

SHORT NORTH CRIME INTERDICTION PILOT PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by the Short North Alliance

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Executive Summary

In 2022, the Short North Alliance continued to lead the collaborative Short North Crime Interdiction Program with support from the City of Columbus and private business and property owners to strengthen violence prevention. Expanding beyond the successful pilot that was led during a two month period in 2021, over two dozen special duty police officers worked four nights a week from March to November 2022, with an added daytime shift scheduled for the last five weeks of the program. In total, officers worked over 3,000 hours, were involved in 700 safety incident interventions, made 47 arrests, and confiscated 24 firearms, most of which were obtained illegally. The program's implementation in 2022 was again informed by collaborative feedback shared through the Short North Violence and Injury Prevention Work Group and directly from participants in the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge Program.

As an organization, we believe safety in the Short North Arts District is a state where everyone is free of harm, thrives, and has their well-being protected and their diversity celebrated. In 2022, as predicted, the Short North community experienced growth in the amount of businesses operating, the amount of people visiting, and the frequency with which congregate groups gathered on High Street late at night. Also, as predicted, the area experienced an overall increase in most crimes from 2021 to 2022, with the exception of reductions in key areas like noise, robberies, and felony thefts. However, of the over 700 direct incidents Short North Crime Interdiction Program Officers were involved this year, incidents were less violent overall than in 2021, despite officers encountering more individuals with guns and there being two deaths. While there continued to be issues of concern in 2022, we felt that we made progress toward a safer Short North community for all because we believe that the safety interventions made through the Short North Crime Interdiction Program prevented what would have been an even higher rate of crime with potentially more violent outcomes. Further, we maintained a deeper understanding of issues impacting overall safety. The following report outlines further details of the actions, findings, program impacts, and considerations for the future.

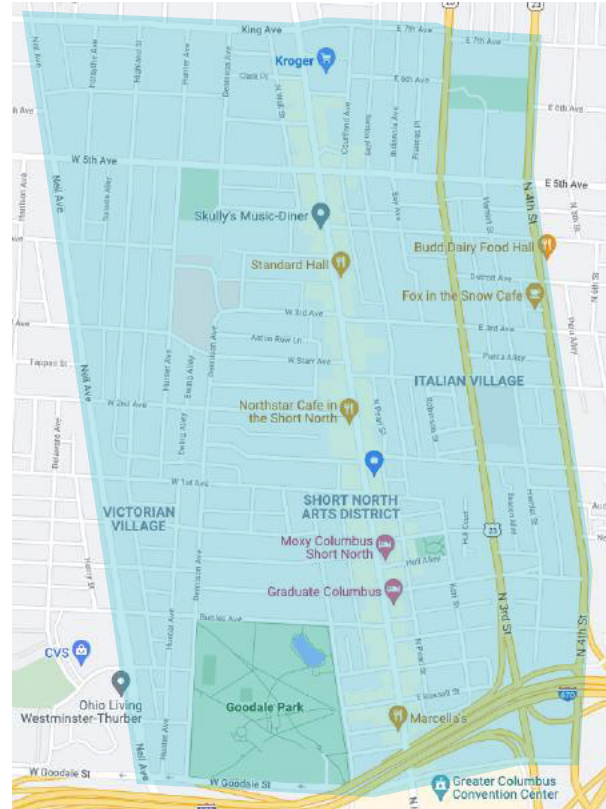
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Overview of the Short North Crime Interdiction Pilot Program

The Short North Crime Interdiction Pilot Program (Program) continued from March to November in 2022 as a collaboration between the Short North Alliance (SNA) and the Columbus, Ohio Division of Police (CPD) to combat the rise in occurrences of violent crimes in the Short North Arts District.

The Program began on March 17, 2022 with light staffing and increased to consistent staffing as of April 2, 2022. The program was funded by private business and property owners participating in the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge program and through public safety grants received from the City of Columbus. The program was administered through a “Special Duty” assignment, under the direction of CPD Sergeant Joseph Curmode. CPD personnel assigned to this Program provided an increased law enforcement presence in the Short North Arts District and adjacent residential neighborhoods of Italian Village, Victorian Village, and Weinland Park with the patrol boundaries of Goodale Street to King Avenue and Neil Avenue to North 4th Street, from 11:00 pm to 4:00 am on most Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. During the last five weeks of the program, additional daytime shifts of officers were assigned to work from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm on program days.

Short North Crime Interdiction Pilot Program Service Area



Goals of the Short North Crime Interdiction Pilot Program

The SNA outlined the following as goals for the Program:

1. Prevent the occurrence of violent crimes in the Short North Arts District
2. Provide assistance to citizens (both residents and visitors) and businesses in the Short North Arts District
3. Address violations that impact the “quality of life” of Short North Arts District residents with these areas of focus:
 - a. Violence and Injury Prevention
 - b. Excessive Noise Mitigation and Law Enforcement
 - c. Traffic Law Enforcement Mobile Food Vending Regulation Enforcement
4. Collect information to improve crime prevention efforts in the Short North Arts District.

All special duty officers working directly through the SNA were asked to practice fairness in their enforcement, provide education first over enforcement based on the circumstances of a given incident with targeted enforcement of some specific crimes, wear and activate body cameras, and avoid uses of force. Officers were ultimately guided by CPD Division Policies, Standard Operating Procedures, and local, state, and federal laws

2022 Program Statistics

I. Operational Changes From 2021

The Special Duty officers began their work full time on April 2, 2022, with a few light-staffing weeks beginning March 17, 2022.

Special duty personnel normally used a “warning based” approach to violators in an effort to educate, instead of issuing citations. However, citations were still issued for exceptionally egregious violations or if the officer determined a citation was appropriate (reckless operation, OVI, parking in a handicapped space, etc.). A special concern of the community was the amount of excessive noise coming from vehicles traveling through the District. Sergeant Curmode observed that traffic density on Friday and Saturday nights in the District dramatically increases, and that traffic is often at a “stand-still.” It was discovered that many of the traffic “back-ups” were the result of rideshare vehicles stopping in the middle of High Street and blocking traffic for several minutes. This resulted in vehicles playing loud music to move more slowly or stay stopped in traffic throughout the District, instead of the vehicle traveling through at a normal speed (it is believed this resulted in the increase of noise complaints related to vehicles.) The City of Columbus, in coordination with private rideshare operators, implemented “rideshare pickup zones” throughout the District at COTA bus stops that were not utilized late at night. This information was communicated by rideshare operators and the SNA to customers via rideshare platforms (Uber, etc.) as well as signage throughout the District, and through local media. This approach aided in the enforcement practices that officers could operationalize for 2022.

The community was also concerned about the incidents of violence and their relationship to locations where mobile food vendors have informally been operating throughout the District. It was observed that after the bars and restaurants closed at 3:00 am, many individuals would congregate at and around the mobile food vendors operating on sidewalks throughout the District. This is believed to have contributed to higher rates of violence and crime occurring throughout the District after 3:00 am due to the crowds staying in these highly concentrated locations. Personnel were directed to enforce the City Ordinance regarding the prohibition of mobile food vendors operating after 3:00 am first via education, with subsequent violations by the same operators resulting in citations. Personnel were also directed to continue being a visible deterrent to violent criminal activity, assist individuals in the District in need, and continue to improve the “quality of life” of individuals in the District.

Program officers also observed large congregation points at in-road dining locations and on patios after the close of business. Program officers provided feedback to SNA who coordinated with various businesses to secure patios after hours and, in at least one instance, remove an in-road dining location due to the prevalence of fighting occurring in that location after close of business.

II. Staffing and Costs

A total of two sergeants and twenty-two officers were scheduled to work during the program. Personnel worked over 3,000 total hours from 11:00 pm until 4:00 am, with an additional team that worked from 3:00 pm to 11:00 PM during the last five weeks of the program in 2022. Table One outlines the average weekly staffing for this phase of the program.

