

# The Pattern of Utilizing Local Community Wisdom to Support Tourism in Berastagi

Muhammad Ridho Siregar<sup>1</sup>, Cut Nuraini<sup>2</sup>, Ihsan Azhari<sup>3</sup>

Email: [fathanridhosiregar@gmail.com](mailto:fathanridhosiregar@gmail.com)

<sup>1</sup>Student of Master's Program in Urban and Regional Planning (MPWK) Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi (UNPAB), Medan, North Sumatra

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer of Department of Architecture and Master's Program in Urban and Regional Planning, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi (UNPAB), Medan, North Sumatra

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer of the Master's Program in Urban and Regional Planning, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi (UNPAB), Medan, North Sumatra

## Abstract

Although Berastagi has the allure of night tourism, the city is also known as a culinary center, thanks to the presence of the Pasar Kaget. However, previous research has not extensively addressed the aspects of night tourism and the utilization of local wisdom. This research aims to identify night activities in Berastagi based on the pattern of utilizing local wisdom. The two main theories underlying this research are night tourism and local wisdom. The intended pattern of utilization is a roadmap for how night tourism can be better developed. The theory of night tourism identifies 4 main component patterns: economic, social, environmental, and the night atmosphere. Meanwhile, local wisdom emphasizes the first pattern, which is the value of trust, and the second, which is the cultural life that grows within the community. The research method used is qualitative descriptive, with data obtained through interviews and field observations. The research results show that the Berastagi community has felt the economic impact of night tourism, and integrating Karo culture into night tourism can enhance business opportunities and economic growth. Although there is negative public perception of night tourism, the Karo customary institution in Berastagi plays a role as a local force in safeguarding social aspects during these activities. To enhance night tourism in Berastagi, improvements are needed, such as the concentration of night tourism areas and the incorporation of traditional Karo tribal ornaments. By making Karo culinary and culture the distinctive identity, the city of Berastagi can build a unique night atmosphere, providing a different experience between night and day tourism.

**Keywords:** Local Wisdom, Night Tourism, Cultural Identity, Berastagi

Received : October 11, 2023

Received in Revised: November 22, 2023

Accepted: December 10, 2023

## Introduction

Tourism, in several countries worldwide, has become a primary economic source. Tourism activities not only provide economic benefits but also social ones, with the potential to enhance the quality of life for the surrounding communities. Therefore, tourism has become a crucial issue in the development of global cities (Mercer & Mayfield, 2015; Ginting N., 2016; Aytug & Mikaeli, 2017; and Huang & Wang, 2018). One global research focus from the 1970s to the present is rural tourism, which has even become a priority in many European and American countries (Bălan & Burghilea, 2015). Rural tourism encompasses cultural elements such as people, nature, and physical cultural manifestations, and its development is closely related to local wisdom (Roberts & Eldridge, 2007; Nuraini et al 2023).

Rural tourism offers various activities, such as agrotourism, nature tourism, special interest tourism, and rural life tourism, including new activities like night tourism (Eldridge & Roberts, 2008) & (Aytug & Mikaeli, 2017). Tourists visiting a place at night generally engage in activities such as shopping, dining, or simply strolling (Wolifson & Drozdowski, 2017). Therefore, the development of night tourism in rural areas is crucial to accommodate the new habits of tourists and strengthen the competitiveness of local tourism (Roberts & Eldridge, 2007; Azhari, 2022)

The development of night tourism based on rural local wisdom can be an attraction for tourists while also contributing to the economy (Baker, 2015). In this development process, it is necessary to carefully consider local wisdom as a key element shaping the identity of rural tourism. Local wisdom includes values of trust, ancestral advice, and local culture that naturally grow in community life (Markwick, 2018; Azhari, 2017).

One popular rural tourism destination in the Karo Regency, North Sumatra, is Berastagi. Out of the five most famous tourist spots in the Karo Regency, Berastagi stands out. The city's agricultural products, such as fruits and vegetables, are highly valued. Berastagi not only boasts agricultural produce but also has a rich culture and beautiful natural surroundings (Ginting, Rahman, & Nasution, 2017). The city features picturesque landscapes and a cool climate due to its high-altitude location, nestled between two mountains, Mount Sibayak and Sinabung.

Berastagi's uniqueness lies not only in its extraordinary culture and nature but also in tourist attractions like Gundaling Hill, Fruit Market, Mejuah-juah Park, and the Forest Park, among others. Berastagi is a favorite rural tourist destination due to its numerous attractions (Ginting N., 2016). Tourists can also visit Berastagi at night. However, the nighttime destination is primarily the culinary experience at Pasar Kaget on both sides of the main road. Night tourism in Berastagi needs attention due to the high number of visitors. The planned development must align with local wisdom, which is an integral part of the community's life in Berastagi.

Fundamentally, previous researchers have conducted studies on night tourism (Lee, Chang, Hou, & Lin, 2008), (Ngesan & Karim, 2012), (Baker, 2015), (Goh, 2015), (Mercer & Mayfield, 2015) & (Huang & Wang, 2018). Previous research often looked at aspects of night tourism such as how nighttime lighting affects the landscape atmosphere, the behavior of people enjoying night tourism, and the economic potential of night tourism (Baker, 2015). There has been limited research on the relationship between night tourism and local wisdom. For this reason, the study on "The Pattern of Utilizing Local Community Wisdom in Supporting Tourism in Berastagi" is crucial. This study will investigate night tourism activities in Berastagi based on local wisdom.

## **Research Methods**

The aim of this research is to identify nighttime tourism activities in the city of Berastagi by referring to local wisdom. The research approach used is a descriptive method that aims to depict these activities through steps such as data analysis and data cleansing (Newman & Benz, 1998). The determination of research variables, including economic, social, environmental, and nighttime atmosphere aspects, was carried out after a literature review. Primary data was collected through field observations and interviews, while secondary data consisted of literature and statistics related to the city of Berastagi (Kothari, 2004). The results of the data analysis are directed towards generating findings, conclusions, and recommendations that can be applied in the development of nighttime tourism based on local wisdom in the city of Berastagi.

