

Sugar House traffic plan: concerns worth resolving

There are material, document-supported concerns. The largest are neighborhood pickup spillover, untested curb and screening assumptions, a staffing gap after 1 a.m., and the absence of a quantified assessment of shared intersections during overlapping Skylight events. These warrant a revised, evidenced operating plan before relying on the report's favorable conclusion.

The study includes useful safeguards: a defined River Street route, protection of the Kent Avenue bicycle path, a proposed loading bay, separate arrival and departure streams, and monitoring. Their effectiveness depends on implementation. The supplied material does not establish that congestion or safety failures will occur; it also does not establish that these safeguards will work under adverse conditions.

Study parameter	Reported design case
Patron capacity	1,045 total: 800 Viewing Room + 115 dining room + 50 private dining + 80 patio; approximately 100 staff separately.
11 p.m.-midnight	728 patrons depart while 303 arrive; 139 hired-car pickups + 43 drop-offs = 182 curb service events.
Late close	483 patron departures in the 2-3 a.m. model hour; narrative describes a roughly 1:30-2:30 a.m. departure window.
Loading and queuing	Three to four loading positions; assumed 20-30-second vehicle stops; 256-person entry queue.

Source: GZA report pp. 3-4, 16-19, 21; model A4 and A6. Values are rounded as printed. A curb service event is one pickup or drop-off, not both roadway movements of the vehicle.

How much assurance does this study provide?

Its limitations identify it as a liquor-license/community-review assessment, expressly outside CEQR traffic-impact and DOT curbside studies. Mode shares, vehicle occupancy, screening throughput and other operating inputs remain assumptions or await confirmation. Parking availability was not independently verified. The conclusions assume the proposed management plan is implemented. **Those qualifications materially limit the strength of the conclusion.**

Source: Report p. 30, items 1-7; model A8. This review makes no determination that a particular environmental-review process is legally required.

Page references use the report's printed numbering. The searchable PDF contains printed pp. 3-30 followed by eight model sheets labeled A1-A8. PDF page = printed page minus 2; A1-A8 = PDF pages 29-36.

Curbside demand and neighborhood spillover

The plan counts on pickups spreading onto nearby blocks

Section 8, measure 4, assumes roughly 40-50% of peak pickups can disperse to lawful curb space one or two blocks away. At the upper end, about **70 of 139 pickups** leave the managed frontage each peak hour. This reduces the venue's curb burden by moving activity into the surrounding neighborhood. The report identifies no surveyed allocation by block, available spaces, residential-door exclusion map, or separate staffing coverage for those pickup locations. The cited comparable venues and supporting observations are not supplied.

This is directly relevant to residents' concern about side-street activity. Request a mapped, measured and staffed pickup plan, including South 1st and South 4th Streets where relevant; protection of residential entrances; and a capacity test that does not assume unassigned neighborhood spillover will solve the loading problem.

Source: Report pp. 20-23, especially p. 21, measure 4; p. 26, rover duties.

A short stop is a critical assumption, not demonstrated capacity

The 11 p.m. model has 182 hired-car service events in an hour and places 70% in the busiest 30 minutes: **4.25 events/minute**. Spreading all activity uniformly over an hour gives 3.03/minute. The report assumes stops of 20-30 seconds. Longer ride matching, boarding, accessible loading, maneuvering or blocked positions materially change the result.

Average stop	Ideal capacity: 3 positions	Ideal capacity: 4 positions
30 seconds	360 events/hour	480 events/hour
60 seconds	180 events/hour	240 events/hour
90 seconds	120 events/hour	160 events/hour
120 seconds	90 events/hour	120 events/hour

Illustrative sensitivity, not a forecast: at 90 seconds, even four positions cannot process all 182 events/hour. If half of pickups disperse and all 43 drop-offs remain, managed demand is about 113 events/hour; three positions at 90 seconds offer little spare capacity. These are ideal service limits before variation or downtime, not reliable operating targets. Inventory exactly how many independent positions exist on River Street and in the bay; model them separately.

Source: Report pp. 16-17 and 21. Calculation: positions x 3,600 / stop duration. Longer stop durations above are scenarios, not measured site conditions.

Curb access remains to be secured

The South 3rd Street designation is to be pursued with DOT, and a supplementary Park Kwik pickup arrangement is only proposed. The claim that the plan works from day one needs a verified curb inventory, permissions for the intended operation, accessible-loading geometry and a fallback if the bay is occupied or unavailable. No such approval or agreement appears in the supplied pages.

Source: Report pp. 21-22, measures 1, 9 and 13; p. 30, item 7.

Entry queues, late departures and staffing

The quoted queue-clearance time omits continued arrivals

The report says a full 256-person queue clears in roughly 22-26 minutes at 10-12 screenings/minute. That is essentially 256 divided by the screening rate. **It is valid only with no additional arrivals.** At the report's average six arrivals/minute, the net clearance rate is only four to six/minute, so the same queue takes approximately **43-64 minutes** to clear while those rates persist.

