

Nightlife and Licensing

The dining and nightlife environment in CD 3 has changed significantly since the pandemic, lasting from March 2020 through 2021. While CD 3 is a primarily residential district, it has one of the highest volumes of licensed eating and drinking businesses of any community district in the City. Out of the 59 community districts, CD 3 ranks fourth in total number of active liquor licenses according to the NYS Liquor Authority LAMP map.⁸²

Business closures during the pandemic significantly affected many of the community's eating and drinking establishments as well as other businesses, leaving many vacant storefronts. The Committee is now hearing more applications for previously unlicensed business locations than

⁸² New York State. (n.d.). NYS Liquor Authority Mapping Project (LAMP). <https://lamp.sla.ny.gov/>

pre-COVID. The community is also dealing with the continued effects of outdoor dining that revitalized the community when outdoor businesses were opened but now has had unforeseen negative impacts as demonstrated by the increase in 311 noise complaints and rat indexing findings. CD 3 has the second highest number of commercial noise complaints, 4,735 complaints, in the City. Also, CD 3 is one of the City’s four rat mitigation zones — the four districts with the most rat findings.⁸³

As seen in the chart below, the yearly NYPD 311 commercial noise complaints for CD 3 have increased significantly between pre-COVID years (FY 2019) and post-COVID regulation years (FY 2025).⁸⁴ Over this time period, there has been a 58 percent increase in NYPD commercial noise complaints. See chart below:

Commercial/Business Noise Complaints (311 Calls)								
Fiscal Year	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	Change between FY 2019 and FY 2025
Noise – Commercial (loud music/talking)	3,011	2,090	2,762	4,336	4,436	4,748	4,746	
Year over year change	N/A	-31%	+32%	+57%	+2%	+7%	less than -1%	+58%

These conditions have highlighted the ongoing issues associated with allowing numerous licensed businesses within a small residential community. Complaints related to nightlife are difficult to resolve because no single agency has sole jurisdiction over noisy crowds and loud music, traffic congestion and horn honking outside businesses.

Additionally, the City has moved away from enforcement as noted in this correspondence from a CB 3 NYPD precinct: “The city has moved away from wanting to cite bars/establishments for infractions as such..... NYC CURE is a non enforcement unit that wants to help....also recommend NYC Mend which will also arrange a mediation between residents and establishment owners with professional mediators.”

At The September 25, 2025 NYPD budget consultation meeting, NYPD was asked if the non-enforcement policy had been effective. The previous year the agency reported that there had been a 13% increase in bar noise complaints in the Manhattan South precincts. For FY 25, NYPD reported that the numbers were basically flat—there was a .22% decrease. This shows a

⁸³ New York City. (2023). NYC’s rat mitigation zones. Environment & Health Data Portal. <https://a816-dohbsep.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/data-features/rat-mitigation-zones/>

⁸⁴ NYC Open Data. (2025, August 13). 311 Service Requests from 2010 to Present. [Data.cityofnewyork.us. https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Social-Services/311-Service-Requests-from-2010-to-Present/erm2-nwe9/about_data](https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Social-Services/311-Service-Requests-from-2010-to-Present/erm2-nwe9/about_data)

significant increase since COVID that has not been successfully mitigated by the non-enforcement policy. The SLA, which issues licenses and has jurisdiction over license compliance, has limited investigation and enforcement abilities. Conditions resulting from the saturation of nightlife businesses are often not criminal but are quality-of-life violations dependent on City enforcement. The non-enforcement policy dictated to NYPD and DEP should be eliminated to achieve a balance of education for businesses, quality of life for residents, and enforcement as a consequence of continued noncompliance.

Dining Out NYC

The Dining Out program is an attempt to administer the outdoor dining program consisting of sidewalk cafes and roadbed sheds while addressing problems that occurred during the temporary program. Previous problems were rats, noise, garbage, and badly maintained roadbed sheds. The new permanent program has addressed rats but has at the same time created new problems and a tremendous burden for those community boards with the highest number of outdoor dining permits.

There is a need for DOT inspection and enforcement. Recent observation by the Community Board, complaints from residents, and observations on a walkthrough June 6, 2025 with the Community Board, NYPD, and the SLA showed many outdoor dining violations. The most common were lack of compliance with the approved plan (mostly tables on the sidewalk at the curb blocking pedestrian access) and operation after City closing hour of midnight. DOT does not respond to complaints in a timely manner and has not managed compliance so far.

Additionally, we see examples of businesses that receive summonses that continue to not comply, such as seen on St Marks Place. It seems that some businesses regard summonses as a cost of business for continued noncompliance.