Days of the Week	Number of Officers	Number of Sergeants
Thursday	1-4	1-2
Friday	5-6	1
Saturday	5-6	1
Sunday	1-4	1-2

Table One: 2022 Short North Crime Interdiction Program Staffing

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By utilizing this amount of officers and sergeants, information was able to be communicated more easily throughout the “unit” and personnel became aware of individuals within and unique issues facing the Short North Arts District.

During this phase officers and sergeants were paid by the SNA at an increased special duty rate (\$94 per hour for officers, \$111 per hour for sergeants) and Division cruisers were rented at the contractual rate of \$20 per hour. Costs for are outlined in Table Two.

Resource Type	Total Hours	Cost per/Hour	Estimated Costs
Patrol Officer	2,424.7	\$94.00	\$ 227,921.80
Patrol Sergeant	1,104	\$111.00	\$ 122,544.00
Division Cruiser	650	\$20.00	\$ 13,000.00
Division Bicycle	100	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administration	540	\$100.00	\$54,000

Table Two: 2022 Short North Crime Interdiction Program Costs

III. Patrol Actions and Stats

The SNA provided the unit with an online, real-time data collection system. Data collected via this system was utilized by personnel and provided information on incidents officers were involved with during the special duty phase of the program. Table Three outlines the top ranking incidents and methods of resolution.

Category	Quantity of Runs	Percentage of Total
Traffic Stops	92	21.4%
Parking Violations	176	41%
Fight/Altercations	51	11.9%
Assistance with Bar/ Intoxicated Individual	48	11.2%
Food Vendor Contact	17	4%
Noise from Establishment/ House/Business	19	4.4%
Theft	7	1.6%
Vehicle Noise	4	0.9%
Shots Fired & Confirmed	12	2.8%
Robbery	3	0.7%

Table Three: 2022 Short North Crime Interdiction Program Top Incidents and Resolutions

Officers were involved in over 700 documented incident interventions that would have otherwise not have received as timely of a response or any response during this phase of the Program. However, of the over 700 direct incidents Short North Crime Interdiction Program Officers were involved this year, incidents were less violent overall than in 2021, despite CPD encountering more individuals with guns and there being two deaths. Seventeen percent of incidents logged in 2022 by program officers were violent as compared to 22% in 2021.

Parking violations were the primary incident officers encountered due to the number of complaints and traffic issues resulting from blocked and slow traffic along High Street. Officers had 176 different incidents involving parking violators, with 269 citations issued and 7 warnings given, however the issue was likely even greater in numbers due to it not being possible to provide warnings to unoccupied parked vehicles. Traffic stops were the next most common incident program officers encountered. Of the ninety-two traffic stops performed by personnel during this phase, 54 warnings were given, 38 citations were issued, and approximately 20 vehicles fled with no apprehensions.

Of particular note during this Program year was the number of firearms personnel came into contact with. Special Duty officers came into contact with dozens of individuals legally carrying firearms both on their persons and in vehicles, likely as a result of the new Ohio Law. Officers were able to recover twenty-four illegal firearms with arrests (with four of the firearms being reported stolen). Prior to the implementation of the new state firearms law in June, officers had no shots fired incidents during the Program hours. After the state law changed and during the peak summer season, there were seven shootings in a 45-day period from June-August, one of which was deadly and two of which occurred on non-program days. Additionally, there was one deadly assault. Of shootings that happened on program days, program officers were the first to respond 100% of the time. Officers reported a total of forty-seven arrests for various criminal offenses throughout the Program. Of those occurring on program days, program officers were the first to respond 100% of the time, in most instances providing life-saving measures. In the majority of incidents Special Duty officers responded to overall, they encountered individuals under the age of twenty-five. The officers also observed large crowds of individuals under the age of twenty-one congregating along the High Street corridor after bar closing.

