

News from: **Economic & Workforce
Development Department**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**City Seeks Insight from Business Owners on Use of
Sidewalks, Streets to Meet Physical Distancing
Requirements**

Oakland, CA – As Oakland small businesses adapt to current and anticipated Alameda County health orders, City of Oakland staff have heard from the business community and the Economic Recovery Advisory Council that businesses want a simple, streamlined process to use outdoor spaces to support safe reopening. In response, City staff are looking at quick, creative ways that the public right of way could be adapted to meet physical distancing requirements. The goal of the Flex Streets Initiative is to spur equitable economic revitalization by making it easier for retailers, restaurants and other businesses to use larger portions of the sidewalk, parking lanes and streets.

“We want to hear from business owners on how flexible use of streets and sidewalks could help them meet social distancing requirements as they safely re-open,” said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “The City is looking to speed economic recovery through the creative use of our infrastructure.”

As sidewalk and roadway encroachment processes are being reviewed with an eye towards streamlining, a brief online survey has been launched to gauge small business interest and gather insight and needs. The five-minute survey is online in English, Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese at:

https://oaklandca.formstack.com/forms/sidewalk_and_curbside_use_survey_for_restaurants_retailers

Data and insight gained through the survey will inform program guidelines and legislation advanced for consideration by the Oakland City Council.

Learn more about the Flex Streets Initiative at: www.oaklandca.gov/FlexStreets

Flex Streets is the City’s latest business support effort. Other efforts have included launch of the Economic Recovery Advisory Council to provide short- and long-term recommendations to support Oakland’s equitable economic recovery, proactive phone support to targeted businesses, eviction protections for commercial tenants, standing up the Oakland Small Business Emergency Grant program which has awarded \$5,000 grants to 180 businesses and weekly business resource updates to 8,700 businesses and service providers.

For the latest resources and help for business re-opening, please visit the Economic & Workforce Development Department’s website at:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/re-opening-resources>.

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City of
OAKLAND
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