At a surge of 10-12 arrivals/minute and service of 10-12/minute, the queue may stay level or grow; matching average demand is not a guarantee of continuous clearance. Three screening positions at three patrons/minute provide nine screenings/minute, below the claimed 10-12. Ask for a time-based queue model, observed screening performance, fixed door-opening times and a safe overflow procedure that preserves public paths and emergency exits.

Source: Report p. 19; model A8 lists door timing and screening throughput as pending. Calculations: $256/(12-6) = 42.7$; $256/(10-6) = 64$ minutes.

Two frontage marshals end their shifts before the late surge

Table 14 schedules the two River Street queue marshals (Q1-Q2) from 6:30 p.m. to **1 a.m.** The late departure period is roughly 1:30-2:30 a.m., including 483 departures in the 2-3 a.m. model hour. The supervisor, bay attendant and rover remain until 3 a.m., but the table does not specify replacement coverage for the marshals' frontage, smoking-area and noise duties. Clarify dedicated coverage through the last departure and subsequent dispersal.

Source: Report pp. 17, 25-26, Tables 11, 13 and 14.

Several simultaneous jobs fall on the same small team

The five exterior posts are drawn from an approximately 11-person security complement. Entry screening needs another three to four positions while late-event patrons arrive. The two queue marshals also handle River Street loading; the head of security is also traffic supervisor; and one rover covers the bike path, ride redirection, crossings, neighborhood noise and litter. Shared Skylight peaks add corner-control duties with **no additional posts**. A post-by-post schedule should show simultaneous coverage, relief and response to incidents without abandoning another duty.

Source: Report pp. 25-26, section 8.2 and Table 14.

Staggered departures need a workable, safe protocol

The capacity improvement relies on spreading first-show departures across 11 p.m.-midnight while the second event arrives. The timeline still labels the first-show egress block 11-11:30 p.m. Request a reconciled release schedule, holding locations and capacity, a plan for patrons who leave together or request cars early, and review by the responsible safety professionals. Ordinary traffic pacing must preserve prompt emergency exit and must not become an assumption that patrons can be held indefinitely.

Source: Report pp. 17, 22 and 25. This identifies an operating dependency; it is not a finding of an existing fire-code violation.

Shared streets, transport assumptions and parking

Separate frontages still feed shared intersections

The report describes 150-175 hired-car drop-offs for a typical 500-guest Skylight event and reports a 1,280-person combined licensed occupancy upstairs. It says even maximum Skylight use does not change its conclusion, but provides no combined turn-by-turn, pedestrian-crossing or intersection-queue analysis. Both operations use the Kent Avenue/South 2nd and South 3rd interfaces. The report expressly assumes no joint operating plan. Model overlapping departures and arrivals, background traffic, bicycles, park users, garage traffic and emergency access at those common points.

Source: Report pp. 27-30, section 8.3 and limitations item 4. Skylight capacities and hours are reported claims, not independently verified here.

Vehicle service events and roadway movements need reconciliation

The 227 peak-hour vehicle trips are 182 hired-car services plus 45 private-auto trip ends. Model A4 separately doubles hired-car trips for their loaded and repositioning movements: 86 arrival-related + 278 departure-related = 364 hired-car movements. Adding 45 private-auto movements gives **409 movements across the study area** under that no-pairing convention. This is not 409 distinct cars, nor 409 vehicles at every intersection. Require a consistent assignment showing empty vehicles, any assumed pickup/drop-off pairing and dispersal. The issue is incomplete network accounting, not a proven arithmetic omission: the appendix already recognizes the second movement.

Source: Report pp. 15-17; model A4 (PDF p. 32) and A6 (PDF p. 34).

The busy design day still uses favorable, unvalidated inputs

Inputs include 38% hired-car use for late departures, two riders per hired car, 25% linked restaurant/patio trips, 10% of first-show patrons staying afterward, and continued 7% cycling. Late arrivals retain the lower 28% hired-car share. Request named comparable-venue data and scenarios for rain, cold weather, transit disruption, smaller travel parties and fewer linked visits. Bus/ferry demand should be separated: the study itself says ferry service ends around 9:15-9:30 p.m., yet retains a combined 5% bus/ferry share after midnight. This could be all bus demand; the allocation needs explanation.

Source: Report pp. 9-11 and 30; model A1 and A8.

Garage capacity does not establish available parking

The report compares about 45 parked vehicles with a 960-space inventory, but admits independent real-time availability checks were not conducted. Request occupancy counts on representative event nights, simultaneous Skylight demand, public availability and operating-hour confirmation, plus an agreement or workable fallback for patrons directed there. The large inventory may be sufficient; the supplied evidence does not demonstrate vacancies at the relevant times.

Source: Report pp. 9, 18-19 and 30, item 5. FHWA event-planning guidance calls for a parking occupancy study and combined background/event traffic analysis: [FHWA, chapter 3, event operations planning](#).

