



Small Business First

Better Government. Stronger Businesses.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Small businesses strengthen New York City's economy, anchor communities, create jobs, and add to the vibrancy of the City's neighborhoods. Of the more than 200,000 businesses located in New York City, 98 percent are small (fewer than 100 employees) and 89 percent are very small (fewer than 20 employees). These small businesses employ more than half of New York City's private sector workforce, and often provide a first chance for economic self-determination and a path to the middle class for their owners.

Every day, however, small businesses face a variety of challenges, including multiple levels of government regulation. Steps have been taken over the years to improve New York City's regulatory environment, but the complexity and number of requirements weigh heavily on small businesses that often have fewer resources to navigate government.

In July 2014, Mayor de Blasio launched Small Business First, an inter-agency initiative led by the Mayor's Office of Operations and the Department of Small Business Services to make government more effective and efficient in helping businesses start, operate, and expand. The result is 30 recommendations to greatly improve the City's regulatory environment for small businesses and save business owners time, money, and hassle, as well as increase satisfaction with City services.

To build the recommendations included in Small Business First, the City worked closely with small business owners, advocates, neighborhood and community leaders, and elected officials, to solicit ideas about how best to help small businesses. More than 600 unique comments and ideas were received detailing the specific needs of small businesses across the five boroughs. This report outlines 30 initiatives aimed at supporting small businesses in the ways the small business community says it needs most.

Recommendations include:

Provide Clear Information with Coordinated Services and Support

1. Create a Comprehensive Online Business Portal
2. Provide an Easy-to-Find Location for Businesses on Each Regulatory Agency Website
3. Engage Entrepreneurs in Developing Online Services for Businesses
4. Create a New One-Stop Business Center
5. Provide Individual Support to Business Owners with Client Managers
6. Promote the Use of Handheld Devices for Inspections
7. Ensure Agencies Have Plain Language Guides
8. Create Informational Guides for Inter-Agency Processes

Help Businesses Understand and Comply with City Regulations

9. Deploy Small Business Compliance Advisors to Help Businesses Follow the Rule
10. Provide Proactive Support to Businesses Needing Education
11. Provide Better Customer Service
12. Create One-Stop Hearing Centers for Business Regulatory Issues
13. Provide a More Flexible Adjudication Process by Expanding Alternative Hearing Options

Reduce the Burden Imposed by Complex Regulations and Fines

14. Create an Advisory Board to Provide Feedback and Review City Laws
15. Eliminate and Consolidate Licenses and Permits
16. Repeal or Modify Unnecessarily Complex or Obsolete Rules
17. Make it Easier for Gyms and Health Clubs to Open in New York City
18. Improve Coordination Between the Department of Buildings and the Fire Department
19. Streamline Fire Suppression Plan Review by Removing Department of Buildings' Review
20. Allow Licensed Fire Suppression Contractors to Submit Plans for Commercial Kitchen (Rangehood) Fire Suppression Systems
21. Streamline Department of Buildings' Process for Determinations
22. Streamline and Standardize the Process for Obtaining a Department of Buildings' Letter of No Objection
23. Standardize Department of Buildings' Plan Objections
24. Create a Sidewalk Shed Notification System at Department of Transportation
25. Expand the Department of Transportation's Online Permitting System to Include All Permit Types

Ensure Equal Access for All Business Owners

26. Train Community Groups to Assist Local Businesses
27. Support Businesses by Providing Educational Events in Communities
28. Help Small Business Owners by Connecting Them to Personal Financial Counseling
29. Simplify Critical Materials for Small Business Owners
30. Make Key Materials and Services Available in More Languages

We will begin implementing these recommendations immediately, holding ourselves accountable by tracking progress against specific and ambitious goals. We will ensure that we are saving business owners time, money, and hassle, as well as increasing their satisfaction with City services. For example, the City will reduce the time required for a business to open or work with the City by 50 percent and reduce the incidence of repeat violations by 10 percent in neighborhoods targeted for outreach, training, and support.

Through Small Business First, the de Blasio Administration is pursuing a multi-faceted and expansive strategy to ensure City government works better for small businesses. In doing so, the City will lift up entrepreneurs who create jobs, strengthen neighborhoods, and grow the economy.

