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Ask the Mayor

Muriel Bowser
Mayor

Mayor Bowser Invests $4 Million to Help Small Businesses Continue Outdoor Dining Through Winter Months

Monday, September 21, 2020
Businesses Can Apply for Streatery Winter Ready Grants Starting Today

(Washington, DC) – Today, Mayor Muriel Bowser announced the investment of $4 million through the new Streatery Winter Ready Grant program to assist restaurants as they winterize their outdoor dining areas and maintain outdoor dining operations through the colder months. The Mayor's Office of Nightlife & Culture (MONC), along with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), will provide grant recipients with $6,000 to purchase winterization materials such as tents, heaters, propane, lighting, furniture, advertising cost, and more. Businesses can apply starting Monday, September 21, by visiting coronavirus.dc.gov/recovery-business.

"Businesses have been reimagining their outdoor spaces to increase seating capacity, and we have been working throughout the pandemic to cut red tape and provide funding to support this hard-hit industry," said Mayor Bowser. "The Streatery Winter Ready Grant program will keep our outdoor spaces open and more employees at work. We encourage residents to continue supporting local restaurants through both in-person and take-out/delivery options."

The Streatery Winter Ready Grant Program will be housed in the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture. The Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) and the Latin Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) will accept, review, and approve incoming applications. The funds will be available to both food retailers/restaurants and non-food retailers that have an active Sidewalk Cafe Permit (public space), Temporary Sidewalk Cafe Permit (also known as a Streatery), or an Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) Summer Garden (private space) or Sidewalk Cafe Endorsement. While the application deadline is October 31, 2020,

applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the funds are exhausted. As of September 18, 2020, the District has approved 594 temporary outdoor dining permits (streateries), including 473 restaurants with new or expanded outdoor dining on public space, 20 retailers, 5 plazas, and 4 alleys. The District currently has 435 Summer Gardens.

"As nightlife operators and employees continue to be severely impacted by a global pandemic, we continue to identify ways that District Government can provide short-term and long-term relief to the industry," said Shawn Townsend, Director of the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture. "We remain steadfast in identifying ways that assistance can be provided. I appreciate the efforts across District agencies to allow us to offer the Streatery Winter Ready Grant Program and additional relief opportunities."

"DC residents and businesses are resilient, and Mayor Bowser has directed us to do all that we can to support residents and businesses weather the pandemic. The Streatery Winter Ready Grant program allows us to help them do just that – literally," said John Falcicchio, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. "We know that our local businesses are not going to let weather be a barrier to serving customers in the way that is safe and enjoyable."

In addition to the Streatery Winter Ready Grant, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services will be temporarily waiving fees for food retailers to obtain tent and propane permits.

Mayor Bowser also announced that the District's current insurance requirements for Sidewalk Cafes, Streateries, and Parklets will be extended through January 1, 2022. The Office of Risk Management's (ORM) new insurance requirements for outdoor cafes and retail businesses were originally slated to go into effect on January 1, 2021. To find updated outdoor dining insurance requirements, visit here.

"The number one priority for restaurateurs has been the combined safety of their employees and customers. They know that everyone's comfort level is slightly different when it comes to supporting their local restaurants, and this additional relief will help businesses offset costs and extend outdoor service as we work our way through colder months," said Kathy Hollinger, President and CEO of the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW).