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**OPEN RESTAURANTS: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES PLAN TO EXPAND
RESTAURANT OUTDOOR SEATING ONCE CITY ENTERS PHASE 2**

NEW YORK—As New York City prepares to reopen, Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced plans to temporarily use open space to support the city's restaurants while maintaining social distancing. Once the City enters Phase 2 of reopening, restaurants will be able to serve customers in outdoor seating areas without enduring a cumbersome application and approval process.

“New York’s restaurants are part of what make us the greatest city in the world. They’ve taken a hit in our fight against COVID-19 – and there’s no recovery without them,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “Our Open Restaurants plan will help these businesses maximize their customer base while maintaining the social distancing we need to beat this crisis once and for all.”

The Open Restaurants seating program will include:

CURBSIDE SEATING

Once Phase 2 of reopening begins, restaurants in commercial corridors will be able to serve patrons outdoors in alignment with State guidelines. Restaurants will be able to convert parking spaces in order to use the roadbed alongside the curb for dine-in service. There will be a simple process to register and self-certify online.

Guidelines restaurants must comply with include, but are not limited to, ensuring seating is accessible, bus stops or fire hydrants are not blocked, and seating is located away from intersections. Restaurants must provide their own vertical barricades, planters, tables, and chairs.

OPEN STREETS

There are currently over 45 miles of Open Streets across the city, with continued plans to reach a goal of 100 miles citywide. Restaurants will be able to create seating areas directly in front of their establishments on these Open Streets. The City will also identify new Open Streets on commercial strips with large number of restaurants and bars as it continues to roll out new corridors in the coming weeks and months.

SIDEWALK SEATING

The City will work to create a simpler, streamlined process for sidewalk seating that would require establishments to maintain appropriate clear paths for pedestrians and people with disabilities.

The City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, and the Department of Transportation will monitor the success of this three-pronged program and will be prepared to step in if it creates concerns for accessibility or socially distanced use of the sidewalk, curb lane, or streets.

“DOT is happy to find creative ways to utilize our street space and help the restaurant industry get back on its feet, and start the long process of recovery,” said **NYC DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “Working with our fellow agencies, we hope to not only to provide needed space to break bread with loved ones -- but at the same time promote health and cleaning protocols that will keep New Yorkers stay safe. While eating out will not be quite the same, we hope that we can provide a safe interim option as the City starts to reopen. We thank our Council colleagues and all our sister agencies who helped bring this plan together.”

“Our restaurants owners need help now more than ever and have shared their concerns about traditional practices. This plan will enliven our commercial corridors and provide businesses with a much-needed opportunity to generate further revenue while maintaining safety,” said **Jonnel Doris, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services**. “With the help of our partners and communities, we will work together to support our neighborhood businesses, which make New York thrive, and bring back our City safely and equitably.”

"Our local restaurants are important members of our communities and we need to support them as we work to safely reopen our City. Our City is facing numerous crises and we must act swiftly to address them in a way that is just and equitable. I am pleased that our City agencies are thinking creatively about how to cut red tape in a way that supports our local restaurants, while ensuring that safety remains a top priority. New Yorkers are actively reimagining our City, striving toward a future that is racially just and where the people dictate their needs. I look forward to working with our communities and local restaurants to realize an equitable recovery," said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**.

“I am so pleased that the administration is taking the important step of supporting our restaurants and expanding outdoor dining," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "I look forward to working with them on the many details of this important effort, and in including opportunities for street vendors as well. I'm also looking forward to eating out again!"

“Our small businesses are dying. This will help support so many restaurants that will be able to start making a little income and hire back staff. This is an important step back for all of New York,” said **Assembly Member Harvey Epstein**.

"It's great that the Administration is moving forward with a plan to open up streets to outdoor dining. This will help our small businesses survive the economic devastation and help our neighborhoods come back to life. While we are working to give restaurants a chance to survive, by turning public space into commercial space, we must also be making sure that workers are

protected, including sick days for workers delivering meals, and protections against unfair firings,” said **Council Member Brad Lander**.

“Our streets must be a pathway to New York City’s recovery and not solely dedicated to traffic and parking,” said **Transportation Alternatives Executive Director Danny Harris**. “We commend the Department of Transportation and Small Business Services for advancing this bold initiative to open our streets to restaurants, which will help protect tens of thousands of jobs and preserve New York City’s beloved restaurants.”

“Summer is upon us and people are ready to get out and get back to some semblance of normalcy. With outdoor dining being included in phase two of the reopening it is imperative that the city act quickly to come up with a plan to allow restaurants to expand outdoor seating. We thank Mayor de Blasio for supporting small business and proposing a plan to get restaurants up and running safely and responsibly. As we begin to reopen, we are encouraged by the City’s efforts to streamline the process and increase the availability of outdoor seating. We look forward to working with the administration to make sure this is rolled out in a way that makes sense for businesses and the communities they serve,” said **Jeffrey Garcia, President of the NYS Latino Restaurant, Bar & Lounge Association**.

"Expanding open spaces for restaurants this summer will allow more New Yorkers to get fresh air while maintaining social distancing and supporting local businesses. Reallocating curb lanes is a win for public health, air quality, and small businesses. We look forward to working with the City to open more streets for dining, walking, and biking, as well as allowing restaurants to repurpose curb space on streets that are not part of the Open Streets plan,” said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**.

"Creative responses such as this are essential to the survival of our businesses, our streets, and the life of this great city. This plan shows the administration's commitment to reorient streets away from vehicular use in order to support the survival of our small businesses, who are struggling to balance their fixed costs with catastrophic reductions in capacity within their spaces. By adopting a bold and forward-thinking approach to the public realm, the City can provide opportunities for greater access to open space and help enliven commercial corridors, while also boosting resiliency and reducing our reliance on cars. We look forward to building out this program to also support our retail businesses and help our community get back on its feet,” said **Regina Myer, president of Downtown Brooklyn Partnership**.

“Transforming New York City’s street space to allow for outdoor seating is a critical step for a safe recovery. The City must ensure that our streets and public spaces are being adapted in safe and equitable ways for all New Yorkers to use in the coming weeks and months. I commend the City and its agencies for partnering together and working to find innovative ways for New Yorkers to safely congregate as it reopens,” said **Tom Wright, President and CEO of Regional Plan Association**.

“The Open Restaurants plan is an important step toward a reopened New York and should come as a relief to beleaguered restaurant owners. This is also a moment to rethink street space writ large,” said **Liam Blank of Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. “We look forward to working with the city to establish not only more restaurant space, but to repurpose street space for emergency bus, bike, and micromobility lanes as well.”

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