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MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF CITYWIDE OUTDOOR DINING PROGRAM

Five new outdoor dining corridors to open this weekend in City's latest effort to help local businesses

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot along with the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection and Department of Transportation today announced an expansion to Chicago's citywide outdoor dining program. The expansion will be in effect starting this weekend and will close streets in five additional neighborhoods to continue helping small and local businesses increase operations. This assistance comes as the City continues forward within its reopening framework and moves into phase four this Friday, June 26. All operations will be carried out in alignment with guidance from the City's public health professionals.

"We are thrilled to be taking this exciting next step in Chicago's outdoor dining program following the emphatic success of our initial three pilot streets," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Our city's small and local businesses make up the fabric of our beloved neighborhoods, as well as represent the backbone of our economy, and thanks to this program, many of them will be able to safely welcome more customers, bring employees back to work, and recover from the shock of the COVID-19 crisis. As we move forward into phase four of our reopening framework, we hope to continue to expand this program even further and allow all of Chicago's businesses to thrive."

The expanded outdoor dining program will close streets and utilize the public way to allow local businesses to establish operations outdoors. The City worked in close coordination with local Aldermen, businesses and chambers of commerce to tailor operations of the expansion to best meet the needs of businesses. The following areas are included in the expansion:

- Balmoral Street – closed on both sides of North Clark
- Chinatown Square – adjacent to Archer Avenue from Wentworth to Princeton
- Taylor Street – closed from Loomis to Ashland
- Oliphant Avenue – closed from Northwest Highway to the first alley to the North
- 75th Street – sidewalk dining areas from Indiana to Calumet

In addition to expanding the open streets outdoor dining program, the City has also approved permits for over 30 parking lots to allow businesses to expand capacity for



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outdoor service. The parking lot permits are immediately in effect and will allow businesses to conduct operations in the parking lot for up to 180 days.

Additionally, throughout the City's COVID-19 response the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protections (BACP) has taken steps to remove regulatory burdens and provide financial relief to restaurants. In addition to the Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit, earlier this month City Council passed an ordinance to temporarily reform the Sidewalk Café permit process through the following measures:

- **Reduce the fees for Sidewalk Café permits by 75%**, which would apply retroactively to all permits issues this year. Businesses who have already been granted a permit will receive a refund.
- **Extend the boundaries of Sidewalk Café** into the public way in front of a neighboring establishment, provided that the neighbor is not a retail food or liquor establishment. Cafes must extend continuously, cannot block the door or window of a neighboring property, and plans for extended cafes must be submitted as part of the application, with insurance coverage including the entire extended footprint.
- **Expedite the permit process** by removing the requirement for Sidewalk Café permit applications to be submitted to City Council before issuance. This will preserve the local alderman's ability to review applications on the front end while removing a regulatory burden that can add 30 days to the issuance timeline.

To date, BACP has approved over 1,000 Sidewalk Café permits and continues to process applications under the new, temporary reforms. The City will also be sending refunds for 75% of the permit fee to over 500 business that already paid for the sidewalk café permit in full.

The expansion of the outdoor dining program comes after the successful launch of three outdoor dining pilot corridors on Broadway Avenue, Rush Street and Oakley Street. Over the past two weeks, corridors have provided important information for the City as expanded outdoor dining comes to additional neighborhoods. Based on interest from the participating businesses, hours and days may be adjusted for future dining in these locations. The continuation of the programming is ultimately under the jurisdiction of the local chamber of commerce. For more information on the program please visit [Chicago.gov](https://www.chicago.gov).