Additionally, personnel intervened with a suicidal individual on top of a parking garage who was threatening to jump off and assisted in apprehending suspects in the Short North who had stolen a victim's vehicle at gunpoint in the North Columbus area. While there were three incidents involving Operating a Motor Vehicle under the Influence arrests, officers reported numerous observations of alcohol-related or other OMVI-related incidents that occurred prior to or outside of their patrol.

There were three incidents that required the use of force involving mace and one use of force involving restraints, otherwise officers practiced education with over enforcement, with targeted enforcement of select crimes.

2022 Program Impact

I. Short North Arts District Crime Trends

To determine the impact of the program and evaluate overall safety in the Short North Arts District and surrounding residential neighborhoods now and in the future, the SNA examined comparative crime statistics compiled by the City of Columbus Division of Police, High Street pedestrian counts tracked through kiosks in the public-right-of-way, and historical business and property data maintained by the SNA from 2019 and 2022. 2019 was the most accurate benchmark year for data comparisons and forecasting, as 2020 and 2021 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and years prior to 2019 were impacted by construction, outdated parking systems, or are not reflective of the present development density of the District.

Our analysis showed the following trends:

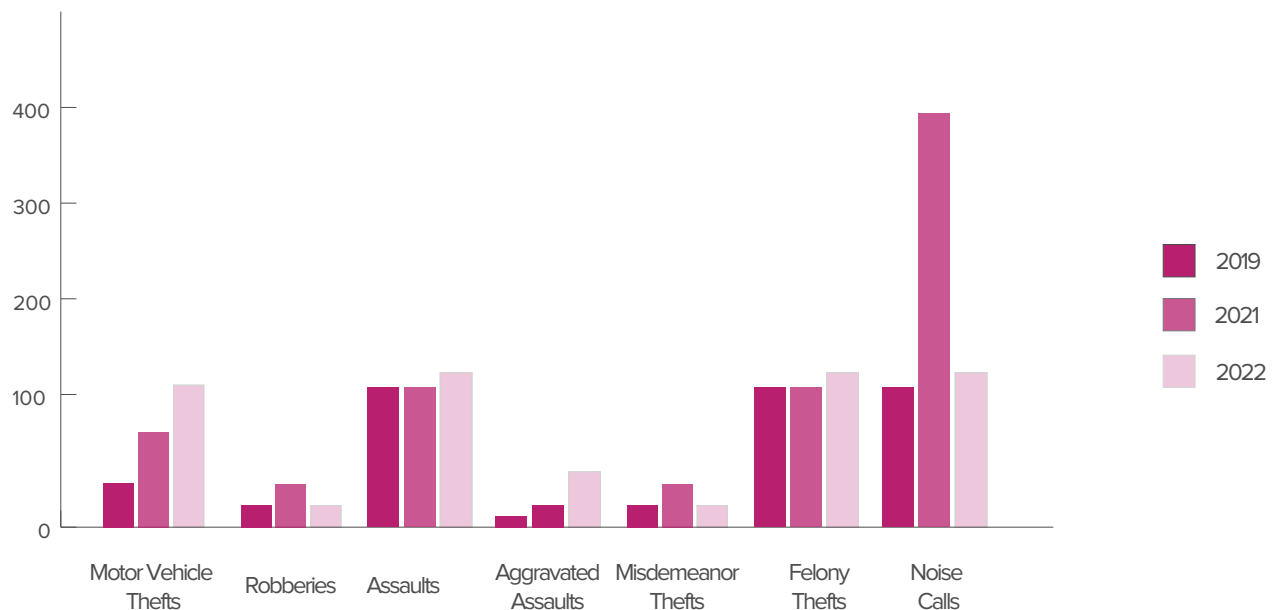
As predicted, in 2022 the Short North community experienced growth in:

- The number of late-night operating businesses (54 to 61, a 13% increase with 6 net new liquor-permitted and 1 non-liquor-permitted)
- The average amount of people visiting increased by 9%
- The frequency of congregate group gathering on High Street late at night, after close of business, and include under 21 youth, with program officers tracking 51 fights

Also, as predicted, the Short North Community experienced an overall increase in most crimes from 2021 to 2022, with the exception of with reductions in key areas like noise, robberies, and felony thefts.

