



Date: May 28, 2020

Topic: Small Business Task Force – Recent Initiatives Update

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For the past few weeks, the Melrose Small Business Task force has been actively engaged with small business owners (SBOs) to better understand their short and long- term needs, as stores and restaurants in the City of Melrose plan to reopen. The Melrose Small Business Task Force wants to ensure business owners and their customers feel comfortable visiting, dining and shopping in our community.

Here are just a few examples of what has been done, as well as several ongoing initiatives being explored:

- **Online Survey** - conducted a survey for small business owners to learn more about overall impact to their business, which will allow the Task Force to formulate a mitigation strategy to better address those needs.
- **Reopening Safety Guidelines** – provided small business owners with a complete list of safety procedures, per State guidelines and CDC recommendations.
- **Small Business “Reopening” packages** - partnered with Melrose-based Garden Remedies and the City’s health department to create packages that include hand sanitizer and disposable masks. These packages will be distributed to local businesses through the Melrose Chamber of Commerce.
- **“Melrose – Back in Business”** – created a new tagline and logo for a banner above Main Street and to be used across marketing materials for the City upon reopening.
- **“Thank You, Essential Workers” Mural funding/planning** – we are working with Follow Your Art to create a temporary mural on the side of the YMCA on Main Street that will

recognize and thank local essential business workers. Funding has been secured and this is looking to launch in June.

- **Curbside Parking** – We have worked with the traffic commission to obtain approvals for dedicated parking spaces that will be used for short-term “curbside parking.” These parking spaces will provide a curbside customer pick-up amenity for our local restaurants and retailers. We hope to have this implemented shortly.
- **Parklets** – working with the Commonwealth of MA to determine the process and timing for approvals to have “parklets” around Melrose. Parklets are a sidewalk extension that provides more space and amenities for customers using the sidewalk and street. Parklets could provide restaurants with additional outdoor seating capacity, as well as create a comfortable outdoor experience for customers. The Task Force is working with our full-service restaurant owners to determine interest level and viability.
- **Creating more space along Main Street** – we are exploring ways to better utilize the downtown portion of Main Street to allow for a comfortable pedestrian and customer experience. This could be achieved by closing down a portion of Main Street to vehicular traffic on specific days/evenings during the week. The Task Force is in discussions with surrounding business owners and residents to better understand the positive and negative impacts. Any shutdown would not occur until future reopening phases are in effect for the State of MA. We will be ready to plan and implement quickly when the timing is right, as mandated by the state.

The Small Business Task Force will continue to work on these key initiatives and provide updates and they continue to evolve. We are very excited about “getting back to business” with the community and are committed to doing everything we can to make it safe to do so.

If you have any questions or ideas, feel free to email Patrick Prendergast, Mayor’s Chief of Staff at [PPrendergast@cityofmelrose.org](mailto:PPrendergast@cityofmelrose.org).

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