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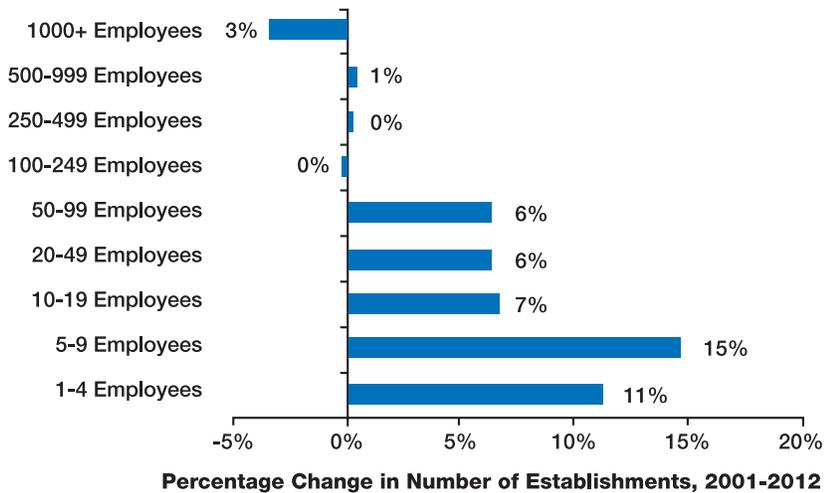
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INTRODUCTION

A City of Small Businesses

Every day in New York City, entrepreneurs open and operate small businesses. These small business owners take tremendous financial risk to transform their dreams into reality and in doing so, they provide the foundation for our city's unique and diverse neighborhoods. For many New Yorkers, small business ownership also offers a first chance for economic self-determination and a path to the middle class. As we strive to create a fairer economy and reduce inequality in our city, supporting those who pursue business ownership is vitally important.

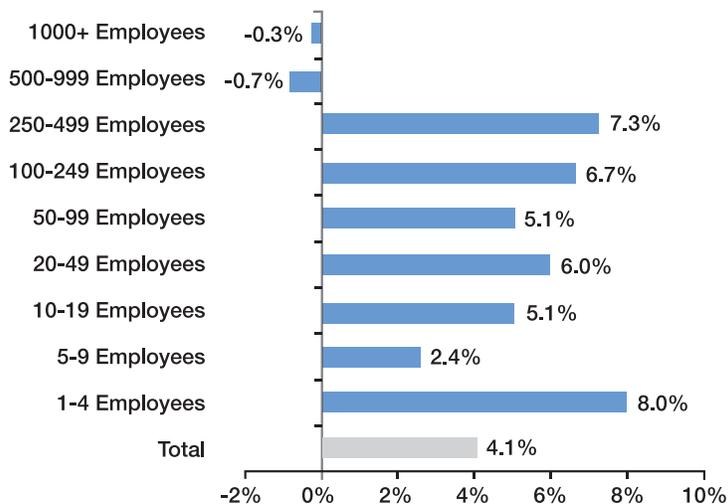
CHANGE IN NUMBER OF NYC ESTABLISHMENTS BY ESTABLISHMENT SIZE, 2001-2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns

New York City is a city of small businesses. Of the approximately 220,000 businesses located in the City, 98 percent are small (fewer than 100 employees) and 89 percent are very small (fewer than 20 employees). These businesses already employ nearly half of the City's workforce and they are growing. Very small businesses were responsible for nearly a quarter of the new hires in the City between 2007 and 2012. Similarly, businesses with fewer than 100 employees gained jobs at a rate of five percent compared with a 0.7 percent loss for businesses with 500 to 1,000 employees. Given the importance of small businesses to our economy, it is critical to New York's global competitiveness that we create an environment where it is easy for small businesses to open, operate, and grow.

CHANGE IN NYC EMPLOYMENT BY ESTABLISHMENT SIZE, Q1 2007- Q1 2012



Percentage Change in Number of Employees, Q1 2007 - Q1 2012

Source: NYSDOL, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

The Challenge of Starting, Operating, and Growing in New York City

Government regulation at all levels has consistently been cited by small businesses as one of the primary hurdles. The City's small business owners have repeatedly voiced their concerns about the overwhelming maze of requirements and processes that they must navigate to open, operate, and grow. These concerns are very real. New York City has a complex regulatory environment, with over 6,000 rules and regulations and around 250 business-related licenses and permits as well as many processes created to ensure compliance with the law. For example, a restaurant opening in New York City may have to file applications, make payments, undergo reviews, obtain approvals, get inspections, and receive licenses and permits from up to eight City agencies before it even opens its doors for business. The complexity of this process brings with it many possibilities for confusion and delays from both the business and the City, adding significant costs and hindering business development. Once the business opens it may receive violations from inspections that can be, in some cases, more punitive than educational.

Regulatory requirements weigh heavily on businesses that are small. These businesses are typically subject to a large proportion of the City's laws and, in terms of resources, their owners are the least capable of navigating the bureaucracy. Of all of the industries that are regulated by the City, the most heavily regulated are the accommodation and food services, retail, and other services (includes beauty salons, nail salons, laundry, and dry cleaning) industries. These industries are almost exclusively comprised of small businesses. Unlike some larger businesses, small businesses do not have staff dedicated to managing their interactions with government and may have less knowledge of and experience with City processes and rules. In addition, many small business owners are further inhibited by language, cultural barriers, or other impediments that make this process more difficult. As a result, in the majority of cases, owners are forced to allocate their limited resources to the hiring of consultants or expeditors to help them. Leveling the City's regulatory playing field for small businesses is necessary to create a fairer economy in New York City.

Some of the groups we met with include:

- American Institute of Architects
- Association for a Better New York
- Bronx Chamber of Commerce
- Bronx Overall EDC
- Brooklyn Chamber
- Con Edison
- El Museo del Barrio
- Make the Road NY
- Manhattan Chamber
- Mano a Mano
- New York City Hospitality Alliance
- New York Fire Alarm Association
- New York State Restaurant Association
- NY Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association
- NYC BID Association
- Partnership for New York City
- Queens Chamber of Commerce
- Queens EDC
- Real Estate Board of New York
- SAPNA NYC
- Staten Island Chamber
- Staten Island Economic Development Corp

Some of the elected officials that we met with include:

- Bronx Borough President
- Brooklyn Borough President
- Manhattan Borough President
- Queens Borough President
- Staten Island Borough President

The Vision of Small Business First

Efforts have been made over the past few years to improve the small business regulatory climate with some success. For example, the collaborative work of the Mayor's Office, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), and the City Council resulted in significant improvements to the licensing process for sidewalk cafés including a reduction in the time for obtaining and renewing licenses from 465 days to less than 150 days. We will build on these achievements and focus on Mayor de Blasio's goals to reach and support small businesses and underserved New Yorkers across all five boroughs; promote education and compliance, instead of simply punitive enforcement; and focus on inter-agency collaboration. Mayor de Blasio acted on these priorities in his first budget by reducing the revenue estimates from fines for fiscal year 2015 by 21 percent for DCA and 44 percent for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) as compared to 2012. In addition, DCA has implemented a Small Business Relief package that includes numerous initiatives such as a reduction in the number of violations that would be cited for an incident and reduced amounts for violation settlements.

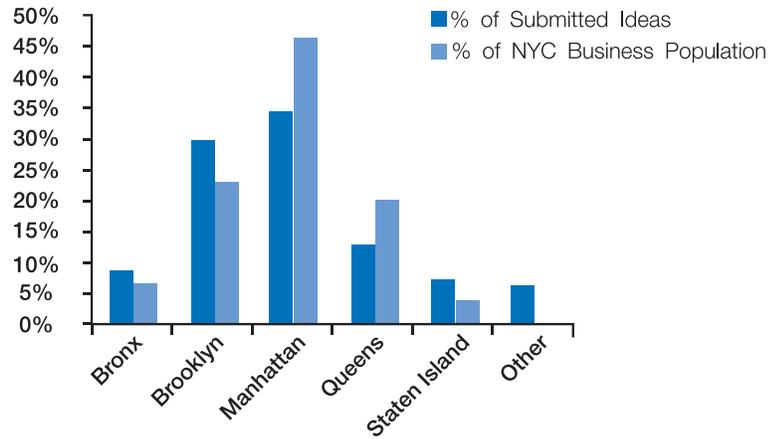
Despite these improvements, however, we know that there is more to be done. With that in mind, in July 2014, Mayor de Blasio launched Small Business First, an initiative led by the Mayor's Office of Operations (Operations) and the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) in conjunction with numerous City agencies that seeks to dramatically improve the regulatory climate for businesses in New York City. The Mayor directed Operations and SBS to work with the public and with City agencies to develop recommendations to achieve this goal. The results are described in this report.