## Theoretical Study

Countries worldwide are currently discussing the role of tourism as a sector capable of generating significant foreign exchange. Tourism, as the world's fastest-growing economic sector, has experienced rapid growth, especially in the last few decades. The focus on rural tourism development, particularly through nighttime tourism activities, has become controversial due to its involvement in aspects such as biodiversity, agricultural economics, vernacular architecture, as well as social-cultural and environmental values (Goh, 2015), (Farhan & Anwar, 2016). Studies indicate that the development of nighttime tourism can be a crucial innovation for utilizing regions and enhancing land functions (Newman & Benz, 1998), (Kothari, 2004) & (Ngesan & Karim, 2012). Although nighttime tourism can have positive impacts on the economy, society, and the environment, it also faces controversy from some urban communities who deem it inappropriate (Markwick, 2018) & (Huang & Wang, 2018).

Four main factors influencing the growth of nighttime tourism involve supportive environmental conditions, attractive attractions, cultural richness, and the presence of nighttime shopping venues. The development of nighttime tourism is considered the best option to break away from daily routines and provide a different atmosphere at night. Governments view nighttime tourism as an integral part of tourism development, considering its economic potential. The success of nighttime tourism depends on comprehensive preparation (Guo, Lin, Meng, & Zhao, 2011) & (Ngesan & Karim, 2012).

Night tourism is considered important as it can enhance the economic value of an area through tourist expenditures. The serene atmosphere at night is one of the main reasons people visit tourist destinations, seeking new experiences with local culture and everyday life. The development of night tourism requires a profound understanding of its components to achieve sustainability and provide a positive impact on the local community.

## Results and Discussion

A study on night tourism in Berastagi City, Karo Regency, North Sumatra, focuses on the potential development of the area as a nighttime tourist destination. Karo Regency, located in the highlands of the Bukit Barisan Mountains, shares borders with Langkat, Deli Serdang, Dairi, Toba Samosir, Deli Serdang, Simalungun, and Southeast Aceh. Known for its agricultural produce and tourist attractions, especially in Berastagi City, Karo Regency became a primary destination for tourists in 2018 (Central Statistics Agency of Karo Regency, 2017). This research is concentrated on areas that have already become objects of night tourism, such as the Fruit Market and Mejuah-juah Park in Berastagi on Jalan Veteran, with the aim of exploring further development potential.

Berastagi City, near the capital of North Sumatra Province, is a favorite among domestic and foreign tourists due to its strategic location (approximately 60 km from the capital). Foreign tourists typically visit to enjoy Lake Toba. The city offers various natural and man-made attractions, such as Sikulikap Waterfall, Penatapan, Mount Sibayak, Kubu Hill, Fruit Market, Mejuah-Juah Park, and Gundaling Hill. Despite being only a two-hour drive from Medan and attracting tourists, competition has increased because Lake Toba is more easily accessible. Berastagi City, as a popular destination in Karo Regency, has experienced an increase in visits, especially from tourists seeking nighttime experiences. Although current night tourism in Berastagi is focused on culinary experiences like Pasar Kaget and local coffee cafes, considering the development of night tourism as a new strategy is necessary to compete in the competitive tourism industry. The following is the research area map:



Figure 1. The Map of Research Area

Over time, enjoying coffee and other beverages in cafes has become a part of the lifestyle for both locals and tourists. Cafes are now not just places to enjoy coffee or other drinks, but also places where people can gather and converse with each other. In Berastagi, a trend of cafe growth is emerging. Besides meeting the current needs of the community, cafe growth also has potential due to the distinctive local coffee flavor that is part of the local products. Cafes in Berastagi are not only open at night but can also be visited during the day. However, visitors tend to come at night due to the cool and relaxed weather. Currently, there are nine cafes in the study area, with two of them producing their own coffee using local coffee beans. The presence of local products, such as coffee from Karo Regency known for its high quality, supports the sustainability of existing cafes.

Until now, Pasar Kaget remains the most popular nighttime tourist spot in Berastagi City. Along the pedestrian path on Jalan Veteran in Berastagi City, many food stalls open at 6:00 PM. This culinary center is open from the evening until early morning, so tourists won't find it in the morning or afternoon. The current Jalan Veteran used for Pasar Kaget consists only of a pedestrian lane. Pasar Kaget offers authentic Indonesian foods such as grilled chicken rice, grilled fish, fried noodles, fried rice, satay, and more. Some stalls also sell Indonesian snacks, such as martabak, toasted bread from Bandung, and pempek from Palembang, in addition to the main dishes. At some stalls, you can find nurung mas arsik and sayur bohan-bohan, but due to the halal culinary concept at Pasar Kaget, not many traditional Karo foods are available. Karo tribe's specialties cannot be consumed by Muslims. Pasar Kaget remains open until 4:00 AM. Tourists usually come from around 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM. Despite being well-known as a nighttime tourist spot in Berastagi, Pasar Kaget lacks designs or ornaments that enhance the Karo cultural impression.

Taman Mejuah-juah is a city park and green open space in Berastagi City. This park is easily accessible by both locals and foreigners as it is located in the center of Berastagi City. Taman Mejuah-juah is a recreational spot during the day and is also used for specific events. Mejuah-juah Festival and Flower and Fruit Festival are two major events that are part of Berastagi City's annual agenda. Taman Juara will be open to the public until early morning during these events. Taman Mejuah-juah is not just a green open space in the city; it also has many facilities, such as a spacious parking area, an outdoor stage, an art building, and an amphitheater. However, it is regrettable that these facilities are not fully utilized. Taman Mejuah-juah is still only used for specific events. There are no regular activities there. Tourists are only allowed to visit on regular days from morning until 6:00 PM. Here are the locations of nighttime attractions in Berastagi:



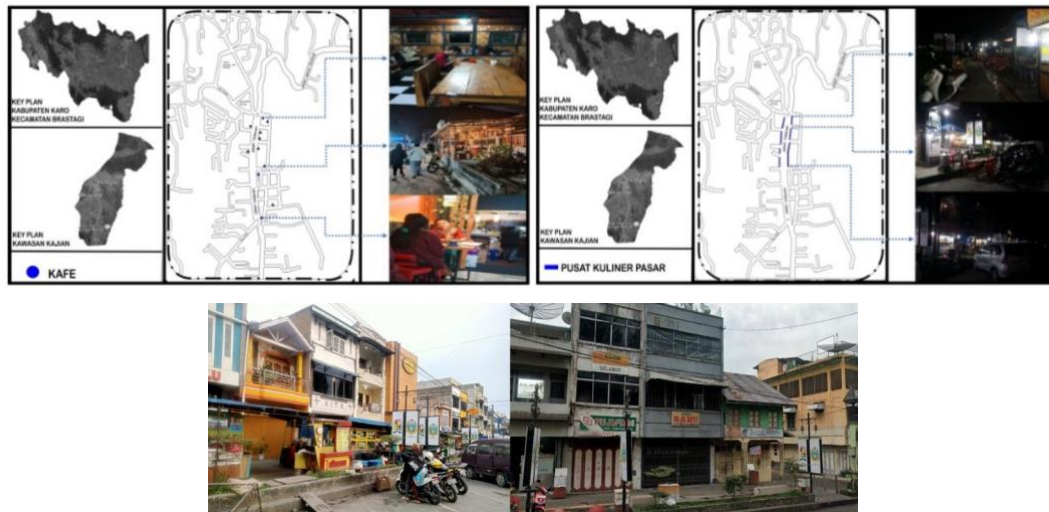


Figure 2. The locations of nighttime attractions in Berastagi

Based on the data collected through interviews and field observations with eight key informants, the data analysis will be further discussed. The literature review results identified four main aspects of nighttime tourism development in Berastagi City, namely economic, social, environmental, and nighttime atmosphere.

### Utilization Patterns Through Economic Aspects

The economic impact of tourism activities is not only felt by the local community but also beneficial for the development of specific regions. Focusing on locally inspired night tourism in Berastagi City, the discussion covers five key indicators: business opportunities, community involvement, uniqueness, events, and economic growth as the first pattern of utilization in terms of economic aspects.

In terms of business opportunities, night tourism in Berastagi City, as part of the tourism industry, provides significant business opportunities for the local community. As one of the main destinations in Karo Regency, this city attracts tourists, creating vital economic activities at night. The growth of this industry is an essential part of the city's creativity, as people have a habit of consuming entertainment at night. The presence of tourists increases demand, creating local business opportunities, especially in the culinary sector.

Culinary, as the primary need of tourists, becomes the most potential nighttime business opportunity. For example, cafes selling distinctive coffee from Karo Regency create jobs and enhance the livelihoods of local coffee farmers. Pasar Kaget, with its main food and snack stalls, as well as cafes, becomes a popular night culinary center for tourists, providing business opportunities for the surrounding community. Not only in the culinary sector, business opportunities in night tourism also extend to the arts and culture sector. Although currently limited to performances at Pasar Kaget, the development of night tourism can create opportunities for traditional artists from Karo Regency to showcase traditional music and dance as attractions. Unfortunately, many art studios in Berastagi City are not active due to a lack of regular performances and support.

Thus, the development of night tourism in Berastagi City brings significant business potential for the local community, not only in the culinary sector but also in arts and culture. These opportunities need to be well-developed to create more job opportunities and have a positive impact on the economic growth of the region.



Figure 3. The locations of Pasar Kaget in Berastagi

In terms of community involvement, nighttime tourism in Berastagi City, especially at Pasar Kaget, has created significant culinary business opportunities. More than 30 food and beverage stalls, including snacks and main dishes, have been established by local residents and newcomers who see the business potential. Although initially only ten stalls, the community's interest in nighttime culinary businesses continues to grow. Additionally, young entrepreneurs tend to focus more on cafe businesses, which, although available during the day, become lively places at night. While the potential for culinary businesses is growing, the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi still needs to involve more sectors, especially arts and culture.

Currently, the cultural arts studios of Tanah Karo are preparing to participate in revitalizing nighttime tourism, but there is no official involvement from the local government yet. Bringing cultural arts into nighttime tourism programs can breathe new life into art studios and help preserve traditional arts. However, the main constraint is the lack of official support and a regular schedule for the involvement of cultural arts in nighttime activities. Artists and studios do not yet have sufficient platforms to contribute actively. Stronger involvement from the local government is needed to establish a regular schedule, support artists, and incorporate traditional arts as an integral part of nighttime activities in Berastagi City. By involving more elements of the community, both in the culinary and arts sectors, it can strengthen the economic impact and sustainability of nighttime tourism in Berastagi City.

Culinary, as the primary need for tourists, becomes the most potential nighttime business opportunity. For example, cafes selling specialty coffee from Karo Regency create job opportunities and enhance the livelihood of local coffee farmers. Pasar Kaget, with its main food stalls, snacks, and cafes, becomes a popular nighttime culinary center for tourists, providing business opportunities for the surrounding community. Not only in the culinary sector, but nighttime tourism business opportunities also extend to the arts and culture sector. Although currently limited to performances at Pasar Kaget, the development of nighttime tourism can create opportunities for traditional artists from Karo Regency to showcase traditional music and dance as attractions. Unfortunately, many art studios in Berastagi City are inactive due to a lack of regular performances and support. Therefore, the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi City brings significant business potential for the local community, not only in the culinary sector but also in arts and culture. These opportunities need to be well-developed to create more job opportunities and have a positive impact on the economic growth of the region.

In terms of uniqueness, concerning nighttime tourism activities in Berastagi City, tourist engagement can be enhanced through products that have local uniqueness. Although the Fruit Market serves as a place providing unique souvenirs from Berastagi City, only a few shops

remain open after six in the evening. During specific times, such as holidays or special events, shops in the Fruit Market may stay open until ten or eleven at night, providing tourists with the opportunity to shop at night. Pasar Kaget, which focuses on culinary sales, also has the potential to increase tourist engagement. Although initially focused on heavy meals, Pasar Kaget should clarify the prices of each menu to meet tourist expectations. Clarity in pricing and the variety of culinary offerings can enhance tourist interest in shopping and spending their money in the area.

