiencing impacts at closing hours, including noise from loud conversations, public urination and vomiting, vandalism, theft and property damage, as well as litter and trash. Further, participants reported a prevalence of disorderly conduct and noted that public intoxication and imbibing on the streets and parking lots were common occurrences. Though the level of impact was not reported as severe, protocols and standards should be set to address them so they cannot and do not escalate.
- **Disorderly Conduct Among Residents:** Some young adult Downtown residents who party in Downtown residential housing before and after bar closing time are responsible for quality of life impacts such as noise from disturbances and vandalism, indicating a need for better education of community standards. These behaviors can lead to a perception that licensed venues are the source.
- **Licensing Regulations:** The current licensing process requires prospective operators who have not had a license for one year to obtain signatures from the surrounding community in a petition to gain a liquor license. If they don't obtain the required number of signatures, the City allows the operator to present their case to City Council at a special public hearing.

Long Term Goals

- **Assure Community Input:** As Rock Island develops more residential housing and works to attract more businesses, there is a need to assure that residents have an efficient forum for input and complaint.
- **Home Parties:** Until owner-occupied units reach the majority, Rock Island will need to address control of impacts from private parties, especially those that extend after bar close.

Short Term Goals

- **Promotional Campaign for the Smoking Ban:** Although some operators fear the smoking ban will negatively impact their revenue, there are also many visitors and residents in the Quad City region (especially from Iowa, which has not implemented a state-wide ban) who may be more likely to patronize establishments because of the smoking ban. Promoting Rock Island's non-smoking status can both publicize the new policy in a positive light and also educate the public about the need for their own change in lifestyle when patronizing Downtown establishments.
- **Partner with Keep Rock Island Beautiful:** In anticipation of an increase in cigarette butt litter due to the transference of cigarette smokers from indoors to outdoors, establishing a proactive partnership with the city's local *Keep America Beautiful* chapter can help the Downtown area prepare for new impacts associated with the smoking ban.

- **Community Covenant/Code of Conduct:** Used to establish basic understanding of roles and responsibilities of the city, hospitality businesses and the guests they both serve, a Community Covenant can help foster consensus among hospitality operators about ideal business practices and facilitate responsiveness to community concerns. Further, the process can lead to greater community involvement among residents and foster trust and support with Downtown businesses. The code can be distributed to new operators at the Hospitality Business Orientation (HBO).
- **Public Restrooms:** Bringing portable restrooms to the District for Friday and Saturday nights can be a temporary response to help reduce public urination until the City can develop public facilities.

RESOURCES

One of RHI's tenets is that existing resources should be fully utilized in addressing challenges that districts face. Such resources may be defined as successful strategies, partnerships, practices, products and policies, as well as opportunities. Some of these could easily be adapted without reinventing the wheel and expending valuable time, expense and effort.

Public Sector

Rock Island Arts Advisory Committee

- The Arts Advisory Committee serves as an advisory committee to the City Council.

District Calendar Website

- Currently a hidden page due to lack of content, this could be a potentially useful resource in promoting awareness of local businesses by serving as a central location for web links to all Downtown arts, dining and entertainment websites.

Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)

- The Quad Cities CVB website www.visitquadcities.com draws 500,000 visitors yearly, with the top visited webpage being the Events page. This particular webpage is a free resource in which local dining and entertainment businesses' events, special offers and live music calendars can be posted.
- The Convention and Visitors Bureau offers its members free hospitality trainings.

Scott Community College (Iowa)

- The Scott Community College offers a culinary training program.

Neighborhood Partners Task Force

- Rock Island Neighborhood Partners Task Forces, which bring together representatives from neighborhood groups, non-profits and enforcement agencies to communicate and exchange information about safety, are organized through Neighborhood Partners and its Task Forces.

Mississippi River as an Asset

- The Mississippi river, if better utilized through riverfront development, can be a valuable asset and draw for both visitors and residents. It can also potentially serve as a site for the creative arts and performers, which could generate greater pedestrian activity. The RiverVision plan identifies opportunities for both Rock Island and Davenport.

Entrepreneurial Programs

- SCORE and Blackhawk College offer entrepreneurial programs.

Young Professionals Network

- The Young Professionals Network, a part of the Illinois Quad City Chamber of Commerce, is a networking group for 20 to 30 year olds designed to help retain young professionals in Rock Island by offering community engagement and social opportunities with their peers.

Tobacco-Free Quad Cities (TFQC)

- Tobacco-Free Quad Cities (TFQC) is a Quad City Health Initiative geared to residents of Rock Island and Scott County to educate the public about the effects of tobacco usage and to influence tobacco related legislation.

Concierge Government

- City of Rock Island has organized information for new business owners with contact information for key departments.

Private Sector

Keep Rock Island Beautiful

- Rock Island's local chapter of Keep America Beautiful can be a valuable partner in cigarette litter prevention during the smoking ban, providing grants and resources for litter receptacles and more.

River Cities' Reader

- The Reader is a weekly newspaper distributed across the Quad Cities with news about upcoming events.

The Rock Island News

- The Rock Island News is a weekly insert in the Quad City Times that focuses on Rock Island news, issues, people, history and events.

Multi Sector Partnerships

City and College Partnerships

- There is an opportunity for a collaborative partnership between the city and local college campuses such as Augustana and Saint Ambrose in regard to transportation of college students to Downtown social amenities, but especially to take them back safely at night. College campuses can also take on a greater role in risk-management to discourage students from arriving intoxicated to Downtown venues. Further, promotion of Downtown events and festivals can encourage more college students to enjoy the city's cultural amenities during the daytime and evening hours as well. However, city officials have encountered some small difficulties in collaborating with college campuses. It was suggested that greater student involvement is needed to begin the process.

Renaissance Rock Island

- Renaissance Rock Island's umbrella over The District, Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation and DARI's distinguished and influential board supports promotion of commercial and recreational development and provides business assistance,
- **Illinois Quad City Chamber of Commerce**
- **Illinois License Beverage Association**

Other City Strategies

Safety Kiosk

- Gainesville, Florida's police department utilizes a safety kiosk in their entertainment zone that provides educational safety fliers and is staffed with both volunteers and enforcement representatives. The kiosk can be any central public space such as a business exterior, alcove, bench or booth that provides a non-confrontational safety presence where patrons can go to report incidents, obtain medical aid, or meet up with friends.

Office of Small Business

- San Diego, California has a City-run Office of Small Business with an ombudsperson to assist businesses and act as liaison between public and private entities.

Night Hop

- Boulder, Colorado's Night Hop is a not-for-profit community shuttle that transports passengers on a fixed-route loop that connects University Hill and its neighborhood, local shopping, and the downtown area. The shuttle runs every 20 minutes until 3:00 a.m. on Thursday-Saturday nights, addressing the high flow of young people between their homes and downtown on weekends in this college town. On the Night Hop's last run, it offers door-to-door service to ensure that the last travelers of the evening reach home safely.

Watchdogs

- Athens, Georgia has a safe ride program provided by student volunteers using donated office space and rental cars each with a male/female driver/navigator team. Corporate sponsors help pay for the fees to cover free rides within a six-mile radius of the campus on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Shared Cab Rides

- Ann Arbor, Michigan's NightRide program is a taxi service contracted through the local transit authority to provide subsidized, fixed-price, shared-ride door-to-door service to the general public during late-night hours. The affordable taxi service supplements the fixed-route bus service the authority operates during daytime hours, creating a safe alternative to driving for patrons and employees of its downtown hospitality zone.

Seasonal Hospitality Roundtables

- Hospitality roundtables provide business owners, managers and staff with a regular communication channel to get information, discuss issues and develop better relations with government and community representatives. Chicago, Illinois developed a hospitality business roundtable schedule with themes focused to seasonal needs. Autumn roundtables features back to school issues, spring sessions deal with café seating and special events while summer workshops address security training and noise control.

PERCEPTIONS

Without a mechanism for safety, residential, development and hospitality to interact, miscommunication and misperceptions continue and mistrust festers. In each of the four groups, the following perceptions were formed about each group.

About Hospitality

- “There are too many bars.”
- “We look at Downtown businesses and say ‘you’re important to us.’”
- “There aren’t convenient venues for families
- “There’s nothing to do but drink.”

About Safety

- “Police can’t be there 24 hours a day, so business owners have to be proactive about safety.”
- “I know we need it, but DUI enforcement is so heavy it scares people away from Rock Island”
- “At closing time, a lot of doormen help police.”

