

ORDINANCE

NO. _____

An Ordinance amending the Columbus Code to repeal and replace Sections 14-14 and 14-15 with new code sections that impose a curfew for unattended minors in the Uptown District, and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the Uptown District from 8th Street to 14th Street, between 2nd Avenue and Bay Avenue, (“the District”) is a diverse area of business, entertainment, recreation and tourism activities; and

WEHREAS, the Columbus Police Department has recorded a concerning number of calls and arrests in the District over the past years as evidenced by the report attached hereto as Exhibit A which shows that there have been 434 cases resulting in 331 arrests; and

WHEREAS, it has been the observation of law enforcement officials, business owners, and other goodwill ambassadors in the District that a large number of the incidents occur in the evening hours and are associated with the presence of a large number of unsupervised juveniles who appear to be dropped off and left in the District during the evening hours; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of this Council to implement a curfew for the summer and early fall months to address these issues.

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY ORDAINS: SECTION 1.

Section 14-14 and 14-15 of the Columbus code which are currently reserved shall be replaced by two new code sections 14-14 and 14-15 to read as follows:

“Sec. 14-14. Curfew Authorized.

It shall be unlawful for any person under the age of eighteen (18) years to remain in or upon any public place, street, sidewalk, park, parking garage, or any other public area within the designated Uptown District (from 8th Street to 14th Street, between 2nd Avenue and Bay Ave) unsupervised by an adult having the lawful authority to be at such places between the hours of 9:00 p.m. on any day and 5:00 a.m. of the following day.

The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to a minor who:

- a) Is accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or other adult having the lawful care and custody of the minor;
- b) Is engaged in lawful employment, or traveling directly to or from such employment;
- c) Is attending or traveling to or from a school-sponsored, civic, religious, or other approved organized activity;
- d) Is a current Columbus State University student and is housed in the Uptown Columbus area;
- e) Is attending or traveling directly to or from an activity exercising the First Amendment rights protected under the Constitution; or
- f) Is staying at a hotel or lodging facility in the designated area.

Sec. 14-15. Responsibility of Parents.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for the parent, guardian, or other adult having custody or control of any child under the age of 18 to permit, or by insufficient control, allow such child to remain

in or upon any public place, street, sidewalk, park, parking garages or other public area within the designated Uptown District (from 8th Street to 14th Street, between 2nd Avenue and Bay Ave) unsupervised by an adult having the lawful authority to be at such places between the hours of 9:00 p.m. on any day and 5:00 a.m. of the following day; except in circumstances set out in subsection (a) through (f) of section 14-14.

- (b) Any parent, guardian, or other adult violating this section shall, upon conviction before the recorder of Columbus, Georgia, be punished in accordance with section 1-8 of the Columbus, Georgia, Code of Ordinances.

SECTION 2.

If any section, clause, portion or provision of this ordinance is found unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect any other portion of this ordinance.

SECTION 3.

This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after signing by the Mayor and transmission to the Clerk of Council, and it shall sunset on September 30, 2026, for evaluation of its effectiveness and whether there is a continuing need for it.

SECTION 4.

All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the 26th day of May 2026; and introduced on second reading at a regular meeting of said Council held on the ____ day of ____ 2026 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of ____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen	voting _____
Councilor Anker	voting _____
Councilor Chambers	voting _____
Councilor Cogle	voting _____
Councilor Crabb	voting _____
Councilor Davis	voting _____
Councilor Garrett	voting _____
Councilor Hickey	voting _____
Councilor Huff	voting _____
Councilor Tucker	voting _____

Lindsey G. McLemore
Clerk of Council

B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III
Mayor