The importance of highlighting local uniqueness is evident in the cafes in Berastagi City, where two local cafes, Biji Hitam and Kopita, produce their coffee using local coffee beans. This approach adds a sense of locality to the products, making them more appealing to tourists seeking a unique culinary experience. Cafe owners are aware that providing local products can attract tourist interest for purchasing and bringing home as souvenirs. By strengthening the value of local uniqueness, whether through souvenirs, culinary offerings, or coffee products, Berastagi City can more effectively capture the attention and engagement of tourists in its nighttime tourism activities. Products related to local culture have the potential to enhance the attractiveness of nighttime tourism destinations and enrich the tourist experience. It can be seen in the following image:



Figure 4. The Products related to local culture in Berastagi

Regarding the culinary sector, the nighttime tourism activities in Berastagi City, particularly at Pasar Kaget, offer a variety of culinary experiences for tourists. The culinary sector plays a crucial role in attracting tourists and enhancing their overall nighttime experience. Pasar Kaget, with its diverse food stalls and local culinary delights, serves as a central culinary hub that draws in both local residents and tourists. The culinary offerings at Pasar Kaget are diverse, ranging from traditional Karo cuisine to popular Indonesian dishes. Local specialties such as nasi ayam bakar (grilled chicken rice), ikan bakar (grilled fish), mie goreng (fried noodles), nasi goreng (fried rice), and sate (satay) are among the many options available. In addition to main dishes, various stalls also offer Indonesian snacks like martabak, roti bakar Bandung (toasted bread from Bandung), and pempek Palembang (fishcake from Palembang). These culinary delights provide a rich and flavorful experience for visitors exploring the nighttime scene in Berastagi.

The popularity of Pasar Kaget as a nighttime culinary destination is evident from the numerous food stalls lining the pedestrian street on Jalan Veteran. The culinary offerings cater to a wide range of tastes, making it a vibrant and bustling place during the evening hours. Pasar Kaget opens its doors from the evening until the early hours of the morning, making it a sought-after destination for both locals and tourists looking to satisfy their culinary cravings. In summary,

Pasar Kaget in Berastagi City offers a diverse and enticing culinary experience, making it a key attraction for nighttime tourism. The array of local and traditional dishes contributes to the vibrant atmosphere, attracting visitors to explore the culinary delights of Berastagi during the evening hours. The involvement of the local community, particularly cultural art studios, is key to enlivening nighttime tourism. Creating regular and sustainable events can be a strategic step in strengthening the nighttime tourism economy. In addition to supporting the nighttime economic growth, these events can also play a role in promoting regional tourism on a global scale. Although currently, there are only two major events each year, efforts to establish regular events are essential to maintain attractiveness and enhance the participation of the local community and tourists. It can be seen in the following image:



Figure 5. The nighttime tourism in Berastagi

In terms of economic growth, in Berastagi, it can have a positive impact on the lives of the people and the development of the region through nighttime tourism activities. Tourist visitation data to Karo Regency in 2018 indicated that Berastagi was the main destination, offering significant potential for nighttime tourism development. The success of nighttime tourism businesses, especially in culinary and cafes, has garnered attention from entrepreneurs and vendors in Pasar Kaget and its surroundings. Tourist involvement in nighttime activities helps boost local income and the quality of life for the community. Economic benefits are also reflected in the local government's collection of funds through business permits, restaurant taxes, and revenue from nighttime tourism events. While there are positive impacts on economic growth, there needs to be further attention to adequate development to maximize the benefits. Focusing on activities in Taman Mejuah-juah, with its performance stage and art space, can enhance the appeal of nighttime tourism. The local government can optimize revenue through show tickets and park entrance fees. The importance of making the destination more competitive with other cities and improving infrastructure and tourism resources also needs to be considered to ensure sustainable economic growth. The local government can consider transforming the city park into a center for nighttime tourism activities to support Berastagi's competitiveness with other destinations.

### Utilization Pattern Through Social Aspects

Often, economic activities at night have negative effects. This is due to the fact that the activities offered by tourist destinations at night are similar to the presence of nightlife entertainment, such as pubs, nightclubs, and liquor stores. However, nighttime activities often do not align with the local community. To maintain local wisdom, the development of night tourism in Berastagi must consider the social elements of the local community. The second utilization pattern is through the social aspect, and the analysis process will be based on four criteria: social protection, local culture, new experiences, and tourist activities.



**Social Protection:** The customs of the Karo community provide protection against negative influences and nighttime tourism activities often associated with negative aspects. Cultural values, such as "Mehangke and Sihangke," create an environment that respects and protects the community from harmful effects of nighttime tourism. The Head of BAPPEDA Karo and the Chair of the Karo Customary and Cultural Institution emphasize the need to preserve and guide local culture to introduce these values. Restrictions on nighttime activities that do not align with cultural values can be imposed by the customary institution. The development of nighttime tourism, not only in the culinary sector but also in culture, can change negative perceptions and involve the community in positive activities.

**Local Culture:** Tourist nighttime activities can influence the social life of the local community, especially if the local culture and the habits of tourists differ. However, to date, there have been no tourist activities that have negatively impacted the social life of the local community in Berastagi. The Chair of the Karo Customary and Cultural Institution emphasizes the community's attachment to local culture as a controlling institution for cultural change. The development of nighttime tourism in rural areas, such as Berastagi, needs to consider the socio-cultural diversity and involve customary institutions in preventing negative impacts on local culture. The life still bound by Karo culture in Berastagi is a major strength in maintaining the social quality of the community.

**New Experiences:** The lifestyle and traditions of the local community in Berastagi offer new experiences for tourists. When visiting a place, people seek different local cultural experiences. The Chair of the Karo Hotel and Restaurant Association highlights the importance of simple activities, such as drinking tuak, as a unique experience for tourists, especially from Europe. To date, nighttime tourism in Berastagi is limited to halal cuisine and coffee. The development of nighttime tourism needs to consider halal food, local specialties, and local beverages such as tuak. The experience at tuak establishments, accompanied by traditional music and singing, can attract visitor interest. Although there are challenges in presenting non-halal Karo specialties, proper planning can segregate halal and non-halal food in the nighttime tourism area to cater to diverse tourist tastes.

**Tourist Activities:** Night tourism in Berastagi has great potential for development, given the trend of tourists tending to travel at night. Currently, the cold weather and limited nighttime destinations hinder the growth of nighttime activities in the city. The Head of Marketing Development at the Department of Tourism and Culture of Karo Regency mentions that the cold nighttime temperatures make tourists less interested in nighttime tourism. This creates a challenge for the development of nighttime activities. This opinion is reinforced by the Chair of the Karo Customary and Cultural Institution, who describes Berastagi as a "dead city" at night without activities that attract tourists. Local governments can use the nighttime to attract tourists and develop diverse nighttime activities, such as shopping, finding food, or just strolling. This will not only increase tourist visits but also potentially boost local economic growth.

