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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON 1010 WINS

Donna Vaughan: Now, with another snowstorm heading in our direction, preparations are now well underway in the city. Mayor de Blasio taking a moment from the storm prep to join us live here on 1010 WINS and bring us up to date. Good evening, Mr. Mayor, thanks for making time for us tonight.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good evening, Donna. How are you doing?

Vaughan: Well, okay, considering what's heading this way. Why don't we start with an overview, what is the City doing tonight to get ready for this bad weather?

Mayor: Well, our Sanitation Department is out in force, Donna. They did a great job, absolutely amazing job with that last storm. They are out there, got over 700 spreaders that will be out tonight with spreading the salt. We'll have everyone on alert and ready to handle this storm. Look, we expect it to be intense, and you know, start early hours of tomorrow morning and then go through the day. So, the message to all New Yorkers, stay off the roads, it's going to be, you know, very intense snowfall for some of that timeframe. We want people off the roads, being safe at home, and we want to make sure that Sanitation can get out there and do their job. And very important to let everyone know that Alternate Side Parking will be suspended through next Saturday, so a nice long stretch, through next Saturday, so you don't need to move your cars, but tomorrow let's just stay off the roads and let Sanitation do the great work they do.

Vaughan: Through next, Saturday. Okay, that's good to know about Alternate Side of the Street Parking being suspended. Now, you know, city restaurants were already having a rough go even before the bad weather, and now outdoor dining is being suspended on Super Bowl Sunday of all days, you must have some concern about how this is going to affect business for the city's struggling restaurants?

Mayor: Well, I do, but let's clarify that means the outdoor dining that is actually in the roadways, not the outdoor dining that's on the sidewalks, that's an important distinction, Donna, but the outdoor dining in the roadways, the Open Streets Initiative, that will be suspended for Sunday and I do feel bad. Those restaurants – you know, obviously we want them to have a lot of business tomorrow, the Super Bowl, hopefully this translates into take-out and delivery, but thank God, you know, we're going to get through this. It's only going to be a one-day event.

Vaughan: Alright, thanks for clarifying that, so only outdoor dining in roadways is suspended, not sidewalks?

Mayor: Correct, correct. And obviously take-out and delivery will be continuing as well. And also, important to say, Donna, that vaccination centers will be running tomorrow, Sunday, certainly. We intend to have them running Monday and right now we are very hopeful that school will be unaffected, and that in-person schooling will happen on Monday as well. So, we – you know, with every storm you have to see what actually happens and sometimes Mother Nature throws us a curveball, but right now, vaccination centers open, Sunday, Monday. School open Monday in-person learning.

Vaughan: Alright, that's good to know, so if you have a coronavirus vaccine scheduled for tomorrow, you should show up for that vaccine, that it's not been cancelled or suspended, the vaccination sites?

Mayor: That's right, even though we do expect, you know, a meaningful amount of snow. Right now, you know, we're in the six to eight inches range, could be ten inches, and it could be very intense for brief periods of time. This is obviously a much smaller projected storm than the one we dealt with a week ago, so we're able to keep those vaccination centers going.

Vaughan: Alright, now obviously if the weather is worse than expected, there is a possibility you could suspend it, so I imagine anyone with an appointment should keep tabs on the weather?

Mayor: That's right. You never know what happens. Weather is, to say the least, unpredictable. So absolutely, good to check in, good to double check, but, you know, we're making this decision now based on what we know and certainly with the weather we expect, we feel good that the vaccination centers can stay open and obviously people are really – you know, so much want to get these vaccinations done. We want to make sure they get them. So, so far so good. We'll keep updating you and everyone else as we get more reports from the Weather Service. But the good news is everyone is seeing what the Sanitation Department can do. They are going to be out in force tonight. I think they are going to make tomorrow go as smoothly as humanly possible. But again, number one thing is stay off the roads and let the men and women of Sanitation who do heroic work. Let them do the work they do best and keep everything moving in this city.

Vaughan: Of course, and that's always your message with all of these storms and bad weather. For essential workers and others who can't stay inside though, they need mass transit to be there for them. Have you had any conversations with the MTA about their readiness tonight?

Mayor: Yeah, they certainly prepared. We haven't heard of any major changes yet, everyone is, of course, MTA like the city is watching the specifics of the preparation and, you know, the incoming information we get to see what we needed to do differently, make adjustments as we along. But I want to emphasize, this is a serious storm, people should take it seriously, but it's not as bad, based on what we know, as the storm we dealt with a week ago. Again, we're likely in the six-to-eight inches that the city can handle, the MTA can handle, doesn't cause as much disruption, thank God.

Vaughan: Alright, Mayor Bill de Blasio, as always, thanks for making time for us tonight here on 1010 WINS, and please stay safe in the bad weather tomorrow yourself.

Mayor: Excellent. Thanks, Donna. You take care.

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