Specific revisions to request

Ask the operator and GZA for a revised package addressing these points before the study is treated as sufficient assurance. These are proposed requests, not statements about existing legal obligations.

Priority	Requested evidence or commitment
1. Native source	Complete original report, including missing pp. 1-2, and unlocked calculation workbook with formulas, unrounded values, dated assumptions and source surveys. Reconcile minor differences between narrative and model tables, such as 303 versus 311 late arrivals.
2. Curb plan	Surveyed usable curb lengths, active loading-position count by location, current restrictions, agency/owner permissions where needed, accessible loading and maneuvering space, ride-platform implementation, and unavailable-bay contingency.
3. Neighborhood protection	Map assigned pickup areas and prohibited residential frontages. Quantify and manage the 40-50% dispersed pickups; show the plan can function if that dispersal does not occur. Identify who covers nearby blocks and handles persistent activity.
4. Crowds and personnel	Observed screening and vehicle dwell distributions; time-based queue and release model; fixed doors/show schedules; simultaneous staffing and relief plan, including full late-departure coverage after 1 a.m.
5. Combined operating tests	Typical and maximum agreed Sugar House/Skylight attendance; overlapping peaks; background vehicle/bike/pedestrian counts; intersection and crossing queues; empty hired-car movements; parking vacancies; weather/transit stress cases.
6. Measurable accountability	Name responsible managers and fund minimum posts. Set launch-stage observations, reporting dates, complaint response times, public/resident reporting, escalation thresholds and corrective actions. Specify changes to staffing, schedule or event size when performance fails.

What the monitoring plan should measure

Useful measures include pickup location by block, vehicle dwell and waiting time, maximum vehicle queue, double-parking and bike-path obstruction, pedestrian queue size, clearance after the last departure, actual staffing, garage vacancies and logged complaints. Agree on who observes, who receives the results and what changes follow a failure. "First-season" monitoring alone leaves the timing and consequences uncertain.

Source: Monitoring is proposed on report p. 23, measure 14; staffing is adaptive on p. 25. The specific measurable commitments above are recommendations from this review.

The most defensible position

The study identifies a substantial late-night traffic-management task and offers measures that may help. Its conclusion depends on assumptions and commitments that should be demonstrated, reconciled and secured, especially where the plan shifts activity onto residential streets.

Calculations, reference checks and source quality

Check	Calculation / interpretation
Published peak cadence	(139 pickups + 43 drop-offs) x 70% / 30 = 4.25 events/minute; 60/4.25 = 14.1 seconds/event. Uniform full-hour flow: 182/60 = 3.03/minute, or 19.8 seconds/event. The report's cadence arithmetic is reasonable.
Higher hired-car demand	Illustration only: with 50% of the same 728 departures in hired cars at 1.5 riders/car, pickups = $728 \times 0.50 / 1.5$ = about 243. Keeping 43 arrival drop-offs unchanged gives about 286 events/hour, 57% above the reported 182. This is a sensitivity, not a predicted mode share.
Queue net clearance	With a full 256-person queue, six new arrivals/minute and 10-12 screenings/minute: $256/(\text{service-arrivals})$ = about 43-64 minutes. The 22-26-minute figure assumes arrivals cease.

Public guidance checked

NYC CEQR, December 2025, chapter 16: a useful methodological benchmark is to assign generated trips to specific intersections and pedestrian facilities and consider existing demand. Its screening levels include 50 peak-hour vehicle trip ends and 200 pedestrian trips. Sugar House's reported volumes warrant a location-specific explanation against that benchmark; a threshold exceedance alone neither proves an impact nor determines that CEQR applies to this application. [Official chapter 16, sections 200-310.](#)

NYC DOT curb rules: No Standing permits immediate passenger pickup/drop-off but not waiting; the sign alone is not a complete explanation for a passenger-loading prohibition. The report's Kent Avenue avoidance also involves the protected bicycle path and Skylight activity. Ask DOT to verify the actual geometry, restrictions and permissions for the proposed routes and bays. [DOT parking regulations](#); [DOT loading zones](#).

Source completeness and digitization

Reviewed 36 photos, IMG_7399.HEIC through IMG_7434.HEIC, captured in sequence on September 10, 2026. They show printed report pages 3-30 consecutively and eight model printouts. Pages 1-2 and the editable workbook are absent from this set. Folded upper-left corners obscure portions of some pages; the photos retain shadows, curvature and occasional soft text. Critical numbers and the principal findings above were checked against the photographed pages. The PDF preserves all frames and adds OCR and a source index; it does not reconstruct hidden text. Machine OCR may misread words or reorder table cells.

This is a document review with transparent arithmetic and selected public-guidance checks. No site counts, field measurements, crash-data analysis, transport simulation, permit search or independent garage/schedule verification was performed. No conclusion about the operator's motive for providing paper follows from these documents. A qualified traffic professional should validate the proposed operating design and unresolved site conditions.

Prepared with Codex for the user. Public references accessed September 10, 2026. The supplied report is attributed to GZA GeoEnvironmental and dated July 2026.