### **Utilization Patterns Through the Environmental Aspect**

Night tourism in Berastagi will impact the city's environmental quality because nighttime activities will enhance the effectiveness of the environment, which is not only used during the day. This is the third pattern of utilization through the environmental aspect. Land function, lighting, security, regional image, and planning are five environmental factors that will be examined in night tourism.

In terms of Land Function, night tourism in Berastagi has become an integral part of city life, providing vitality at night. Nighttime activities, especially on Jl. Veteran, have increased the value and function of the surrounding land. Although only Jl. Veteran is the main location for night tourism, vendors in Pasar Kaget open their shops starting at 6:00 PM. Dividing the downtown area into night tourism spots is one way to enhance land function, as seen on Jl. Veteran. Pasar Kaget also makes a significant contribution, enriching the land value and providing space for pedestrians. As seen in the following image:



Figure 6. Some places or areas for night tourism in Berastagi

Pasar Kaget enhances the land function in its vicinity as it is located on the main route of Berastagi. Conversely, it becomes a source of congestion during major holidays and long weekends. Traffic jams often occur in this city due to vehicles passing through Berastagi and tourist cars wanting to visit Pasar Kaget at night. The relocation of the night tourism center to a fixed location is part of the downtown, but one solution is to reduce the impact of congestion. According to the Chairman of PHRI Karo Regency, "We need to centralize these nighttime activities at a designated location." Additionally, there is an idea to turn Mejuah-juah into a dinner spot due to its strategic location. If the dining center is moved to that location, the city's downtown routes will be less congested. For now, this also needs to be communicated with existing traders. If this night tourism center is placed in one location, the streets of Berastagi will be more organized. Unlike the current situation, Pasar Kaget visitors may experience congestion during peak days. Strategic areas that can be transformed into the city's night tourism include centralized parking, green spaces, and open areas (Ngesan & Karim, 2012). Mejuah-juah Park, a green open space that is still part of downtown Berastagi, is highly potential for development as the city's night tourism center. In addition to its vastness, Mejuah-juah Park has various facilities that can aid the growth of night tourism, such as an open stage, an art building, and a shopping and dining center. However, this has not been properly optimized. If Mejuah-juah Park is used as a night tourism destination, it will enhance the land function of its surroundings. During the day, Mejuah-juah Park can function as a city park and become an attractive tourism destination at night.

In terms of Lighting, the development of nighttime tourism cannot be separated from adequate lighting planning. The dark conditions at night require appropriate lighting to provide comfort and security for visitors. This understanding has also been recognized by the local government, which acknowledges the need for lighting planning to support nighttime activities, as expressed

by the Head of BAPPEDA Karo Regency: "In recognizing the potential of nighttime tourism, the local government has designed a plan to improve lighting in major tourist locations. Especially along the road from Berastagi City Center to Gundaling, so that the area is brightly lit. We are starting its development by providing supporting facilities first. The lighting plan is also prepared by considering the local wisdom in Karo, given that Karo culture has various ornaments that can be integrated into the lighting planning."

Night lighting serves not only as a guarantee of safety but can also be an aesthetic element. The nighttime ambiance created through lighting design has the potential to transform the city's nighttime image and add aesthetic value to the urban environment. Integrating local culture into nighttime tourism lighting planning will create a distinctive identity for the city's image. The use of local cultural aesthetics as part of nighttime tourism lighting design will not only beautify the area (Baker, 2015) & (Eldridge & Roberts, 2008) but has also been attempted to be applied in Berastagi. Currently, city lighting has adopted cultural elements, such as the form of traditional Karo houses, creating a distinctive impression for visitors. Thus, street lights not only serve as a source of illumination but also act as aesthetic elements that enrich the image of Berastagi. Here is a lighting design illustration:

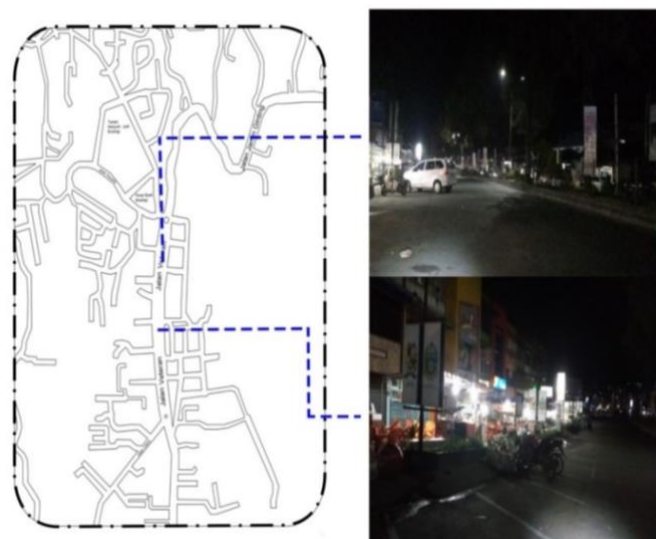


Figure 7. Lighting design in nighttime tourism

Lighting throughout the area is currently minimal and is still in the planning stages, especially from Downtown Berastagi to Bukit Gundaling. This limitation is due to the government's lack of attention to the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi. The statement from the Chairman of the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of Karo Regency emphasizes that nighttime lighting has not been the focus of the Local Government, especially for nighttime tourist areas that need to be equipped with adequate lighting.

Nighttime tourism activities require sufficient lighting to provide a sense of security for visitors (Evans, 2012). Currently, the nighttime tourist areas in Berastagi still do not meet these standards. Government efforts to improve facilities to support nighttime tourism are still in the planning stages. In Pasar Kaget, lighting is limited to vendor stalls with self-funded resources, while access routes to the area still lack proper lighting (Ezeuduji, 2015). This needs to be addressed to enhance the comfort and security of visitors. Taman Mejuah-juah also experiences a lack of lighting, and the government's minimal focus on developing this park as a nighttime tourist destination affects the available facilities. Adequate lighting is only provided during special events such as the Flower and Fruit Festival, as shown in the picture below:



Figure 8. Less than optimal lighting conditions in nighttime tourism

In terms of security, nighttime tourism activities can be vulnerable to criminal acts in a dark environment, but planned development of nighttime tourism with proper lighting can enhance the city's security. The high level of nighttime activities in the city center, as seen in Berastagi, can reduce the crime rate (Ngesan & Karim, 2012). Although Berastagi is considered safe for nighttime tourism, the development of this sector needs to ensure a sense of security for visitors. The involvement of the local community and the strong cultural values are key factors in ensuring security in Berastagi, as stated by the chairman of Lakonta (Lembaga Adat dan Budaya Karo). The local community can contribute to maintaining security, including involving traditional martial arts such as *ndikar*, a traditional martial art or *silat* unique to the Karo people. The future plan is to make Lakonta the cultural-based front guard for nighttime tourism security. However, security in the development of nighttime tourism remains a concern, and the community supports government efforts to combat drugs and alcohol.

The familial atmosphere and the community's adherence to customs provide a sense of security in the tourist area of Berastagi. Although the area is not very large, the camaraderie among the community reduces incidents of crime. Nevertheless, it is important to continue focusing on security aspects in the development of nighttime tourism. The community supports efforts to enhance security, including involving the traditional martial art of *ndikar*. The Karo customary and cultural institution plans to form an *ndikar* community to be involved in maintaining security for nighttime tourism, with the hope that this martial art can attract the attention of tourists.

In terms of regional image, the space formed by nighttime activities in an area can create a distinctive image, influenced by the physical and social conditions of nighttime tourism that affect tourists' perceptions (Lee, Chang, Hou, & Lin, 2008), (Matei, 2015), & (Meliono, 2016). The Chairman of the Karo Customary and Cultural Institution (Lakonta) highlights the lack of tourist attractions in Berastagi, stating that nights in Berastagi feel quiet. Lakonta suggests the addition of Karo cultural elements, such as ornaments and the traditional Karo house's form, as well as the use of typical Karo fabric like *uis nipes* or *buka buluh*, and the use of Karo script on signage in the tourist area. They hope to implement this in 2020, emphasizing that the image of Berastagi City should reflect Karo culture without the need for luxury or modernity. By incorporating local culture into planning, tourism activities in Berastagi can synergize with the surrounding environment, creating a distinctive image for the nighttime tourism area (Bălan &



Burghelea, 2015). Currently, the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi has not shown a clear image. The image of nighttime tourism is limited to Pasar Kaget and the offered culinary experiences, without specific designs or atmospheres reflecting the richness of Karo culture. To strengthen Berastagi City's image with its cultural richness, the development planning in Pasar Kaget needs to incorporate these cultural elements.



Figure 9. Unclear image in the night tourism area of Berastagi

Pasar Kaget, as the only nighttime tourist destination in Berastagi, is only lively on major holidays or long weekends; on regular days, it is less visited. Tourism can influence the image of an area, with a positive image formed through good tourism planning (Hsieh & Chang, 2016), (Jupir, 2013), & (Mercer & Mayfield, 2015). However, nighttime tourism activities in Berastagi, especially in the culinary field, have not successfully created a prominent image for the area.

In terms of Planning, the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi requires careful planning to create harmony with the environment and the local community's way of life. The main goal of nighttime tourism planning is to increase the tourists' length of stay. The Chairman of the Karo Intellectuals Association, who is also a former Head of Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) of North Sumatra Province, emphasizes the need to increase the length of stay through such planning. An increase in the tourists' length of stay resulting from nighttime tourism planning will contribute positively to the region's economy. Unfortunately, until now, the development planning of nighttime tourism has not been a priority for the Karo Regency Local Government. The government's pessimism toward nighttime tourism development is due to the cold nighttime weather in Berastagi. This statement was conveyed by the Head of Marketing Development at the Department of Tourism and Culture of Karo Regency: "...it's challenging to develop nighttime tourism itself, especially considering our cold weather here. The existing plans for developing nighttime tourism focus more on culinary tourism and introducing local culture. Besides the weather, the negative perspective towards nighttime tourism is also a hindrance to its development."

The development of nighttime tourism is influenced by four factors: an environment and weather that supports nighttime tourism activities, the richness of nighttime tourist attractions, the richness of cultural and nightlife atmosphere, and the presence of attractive nighttime shopping places (Guo, Lin, Meng, & Zhao, 2011). Although weather factors can affect nighttime tourism development, the nighttime temperature in Berastagi is not extremely harsh. Therefore, it should not be a reason for the Local Government not to develop nighttime tourism,

especially given the urgency of development now, as stated by the Chairman of the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of Karo Regency: "...now the stay period for tourists has significantly decreased. From 48-52 hours, it is now only 18 hours. This is when we should start planning nighttime tourism so that we can encourage tourists to stay overnight."

In the development of nighttime tourism, fundamental planning is crucial. With a solid planning foundation, nighttime tourism development can provide maximum benefits to the local community (Mercer & Mayfield, 2015). However, until now, the Local Government has not formulated a solid plan to develop nighttime tourism in Berastagi. Yet, Berastagi City should be able to compete amid fierce competition in the tourism industry around Lake Toba. It is expected that the Local Government can facilitate the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi by providing clear guidance to stakeholders, including the direction of development, market orientation, and development goals. Directed planning in nighttime tourism development will create a clear and impactful environment.

### **Pattern of Utilization through the Aspect of Night Atmosphere**

The day and night conditions in a city create different atmospheres, and the atmosphere in this study is the last pattern in utilizing local wisdom for night tourism in Berastagi that can be observed by visitors or residents. Daytime activities are often associated with busy daily routines, while nighttime is more often used for entertainment and relaxation. The analysis of the nighttime atmosphere in the development of locally wise-based night tourism in Berastagi is conducted by referring to four main indicators, namely (1) Model Variations; (2) Distinctive Descriptions; (3) Attractions; and (4) Trademark.

In terms of Model Variations, the development of night tourism in Berastagi can provide a unique experience for tourists, especially by creating a different atmosphere from daytime activities. Unfortunately, until now, there have been no significant efforts to implement these Model Variations, as expressed by the Head of Marketing Development at the Department of Tourism and Culture of Karo Regency. This limitation is largely related to weather factors, which pose a constraint in the sustainable development of nighttime activities. Efforts to enliven nighttime activities are currently seasonal and lack sustainability from the Regional Government. The government's pessimism about the development of night tourism is mainly related to the weather conditions and nature of Berastagi. According to the Chairman of the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of Karo Regency, adjusting Model Variations to the rainy and dry seasons can be a solution, including in food products and the arrangement of indoor or outdoor spaces.

Variations in models can also be applied in cultural arts, such as Karo cultural dances and performances. The scheduling of performances and product presentations can be socialized through booklets in hotels, with the hope of increasing the interest and participation of tourists visiting Berastagi at night. Revitalizing the nighttime atmosphere not only provides variety in products and entertainment but also contributes to better city planning. Unfortunately, the Karo Regency Regional Government has not recognized the importance of night tourism development as a strategic part of city planning. The lack of attention to Model Variations in night tourism development has resulted in a lack of significant initiatives in its development. The Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of Karo Regency and Karo cultural artists actively contribute creative ideas to create Model Variations that can enliven the night atmosphere in Berastagi, including the arrangement of products and cultural performances that can attract tourists.

In terms of Distinctive Descriptions, different activities and lighting between day and night create different atmospheres. The nighttime atmosphere, aided by artificial lighting, has unique characteristics compared to daytime, providing added value to tourist destinations, as stated by (Knežević Cvelbar, Dwyer, Koman, & Mihalič, 2016). Berastagi also depicts a distinctive impression at night, where a relaxed atmosphere for family gatherings stands out. The potential of night tourism in Berastagi, especially in culinary and cultural aspects, needs to be developed according to the preferences of European tourists who tend to seek a clean atmosphere, clear pricing, and light consumption such as snacks, coffee, and alcohol. To develop the potential of night tourism in Berastagi, identifying the preferences of tourists, especially those from Europe, is crucial. A relaxed experience that still provides a new impression is needed to capture their attention. Focus on the uniqueness of Karo culinary and cultural performing arts is considered highly potential. Plans need to be made to centralize night tourism in Mejuah-kuah Park, as a strategic step in line with the vision of the Karo Customary Institution and Culture. The nighttime in Berastagi can be optimized for entertainment and tourism. Separating busy daytime activities, the night becomes an ideal time to enjoy a different atmosphere. This condition can be transformed into a unique experience for tourists, creating a distinctive image of night tourism in the city. Daytime tourism offers the beauty of nature and souvenir shopping, while nighttime tourism can focus on family culinary and the distinctive culture of the Karo tribe.

In terms of Attractions, Tourists often engage in nighttime activities by shopping for food, strolling, or looking for souvenirs in Berastagi. Although such tourist attractions already exist, their development is still basic. Pasar Kaget, the center of nighttime culinary activities, is only open at night. Berastagi also offers various traditional coffees in cafes. Although the Fruit Market is a destination for souvenirs, not all stores are open at night. The description of the nighttime attraction atmosphere in Berastagi can be seen in the following image:



Figure 10. The atmosphere of night attractions in Berastagi City

Every city has a unique way of presenting nighttime attractions that need to be tailored to the preferences of the tourist market. The Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of Karo Regency highlights the potential of Berastagi to enliven nighttime activities through the richness of Karo cultural arts, including cultural performances and local cuisine. Nighttime attractions in Berastagi have not fully emphasized cultural activities, although the city is rich in the culture of the Karo tribe. Karo traditional dances, music, and cultural arts have significant potential as nighttime tourist attractions that enhance the city's atmosphere. PHRI's opinion aligns with the Chairman of Sanggar Seni Karo Persada, who emphasizes the need to revive cultural attractions in nighttime tourism.

Proper development, including showcasing the beauty of nature, folklore, culinary delights, entertainment, and shopping, will enhance the diversity of nighttime tourist activities, providing various options for tourists. Cultural performances at night could become the main attraction that captures the interest of tourists. Focusing on the development of culinary and cultural tourism will strengthen the appeal of nighttime attractions in Berastagi.

In terms of Trademark, visual displays, social atmosphere, environment, and a variety of products and events that tourists can enjoy can form a distinctive identity embedded in their memories of a nighttime tourist destination. In Berastagi, until now, this identity has largely materialized in the form of Pasar Kaget. However, according to the Head of Marketing Development at the Karo Regency Tourism and Culture Office, the desired main identity of Berastagi's nighttime tourism is Karo culture and cuisine. This opinion is reinforced by the Chairman of the Karo Customary Institution and Culture (Lakonta), stating that the identity of nighttime tourism must be strengthened with cultural elements to have an attractive selling point for tourists. The combination of culinary and cultural aspects is expected to change the negative perception of the community towards the development of nighttime tourism.

The types of products and performances offered, along with the physical and social conditions of an area, shape a distinctive identity for nighttime tourism. Currently, the identity of nighttime tourism in Berastagi is primarily focused on nighttime culinary tourism. To change the negative perception of the community towards nighttime tourism development, adjustments need to be made to the activities that are to be developed and offered to tourists. The utilization of culture as the basis for nighttime tourism development is expected to form a positive distinctive identity, aligning with the different nighttime impressions from daytime. The potential for developing Trademark in Berastagi's nighttime tourism also lies in the existing culinary identity.

## **Conclusion**

The development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi, with a focus on 4 (four) patterns of utilizing local wisdom to support tourism in Berastagi, considering economic, cultural, and attraction aspects, will provide maximum benefits for the community. The cultural potential of Berastagi can become a new opportunity for employment and business, especially for artists and art studios involved in nighttime tourism. Regular nighttime tourism agendas, both daily and on weekends, need to be held to attract tourist interest, with full support from the local government to art studios. Negative perceptions of the community towards tourists should not be the main obstacle in the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi. The closely-knit life of the Berastagi community with their cultural values and confidence has protected them from negative impacts. Until now, there have been no visible negative impacts of tourist activities on the social life of the local community, which can be used as a nighttime tourism attraction.