2019 -2022 SHORT NORTH AREA CRIME STATS

Prepared by the Columbus Division of Police



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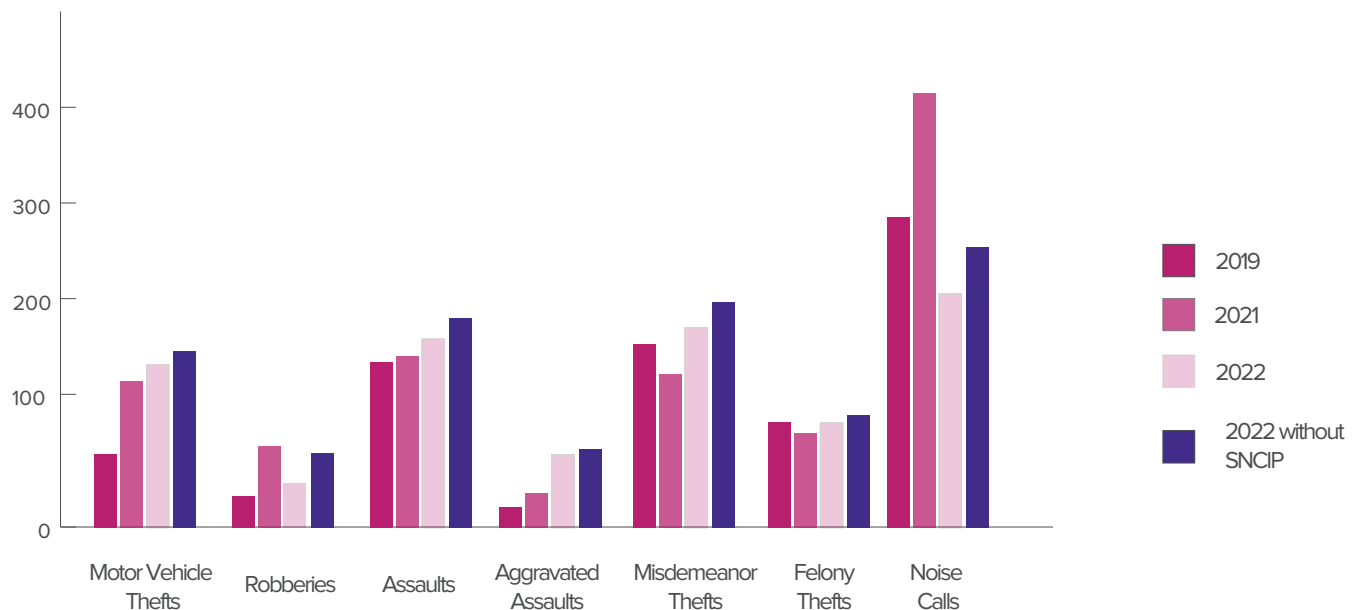
However, of the over 700 direct incidents Short North Crime Interdiction Program Officers were involved this year, incidents were less violent than in 2021, despite encountering more individuals with guns and there being two deaths. Seventeen percent of incidents logged in 2022 by program officers were violent, compared to 22% in 2021.

While there continued to be issues of concern in 2022, we felt that we made progress toward a safer Short North community for all because we believe that these safety interventions prevented an even higher rate of crime with potentially more violent outcomes.

When comparing 2019, 2021, and 2022, as the number of establishments increase, the number of crimes and pedestrians proportionally increased. In 2019 and 2021, every 10% gain in businesses corresponds to an additional 10% increase in crimes. However, in 2022, a 10% gain in businesses corresponded to an additional 20% increase in crime - a rate that we believe could have been closer to the 30% predicted growth in crime had it not been for the Short North Crime Interdiction Program.

