

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 25, 2021

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

NEW YORK CITY LAUNCHES ‘SHOP YOUR CITY’ CHALLENGE

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Jonnel Doris today announced a new campaign to encourage New Yorkers to take a break from big box retailers and shop at local small businesses. The “Shop Your City” Challenge is a 30-day multi-channel marketing campaign featuring a contest and chance to win a \$50 gift card to spend at neighborhood businesses.

In the last year, SBS has launched 28 initiatives to help small businesses and jobseekers stay resilient. Their resources include a hotline [888-SBS-4NYC] that has helped over 60,000 callers, connected over 5,000 businesses to over \$147 million in funding and assisted 90,000 job seekers.

“There’s no recovery without a full comeback for the small businesses that make New York City great. That comeback starts with all of us choosing to put money back in our own communities,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “The Shop Your City challenge will engage New Yorkers across the five boroughs to put big box stores aside and show their love for the local institutions that have given them so much.”

“Our small businesses have taken a tremendous hit because of this pandemic. The City is committed to continuing to find new and creative ways to support these businesses,” said **Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives J. Philip Thompson and Co-Chair of the Racial Inclusion and Equity Taskforce**. “The Shop Your City Challenge will urge New Yorkers to show some love to our cherished small businesses and help them come back stronger.”

“Now more than ever, shopping locally can make or break a business,” said **Jonnel Doris, Commissioner of NYC Department of Small Business Services and Co-Chair of the Small Business Subcommittee of the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity**. “The Shop Your City Challenge will bring New Yorkers together on a single mission, to shop small!”

The Shop Your City Challenge will encourage New Yorkers to support their small businesses while helping NYC’s economy recover through:

- **Advertising and Marketing:** The City will launch a Shop Your City advertising campaign including significant investment in community and ethnic media, posters distributed to community partners and small businesses, and a social media toolkit.
- **Shop Your City Photo Contest:** New Yorkers will be encouraged to support small businesses through themed week categories by going to www.nyc.gov/ShopYourCity to upload a photo or video depicting how you are supporting a local small business. Participants will be entered to the photo contest for a chance to win a \$50 gift card.

- **Community Partnership:** The City will engage with celebrities, local leaders, and business leaders to sign up for the 30-day challenge and support small businesses. Celebrities will be supporting this effort through a promotional video campaign, including actress and comedienne Sherri Shepherd, radio personality and business owner Angela Yee, and President of New York City’s Hospitality and business owner Melba Wilson.
- **Consumer Incentives:** The City will offer New Yorkers “I Shopped Local” stickers and Shop Your City Tote Bags when shopping small.
- **5-borough Business Tour:** The City will participate in days of action according to the themed weeks throughout the next 30 days to engage with small businesses and encourage New Yorkers to shop locally.

The 30-day campaign will kick off on Tuesday, May 25 with visits to small businesses in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn. For more information on the Shop Your City Challenge, including maps and lists of local businesses, visit www.nyc.gov/shopyourcity.

“Supporting small businesses is more important than ever, and I am looking forward to working with NYC Small Business Services, local BIDs, and economic development partners to promote the ‘Shop Your City’ challenge. It is our hope that shoppers will take advantage of small business month to rediscover Downtown Jamaica and witness its renaissance thanks in part to the entrepreneurship of local residents, business improvement districts and shops, many of them MWBEs,” said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller, Co-Chair of the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus**. “It’s important that we find new and creative ways to support our small businesses, especially those in communities of color that have been hit the hardest during the pandemic. By working together, we can facilitate an equitable recovery for all.”

“As our City begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must support our neighborhood small businesses by shopping locally and encouraging customers to frequent mom-and-pop shops along our commercial corridors,” said **Council Member Adrienne Adams**. “The “Shop Your City” challenge is a creative way to motivate consumers to stay local and bolster small businesses that have suffered during this past year. I encourage all New Yorkers to shop small and support your favorite local businesses!”

"Local businesses are the core of communities across the City and now is the time we do our part to help keep their doors open," said **Council Member Selvena N. Brooks-Powers**. "The COVID-19 pandemic did not spare anyone, including the local businesses that in many cases employ locally, and as the City begins to reopen the Shop Local Initiative will help incentivize support of these businesses to help return to some level of normalcy."

“Our small local businesses were one of the sectors that was hit hardest by the pandemic. It was an unexpected draw back to the dreams of many families. However, it was also because of their resilience to stay open and to continue providing their services that has kept our communities running,” said **Council Member Eric Dinowitz**. “Participating in the ‘Shop Your City’ challenge will provide us another opportunity to give back and showcase that small businesses are truly the fabric of our neighborhoods and communities.”