The development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi should pay attention not only to the types of attractions but also to the locations. Currently, nighttime tourism locations are limited to pedestrian paths in the city center, often causing congestion on big days. Consolidated planning of nighttime tourism locations in Berastagi is needed, with Taman Mejuah-juah as a potential option due to its facilities and strategic location. However, proper planning, arrangement, and improvement of facilities, especially lighting, must be carried out by the local government. Highlighting culture and culinary arts in the development of nighttime tourism in Berastagi will create the desired nighttime atmosphere for tourists. Variation in models is needed to change negative perceptions into an appreciation of local culture. The central location of nighttime tourism in Taman Mejuah-juah can facilitate development, creating a new image for



Berastagi. Revitalizing culinary and cultural activities in Taman Mejuah-juah will create a distinctive identity in the form of culinary and cultural tourism. The government, community, and local organizations should actively participate in the development of this nighttime tourism, making culture and culinary arts a trademark to create a unique atmosphere for tourists. The development of nighttime tourism based on local wisdom in Berastagi is expected to enhance the quality of life for the community.

## References

- Amir, S., Osman, M., Bachok, S., & Ibrahim, M. (2015). Sustaining local community economy through tourism: Melaka UNESCO world heritage city. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, 28, 443-452.
- Aytug, H., & Mikaeli, M. (2017). Evaluations of hopa's Rural Tourism Potential in The Context Of European Union Tourism Policy. *Procedia Environmental Science's*, 37, 234 - 245.
- Azhari, I., (2022). Improving Community Welfare by Improving Waste Functions. Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal). Volume 5, No 1, February 2022, Page: 461-470 e-ISSN: 2615-3076 (Online), p-ISSN: 2615-1715 (Print) [www.bircu-journal.com/index.php/birci](http://www.bircu-journal.com/index.php/birci).
- Azhari, I., (2017). The Influence of the Society Self-supporting Development Program (SSDP) Towards Regional Development in Serdang Bedagai Regency. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration*, Inovatus Services Ltd., vol. 3(5), pages 55-67, July. DOI: 10.18775/ijmsba.1849-5664-5419.2014.35.1007.
- Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Karo. (2017). Kecamatan Berastagi dalam Angka 2017. Diambil kembali dari BPS Kabupaten Karo.
- Baker, J. (2015). Darkness, travel and landscape: India by fire-and starlight, c1820–c1860. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 33(4), 749-765.
- Bălan, M., & Burghilea, C. (2015). Rural tourism and its implication in the development of the Fundata village. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 188, 276-281.
- Eldridge, A., & Roberts, M. (2008). A comfort night out? *Alcohol, drunkenness and inclusive town centres*. *Area*, 40(3), 365-374.
- Evans, G. (2012). Hold back the night: Nuit Blanche and all-night events in capital cities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 15(1-2), 35-49.
- Ezeuduji, I. O. (2015). Strategic event-based rural tourism development for sub-Saharan Africa. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18(3), 212-228.
- Farhan, H., & Anwar, K. (2016). The Tourism Development Strategy Based on Rural and Local Wisdom. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 9(3), 170.
- Ginting, N. (2016). How self-efficacy enhance heritage tourism in Medan Historical Corridor, Indonesia. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 234, 193-200.
- Ginting, N., Rahman, N. V., & Nasution, A. D. (2017). Increasing Tourism in Karo District, Indonesia Based on Place Identity. *Environment-Behaviour Proceedings Journal*, 2(5), 177-184.
- Goh, H. C. (2015). Nature And Community-Based Tourism (CBT) For Poverty Alleviation: A Case Study Of Lower Kinabatangan, East Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Society and Space*, 11(3), pp. 42 – 52.

- Guo, Q., Lin, M., Meng, J. H., & Zhao, J. L. (2011). The development of urban night tourism based on the nightscape lighting projects--a Case Study of Guangzhou. *Energy Procedia*, 5, 477-481.
- Hsieh, A. T., & Chang, J. (2016). Shopping and tourist night markets in Taiwan. *Tourism Management*, 27(1), 138-145.
- Huang, W. J., & Wang, P. (2018). "All that's best of dark and bright": Day and night perceptions of Hong Kong cityscape. *Tourism Management* 66, 274-286.
- Jupir, M. M. (2013). Implementasi kebijakan pariwisata berbasis kearifan lokal (Studi di Kabupaten Manggarai Barat). *Journal of Indonesian Tourism and Development Studies*, 1(1), 28-38.
- Knežević Cvelbar, L., Dwyer, L., Koman, M., & Mihalič, T. (2016). Drivers of destination competitiveness in tourism: a global investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(8), 1041-1050.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.
- Lane, B., & Kastenholtz, E. (2015). Rural tourism: The evolution of practice and research approaches--towards a new generation concept? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(8-9), 1133-1156.
- Lee, S. H., Chang, S. C., Hou, J. S., & Lin, C. H. (2008). Night market experience and image of temporary residents and foreign visitors. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 2(3), 217-233.
- Markwick, M. (2018). Valletta ECoC 2018 and cultural tourism development. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 16(3), 286-308.
- Matei, F. D. (2015). Cultural tourism potential, as part of rural tourism development in the North-East of Romania. *Procedia Economics and Finance* 23, 453-460.
- Meliono, I. (2016). Understanding the Nusantara thought and local wisdom as an aspect of the Indonesian education. *TAWARIKH* 2(2).
- Mercer, D., & Mayfield, P. (2015). City of the Spectacle: White Night Melbourne and the politics of public space. *Australian Geographer* 46(4), 507-534.
- Newman, I., & Benz, C. R. (1998). *Qualitative-quantitative research methodology: Exploring the interactive continuum*. SIU Press.
- Ngesan, M. R., & Karim, H. A. (2012). Night time social behavior in urban outdoor spaces of Shah Alam. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 50, 959-968.
- Nuraini, C., Alamsyah B., Novalinda, Sagala, P., Sugiarto, A., 2023. Planning with 'Three-World Structures' : A Comparative Study of Settlement in Mountain Villages. *Journal of Regional and City Planning*, 34(1), page. 55-82, April 2023 DOI: 10.5614/jpwk.2023.34.1.
- Roberts, M., & Eldridge, A. (2007). Quieter, Safer, Cheaper: Planning for a More Inclusive Evening and Night-time Economy. *Planning, Practice & Research*, 22(2), 253 – 266.