



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2022

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT INTRODUCES ORDINANCE TO MAKE EXPANDED
OUTDOOR DINING A PERMANENT FEATURE IN CHICAGO**

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, along with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), today introduced an ordinance to establish a long-term version of Chicago's Expanded Outdoor Dining (EOD) program, which has supported hundreds of restaurants since it was established in 2020. The proposed permanent EOD program incorporates feedback and lessons learned from the past two years to allow eligible restaurants to continue to responsibly operate on the roadway immediately in front of or adjacent to their establishment.

"The Expanded Outdoor Dining Program was implemented during the pandemic to ensure the continued operations of our restaurants while keeping workers and customers safe," said Mayor Lightfoot. "I'm pleased that Chicago is now building upon the success of this program and establishing long-term ways to support our hospitality and dining industries with inviting dining spaces throughout our neighborhoods."

Initially launched in response to restrictions on indoor dining during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program has become a popular and effective way to both support the City's restaurant industry and create inviting outdoor community spaces. Following two temporary extensions, the current EOD program is scheduled to expire at the end of 2022.

"Chicago's expanded outdoor dining program was created as a lifeline for the restaurant industry and has evolved into an integral part of neighborhood vitality, transforming our streets into welcoming public spaces," said CDOT Commissioner Gia Biagi. "CDOT has worked closely with BACP and other stakeholders to use the lessons learned over the past two years to create a permanent program that is beneficial for residents, local businesses, and neighborhoods."

"This is an exciting next step in Chicago's outdoor dining program, which is a fundamental part of Chicago's vibrant dining scene," said BACP Commissioner



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Kenneth J. Meyer. “The permanent Expanded Outdoor Dining program supports small businesses and neighborhoods, as it has done from the beginning of its creation. BACP worked with city agencies and community partners to ensure the program provides the framework for success.”

The proposed permanent EOD program would establish an Outdoor Dining Street Permit, issued by CDOT, to allow establishments with a valid Retail Food Establishment, Tavern, or Consumption on Premises-Incidental Activity liquor license to expand operations into the street. Permits would be valid from May 1st through October 31st on an annual basis, and establishments would be required to follow all rules and regulations. To improve accessibility, the new permit would allow restaurants to operate in curb lanes where the adjacent sidewalk is not wide enough to accommodate a sidewalk café. Full street closures would continue to be allowed for groups of three or more businesses.

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