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News

- Front Page
- Feature Stories
- Local News
- Crimes & Cases
- Political
- Sports
- Schools
- Obituaries

Op-Ed

- Editorial
- Columns

People & Culture

- Photo Gallery
- Arts & Leisure

Links

- About Us
- Editorial Department
- Advertising/Sales
- View Classifieds
- Post A Classified
- Subscriptions
- Webmaster
- History
- Archive

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City Program Helps Restaurants Open Faster

Streamlined Application Process



Mayor Michael Bloomberg (at podium) came to the Tacos Tulcingo restaurant on the Elmhurst/Jackson Heights border last Tuesday, Jan. 3, to announce that over 500 new restaurants have opened across the city with the assistance of the "New Business Acceleration Team." Shown along with the mayor are City Council Speaker Christine Quinn (at left), Tacos Tulcingo Owner Modesto Ramirez and Andrew Rigie of the New York State Restaurant Association. (photo: Nicholas Biondo)

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn announced last Tuesday, Jan. 3, that a total of 546 restaurants have opened using the services of the New Business Acceleration Team (NBAT), a City Council initiative that allows eateries to go through the city's permitting processes more quickly and speeds up the process of opening a new establishment.

Announced in Quinn's 2009 State of the City address and created in March 2010, the New Business Acceleration Team works hand-in-hand with qualifying businesses to schedule and coordinate review appointments and required inspections from City agencies, including the Fire Department, the Health Department and Department of Buildings, among other relevant agencies.

By helping provide new restaurants with the answers and services they need from city government, the Mayor's office noted, businesses are able to open their doors faster—and, in the process, create jobs for New Yorkers sooner than planned and generate additional revenue for the city. The mayor and speaker made the announcement at Tacos Tulcingo restaurant on the Elmhurst/Jackson Heights border, the 500th restaurant the New Business Acceleration Team has

helped launch. They were also joined by New York State Restaurant Association Executive Vice President Andrew Rigie and restaurant owner Modesto Ramirez.

"Helping new restaurants open faster is good for the entire city—be-

-SEE EATERIES ON PG. 59- cause the sooner they open, the sooner they can create jobs," said Bloomberg. "That's exactly why we partnered with the City Council to create the New Business Acceleration Team. By streamlining the process and making it easier to work with city government, we're encouraging businesses to open, create jobs and generate additional economic activity in all five boroughs."

"The Council conceived NBAT in response to a persistent problem restaurateurs told us about: the disproportionate amount of time it took to open a new business," said City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "We knew that by working with the owners and better coordinating government, we could fix this problem and reduce opening times—and we did. The great news is that under the new NBAT model, we have helped more than 500 restaurants open two months more quickly. That's two months more of salaries being paid, revenue being generated and jobs being created per restaurant. This initiative is a testament to the City Council's and Bloomberg Administration's shared dedication to helping small businesses succeed. We look forward to continue working together to expand this pilot program to other sectors."

More than half of the 546 restaurants assisted by the New Business Acceleration Team are located outside Manhattan. Together, these 546 new restaurants have created 6,012 new jobs for New Yorkers, including immigrants and those who are just starting up the economic ladder.

By helping businesses, on average, open their doors 72 days sooner, the New Business Acceleration Team's accelerated openings have also generated \$9 million in additional tax revenue and \$50 million in additional sales revenue, according to the Mayor's office.

Under the New Business Acceleration program, every application for a new restaurant is assigned a case manager who guides the restaurant owner through the entire process. The case manager is on hand to make sure every restaurant owner navigates the permitting process as efficiently as possible.

Inspections—typically the most time-consuming part of opening a restaurant—are conducted by a coordinated team of inspectors from the Department of Buildings, the Fire Department, the Department of Environment Protection and other relevant agencies. As a result, the process is streamlined and more efficient, and a fire safety inspection that in the past might have taken more than a month to schedule and complete, for instance, now only takes a few days.

"It's a joy to welcome Modesto Ramirez's Tacos Tulcingo to Jackson Heights. Taco Tulcingo is now the 500th restaurant to open its doors thanks to the New Business Acceleration Team Program, which has been such an effective public-private partnership between small business owners and the City of New York," said Rep. Joe Crowley. "Mr. Ramirez's story is a truly American story. He arrived in New York seeking a better life for his family; he worked

hard and is now opening his own restaurant, becoming his own boss, and living the American Dream. It's great to have him and his business in our community."

"The New York City Council and the Bloomberg Administration, collaborating with restaurateurs across the five boroughs are making great strides towards taking the red-tape out of opening a business," said City Council Member Diana Reyna, chair of the Committee on Small Business. "Restaurants reflect the diversity of community and are vital to our neighborhoods by providing jobs, culture and cuisine. The New Business Acceleration Team is focused on knocking down barriers in the path of men and women hoping to take a chance, follow a dream, and start a business."

"The NBAT is an important partnership which provides important services to entrepreneurs looking to open a business in this great City," said City Council Member Julissa Ferreras. "We need to continue providing this kind of support to our entrepreneurs, so they can open their doors, create jobs and achieve their own American Dream."

"The New Business Acceleration Program is truly innovative and takes a forward thinking approach to assisting businesses get off the ground in a much more efficient manner," said City Council Member Karen Koslowitz. "By working as a partner with new restaurants, city government is helping entrepreneurs during these tough times. I applaud Speaker Quinn and Mayor Bloomberg's leadership on the success of this important initiative."

Because of the success of the New Business Acceleration Team in assisting restaurants cut through red tape and open their doors sooner and more efficiently, the city is expanding the program to reach even more businesses. To learn more, visit www.nyc.gov or call 311.

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