2019 -2022 SHORT NORTH AREA CRIME STATS WITH ASSUMED 2022 GROWTH

Prepared by the Columbus Division of Police



II. Other Factors Impacting Short North Arts District Crime Trends

While seasonality factors into the rates of crime, other factors that influence Short North crime include police presence and response, public policies and regulations, and investigative efforts.

The Short North Arts District is served by two police precincts, 4 and 16. When there are priority crimes occurring throughout their zones, on-duty police response is prioritized accordingly. Often, that might result in there being minimal on-duty police presence in the Short North Arts District for large durations of time. There were several times during the Program period, especially in 16 Precinct, when program officers significantly outnumbered on-duty officers working in 16 Precinct, supplementing entirely the on-duty police presence for the Short North and allowing on-duty teams to respond in other neighborhoods. Further, the average response time for priority calls for service among program officers was between 30 to 90 seconds, a responsiveness that is substantially better than the on-duty average of 5 minutes in this zone.

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Further, there were several enforcement initiatives led by the Columbus Division of Police that occurred during the Program period. Operation Wheels Down was a special enforcement effort where police helicopters were used to follow and cite reckless drivers in and around the Short North Area. Operation Moonlight was a special enforcement assignment where Columbus Division of Police officers working on overtime assignments were placed in public parks with added lighting. Operation Unity was a special enforcement effort where commercial business establishments and others operating in the public rights-of-way were checked for compliance. Additionally, from Memorial Day Weekend through the end of July, on-duty officers working on mid-watch patrol shifts were scheduled to patrol the Short North area from 4 pm to 11 pm.

Beginning in July, eight COTA bus stop locations were converted to rideshare only pick-up and drop-off locations through a partnership with the City of Columbus Department of Public Service, COTA, Uber, and Lyft utilizing geofencing. Rideshare users were automatically directed to pick up rides through their scheduling app at the designated locations in the Short North Area. The pilot was continued past its original October 2022 planned end date.

The SNA also led a number of additional, non-police-based safety programs in 2022 to address safety, inclusion, and a culture of care in our community. In August, we began a pilot partnership with Southeast Inc. and their RREACT program (Rapid Response Emergency Addiction and Crisis Team). The program scheduled peer support and social workers working with Short North Ambassadors twice weekly in August and September 2022. It was increased to three times a week in October and expanded to five days a week in December. Team members made hundreds of engagements with individuals in need or in crisis, with 66 receiving direct services.

Further, the SNA offered trainings on fostering belonging and de-escalation led in partnership with the YWCA Columbus, The Ohio State University Department of Public Safety, and Columbus Division of Police. These trainings were made available to all businesses in the District and were utilized by 25 businesses.

Finally, the SNA collaborated with the City of Columbus Department Development and a sub-group of the Short North Violence and Injury Prevention Work Group to create the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge Program. The Short North Good Neighbor Pledge Program is a collaborative, community-wide effort to foster transparent communications among all stakeholders who enjoy the Short North community. Businesses and Commercial Property Owners who sign the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge commit to practice community standards for private business operations that support the economic success of businesses, that foster the Short North Arts District as a vibrant, creative, and inclusive community and leading arts destination, and that prevent negative impacts to adjacent historic residential neighborhoods. Community standards include: Noise, Cleanliness, Safety, Operations, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access, and Art, Culture, and Community. Over 100 businesses committed to the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge and the SNA saw a major reduction in overall complaints reported related to businesses. When notified, 99% of pledge participants responded that they would address the concern at hand, and only 1 business was removed from the program due to non-compliance and lack of response.

These other enforcement initiatives and non-police based programs and interventions coupled with the Short North Crime Interdiction team are believed to have contributed to positive impacts on safety in the Short North.

2022 Conclusion and Recommendations

1. Goals Achieved During Program Period

The Program achieved its goals again in 2022. Despite the increase of firearms observed and recovered throughout the Project, the Short North community experienced a slight decrease in gun violence during the Program period from 2021 and, overall the incidents encountered by the Short North Crime Interdiction Team were 4% less violent in 2021 than in 2022. Further, the community received more efficient and responsive police response during the program period, with police response rates substantially better than the on-duty average.