About Development

- “The City is very supportive of our projects.”
- “The City made promises and didn’t follow through with them, but they’ve done other things that have been phenomenal.”
- “Rock Island nurtures the creative class well.”
- “The council and mayor are taking a concierge government direction. They’re providing better customer service, more streamlined processes for obtaining permits, and better access via technology.”
- “It’s very easy to get a business permit, but it’s so easy that every knucklehead goes out to get one.”
- There is a perceived gap in communication between hospitality business owners and the City. “This city doesn’t listen to us [the hospitality industry].”
- On transportation options: “It seems like there are 5 cabs for all the Quad Cities.”
- “Downtown is not friendly for children”

About Community

- “The District is known as the place you go to drink.”
- “The streets themselves are becoming a destination.”
- “Gen X’ers want to have connectivity too.”
- “This is the oddest marketplace I’ve ever been in – it’s the hardest place to market.”
- “Downtown is only geared towards college age students and above.”
- “I have kids, and there’s a lot offered here: Rock Island Grand Prix, Quad Cities Criterium, etc. are excellent.”

PRIORITIES

Each of the focus groups expressed the following opinions and perceptions about their own group as well as the others. Additionally, the focus of the discussion for each group is listed below to provide participants with a sense of where consensus lies.

Top 5 Priorities

1. Cost-effective nighttime alternative transportation options between Rock Island, other Quad Cities and college campuses to facilitate more efficient District ingress and egress and to reduce DUIs.
2. Friendlier and safer pedestrian experience with greater pedestrian activity at all times of day in addition to better lighting on streets and storefronts to fill “dead zones” caused by vacancies.
3. Promote awareness about existing Downtown arts, cultural, dining and entertainment opportunities and upcoming events to the general public and to local colleges through positive publicity and a newsletter to generate greater community support of Downtown businesses and reframe perceptions about safety.
4. Greater collaboration among hospitality business operators through regularly scheduled meetings to develop a uniform, district-wide business plan and to clarify implementation of the smoking ban.
5. Establish cooperative relations between the City / Renaissance Rock Island and the hospitality industry through regular meetings and creation of a liaison in the form of an ombudsman or ambassador.

Hospitality Priorities

1. Enhance late-night transportation options to/from Downtown and between the Quad Cities.
2. Establish cooperative relations between the City and the hospitality industry through regular meetings and creation of a liaison between hospitality operators and the City in the form of an ombudsman or ambassador.
3. Establish regularly scheduled meetings among venue operators to foster collaboration in the hospitality industry.
4. Develop plan for hospitality businesses to implement the smoking ban and clarify rules and expectations.
5. Publicize positive accomplishments to counteract the generally negative portrayal of Downtown.

Safety Priorities

1. Create more late-night transportation options between the Quad Cities and college campuses to facilitate more efficient District egress and reduce DUIs.
2. Improve the perception of safety through safe and pedestrian-friendly activity and by lighting in streets and alleyways.
3. Greater collaboration among hospitality business to develop a uniform, District-wide business plan.
4. Greater collaboration between policing agencies and hospitality businesses.
5. Strategically coordinate trash pick-up and consolidate dumpsters.

Development Priorities

1. A friendlier and safer pedestrian experience with greater pedestrian activity at all times of day in addition to better lighting on streets and storefronts to fill “dead zones” caused by vacancies.
2. Downtown patronage by multiple age generations in the evening hours and more family-friendly options.
3. Create a newsletter to promote knowledge of existing options and upcoming events and therefore generate greater community support of Downtown businesses.
4. Fund a uniformed staff person to clean the streets in the evening and pick up litter and beer bottles to establish a visible standard of community cleanliness for late-night crowds.
5. Cost effective late-night public transportation.

Community Priorities

1. Create new late-night alternative transportation options and thereby reduce DUIs.
2. Promote awareness about existing Downtown arts, cultural, dining and entertainment opportunities to the general public and to local colleges to reframe perceptions about safety.
3. More vibrant street life and pedestrian activity during the daytime.
4. Bring more art and performing art Downtown, particularly in the Plaza.
5. Offer public restrooms in an effort to curb public urination.

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS

Below is a list of individuals who participated in the Engagement Orientation and/or the four Roundtables. Individuals who participated in the Leadership Summit are marked in blue.

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