“The success of small businesses throughout New York City are a cornerstone to a strong and vibrant economy and as we know, the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating for so many of our hardworking entrepreneurs and business owners. I appreciate the advocacy of Mayor Bill de Blasio and Small Business Services Commissioner Jonnel Doris towards supporting our small businesses through the ‘Shop Your City’ challenge. I am hopeful that this initiative will present an opportunity for New Yorkers to buy locally and help neighborhood retailers regain their footing as our great city continues to reemerge from this public health crisis. This program is one part of a robust strategy to get our economy back on its feet and I am supportive of similar efforts that will encourage the long-term prosperity of our small businesses,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene**.

“Whatever we can do to reinforce how important small businesses are to our local economy and support them is another step forward in this recovery. Look forward to New Yorkers joining me and others in shopping at our neighborhood stores and dining at our local restaurants,” said **Council Member Francisco Moya**.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our city and now more than ever, they need our help to bounce back. I have called on our city to make bold investments to boost tourism and encourage local spending. The “Shop Your City” challenge is a step in the right direction, and will help draw New Yorkers and visitors alike to spend across the boroughs. I commend the Mayor and SBS on their work to support our city’s small businesses,” said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

"New Yorkers have displayed incredible resiliency through one of the most difficult periods in our City’s history, now we must channel that same energy into ensuring our communities bounce back stronger than ever” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**. “Our small business community was deeply impacted by pandemic restrictions and as those rules loosen, I want to encourage all of my constituents to support our local retailers and restaurants. Small businesses are essential members of our communities, providing economic opportunities for Black and brown New Yorkers and our immigrant communities. I want to thank the City for helping to promote our local businesses and hope all New Yorkers will take the opportunity to get out there and show that New York is back and better than ever!”

"Our small businesses provide jobs in our communities and personalized service while contributing to the unique character of our diverse neighborhoods -- and yet they have suffered greatly during the pandemic. This Shop Your City campaign provides extra reminders and incentives to shop local during the next 30 days. I strongly support this initiative and urge all my constituents to participate. Small businesses are a tremendous asset to our city, and we must continue to support them this month and every month so that they can thrive and continue to benefit our communities in the years to come," said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

“Our small businesses are the heart of New York City, they are the engine that fuels our economy, providing jobs and keeping the city going even during the toughest times. Economically, our small businesses have been hit the hardest during this pandemic. We as New Yorkers have a responsibility to help them recover, and the Shop Your City Challenge initiative is going to motivate people to do that. That is why initiatives like this one are important and we need to support them. We all need to join the Shop Your City Challenge campaign! Let’s buy

from our small businesses! Let's Buy Local!" said **Quenia Abreu, President of New York Women's Chamber of Commerce.**

"While these past 14 months have caused many small businesses to adjust their operations, we know one thing that hasn't changed, the need for small businesses to remain in our neighborhoods," said **Linda M. Baran, President and CEO of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce.** "The "Shop Your City" Challenge encourages local shopping and in turn keeps dollars local. Now, more than ever, we should all find ways to show a little love by supporting our neighborhood "mom & pop" businesses."

"As we work toward the crucial stages of recovery, we are especially sensitive to the difficulties faced by our small business and restaurant retailers. It is vital to our missions as BIDs and neighborhood stewards to inspire in all ways, engagement and patronage in our commercial corridors, to help support and encourage our valued small business owners." **Robert J. Benfatto, President, Hudson Yards/Hell's Kitchen Alliance and Co-Chair of the NYC BID Association.**

"The pandemic had a tremendous impact on small businesses in Flatiron, NoMad, and across Manhattan's central business districts. As we edge closer to normalcy, it's easy to forget that many of our favorite small businesses are hanging on by a thread and still struggling to make ends meet. When it comes to shopping and dining, we encourage all New Yorkers to think and act locally by taking part in the Shop Your City Challenge this spring. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio, Deputy Mayor Thompson, and Commissioner Doris for standing up a campaign that celebrates the resiliency of our neighborhoods' beloved small businesses," said **James Mettham, Executive Director, Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership.**

"We thank Commissioner Jonnel Doris for creating another great way to encourage consumers to support local businesses," said **Lisa Sorin, President of The Bronx Chamber of Commerce.** "We look forward to working closely with SBS, business partners and organizations in our borough to share and celebrate this Shop Your City initiative."

"The Shop Your City campaign will remind New Yorkers that they have the power to help struggling small businesses survive," said **Jessica Walker, President and CEO of the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce.** "This has been a tough year for everyone. But the coming together of neighbors and communities is what has sustained our city."

"Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Doris, thank you for this opportunity. As President of the NYCHA, a lifelong New Yorker who was born, bred and buttered in the village of Harlem and as a small business owner, I am excited about the "Shop Your City" campaign," said **Melba Wilson, President of New York City's Hospitality Alliance and business owner.** "Small businesses are the fabric of our communities. We employ people and assist in keeping our city safe. The comeback of NYC depends on the economic revitalization of our small businesses. For this initiative we encourage you to focus your efforts on supporting and shopping at NYC Small businesses. After all, we are resilient and with YOU on our side - there really is NO STOPPING NY!"

###