In addition to goals around prevention, the community had much greater access to more detailed information on safety issues late at night. Officers continued to function as a dedicated unit, not only sharing information directly with one another but sharing information directly with and receiving information directly from the community in real time through the SNA. This resulted in issues resolving quickly, the development of strategies among officers to best meet the needs of the specific and unique safety issues experienced in the community, and an inclusive culture of enforcement that used a system of education first, followed by warnings and targeted enforcement.

2. Future Growth

The Short North Arts District continues with its growth trajectory.

In 2019, evening pedestrian foot traffic from 6pm to 4am made up 22% of all pedestrian foot traffic in the District. In 2021, evening pedestrian foot traffic from 6pm to 4am made up 32% of all traffic in the District. In 2022, overall foot traffic increased on average by 9% month to month during the peak season.

Assuming that we return to our 2019 evening pedestrian foot traffic rates with just a 10% increase in evening traffic, that will bring at least 22,000 people to the area nightly on Fridays or Saturdays from June to September in 2023.

Additionally, we are continuing to see the district grow in the square footage of apartment, retail and dining space in the Short North. In 2019 there was 4,934,187 square-feet of building area in the Short North Arts District. In 2021 there was 5,039,835 square-feet of building area. And in 2022, there were 5,271,368 square-feet of building area. That is a 7% increase from 2019 to 2022, which is up from the gains seen from 2019 to 2021. Due to this growth, coupled with major future regional growth announcements such as the development of the Intel chip manufacturing plan and OSU innovation district, it is assumed that we will continue to have new builds that create new spaces for bars, restaurants, retail and apartments that will draw more residents and visitors to the District, particularly along the 5th Avenue and Fourth Street corridors.

There is also a continued increase in the percentage of Eating and Drinking establishments in the Short North Arts District from year to year. On average, these establishments represent about 30% of the businesses in the area. Currently, there are 118 eating and drinking establishments in the Short North Arts District, 55% of which are geared towards late-night and alcohol related activities. Figure 6 shows that of the District's current 58 late-night operating establishments, 36% have opened in the last 5 years.

In 2021, we predicted net growth of an additional four late-night operating establishments in 2022. In actuality, we saw six new late-night operating establishments. Based on our assumed growth rate and considering that there is presently approximately 19 vacant spaces in the Short North Arts District, it is expected that at least 7 new late night establishments will open on High Street in 2023, further contributing to an environment where safety issues are condensed and felt as extremes if appropriate safety measures and interventions are not planned for and provided.

Together with the growth in late-night operating businesses and visitor traffic, it is anticipated that we could see as much as a 30% increase in crime within the Short North Arts District if trends hold consistent from 2021 and 2022.

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NUMBER OF EATING AND DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS OPENED

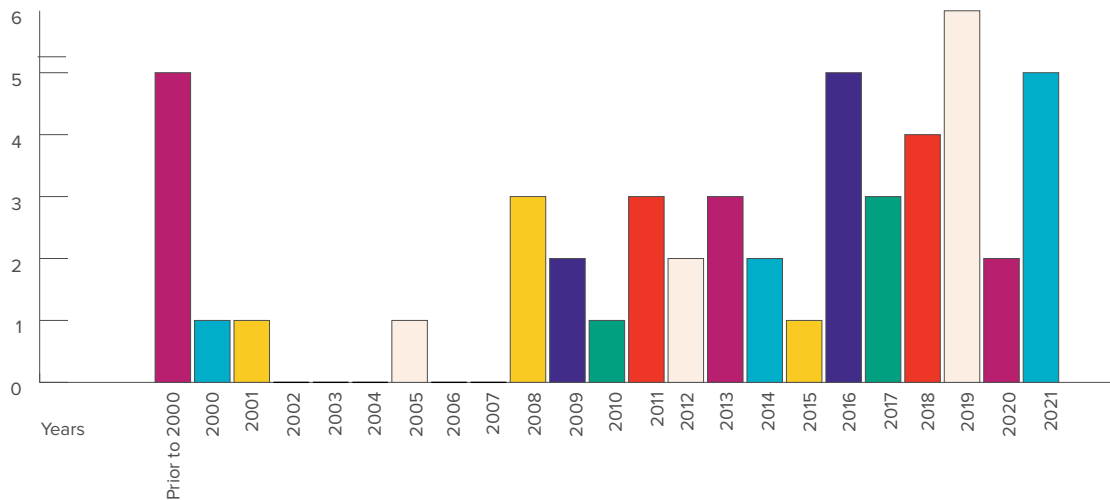


Figure Six: Short North Arts District Late-Night Establishments Opened by Year for Establishments Open 2015 through 2022

NUMBER OF LATE NIGHT + LIQUOR ESTABLISHMENTS PER YEAR

Year Opened	2000 and Prior	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total Opened	5	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	3	2

Year Opened	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Opened	2	2	4	5	3	3	7	4	4	7	3	7	7

3. Future Safety Recommendations

Through its analysis of program results and data, the Short North Alliance offers the following recommendations for how to address late-night safety in the Short North Arts District:

1. Continue to Provide Dedicated, Collaborative Law-Enforcement:

A continued, increased, and dedicated law-enforcement unit presence in the Short North Arts District that shares information and focused on education, enforcement, and continuing safety interventions added tremendous value again in 2022 and should be continued to support decreased violent and other crime through relationships and targeted community-focused interventions. The Short North Crime Interdiction Program worked well to achieve its goals and prevent more severe crime not simply because it was a law-enforcement presence, but because officers working in the program were collaborating with the community and each other to address safety issues and concerns.

2. Gun violence is a public health epidemic, impacting all communities, including the Short North.

The Short North community may have experienced fewer instances of violent crimes committed with guns than in other parts of Columbus, but the density of uses and visitors along with the rate increase of guns used in Short North crimes in 2022, makes the risk to human life safety in any incident involving gun violence greater than most any other area of the City. Potential considerations for limitations in fire arms or other gun reduction education and measures may be needed in the Short North area. Additionally, support intervening in and providing support for youth alternatives could be considered.

3. Traffic congestion and curb management issues continue to contribute to safety issues.

Pedestrian and traffic safety were continuously put at risk due to the sudden stopping and traffic violations of rideshare vehicles. Community noise was also impacted by the congestion vehicles created. Changes to City of Columbus policies guiding rideshare vehicles, providing greater clarity for locations for pick up and drop off in the right-of-way or increasing the penalty for stopping in the right-of-way in a manner that stops or blocks traffic, or extending paid parking periods or other limitations on parking after midnight may further address these safety and quality of life issues.

4. Limitations are needed on pedestrian activity after business close.

Patrons lingering in the public right-of-way after close of business contributed to safety issues. Changes to mobile push-cart vendor operating ordinances, prohibiting operations at times outside of business operating hours and designating locations for operations through permitting and reservations, due to congestion issues, would help to dissipate crowds and limit late night safety concerns.

5. Engage in Theft Prevention Education, Enforcement, and Collaboration

The number of crimes involving thefts of and thefts from vehicles has grown substantially. Many are preventable with intentional theft prevention practices and could be reduced with greater education and awareness of those practices. However, other areas that are targets could benefit from collaboration with law enforcement to better aid in investigations to reduce crimes.

6. Continue the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge Program and other Positive Communications Efforts:

As the number of late night operating businesses and number of patrons visiting the District late at night is expected to grow, collaboration is needed to deepen a culture of care among patrons visiting and businesses operating at late hours. Continuation of the Short North Good Neighbor Pledge program along with a Patron Education Campaign, along with safety campaign messaging could assist with building a more caring environment late at night to avoid violence, prevent injury, and support the quality of life for the Short North Arts District community.



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