Listening to Business Owners

As a first step, Small Business First focused on understanding the needs and priorities of business owners and those who work with them. We engaged in an extensive outreach effort to gather ideas and hear concerns from a wide variety of stakeholders across the City. To that end, we held meetings with business owners, community-based organizations, Chambers of Commerce, local economic development corporations, and Business Improvement Districts. We reached out to immigrant entrepreneurs through organizations and the media. We sought detailed feedback on technical processes from various industries and the professionals who work with them including food service and real estate as well as contractors, architects, and engineers. We also discussed the issues facing business owners and communities with elected officials including City Council members and the Borough Presidents.

We also solicited feedback from business owners and the public directly using various online tools. An online form on the SBS website, available in English and Spanish, allowed anyone to submit an idea to improve the City's regulatory environment. The form was publicized through email blasts from City agencies and many of our partners to more than 90,000 businesses and groups, with a specific focus on working with organizations in immigrant communities to ensure that we communicated with harder-to-reach populations. In addition, blog posts, tweets, and press coverage provided additional encouragement to submit suggestions.

OUTREACH COMMENTS BY BOROUGH



Listening to Agencies

Operations and SBS also sought feedback and ideas from our agency partners. In particular, we engaged in substantial dialogue with:

- Board of Standards and Appeals
- Department of Buildings
- Department of Citywide Administrative Services
- Department of City Planning
- Department of Consumer Affairs
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of Finance
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Department of Housing Preservation and Development
- Department of Information, Technology and Telecommunications
- Department of Sanitation
- Department of Transportation
- Fire Department
- Law Department
- Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities
- Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Office of Labor Relations
- Office of Management and Budget
- Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings
- Taxi and Limousine Commission

What We Learned

We heard consistent messages from the meetings, conversations, web submissions, and other dialogue. Small businesses need the City government to:

1. Provide clear information with coordinated services and support.

Business owners need straightforward directions, and easy-to-access services as well as sources for answers to their questions.

2. Help businesses understand and comply with City regulations.

City agency staff must work with business owners to provide compliance support and education, rather than focusing on punitive measures.

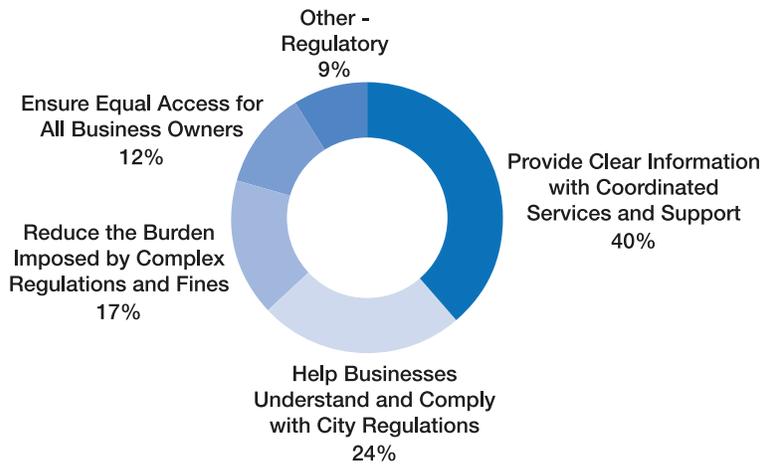
3. Reduce the burden imposed by complex regulations and fines.

The City needs to provide a system of laws and rules that is as simple as possible to understand. Business owners must be able to operate within requirements and City agencies must be able to consistently enforce the law.

4. Ensure equal access for all business owners.

All entrepreneurs and business owners should have access to City services, no matter where they are located or what language they speak.

PUBLIC OUTREACH RESULTS



We have translated the feedback we received into regulatory and process changes to help small businesses where they need it most. Small Business First strives to deliver improvements for small businesses while ensuring compliance with City regulations – which keep New Yorkers safe, healthy, and protected.

**PROVIDE CLEAR
INFORMATION
WITH COORDINATED
SERVICES AND
SUPPORT**



“A centralized location and transparent website would be helpful. This way businesspeople and potential entrepreneurs do not have to seek and filter scattered information.”

—Business Owner, Brooklyn, NY

With 15 City agencies that may be involved in the process of starting and running a small business, business owners are often confused about where to seek information and services. This can lead to misunderstandings, mistakes, and loss of time and money. In addition, businesses may not learn about or receive needed benefits or services that the City makes available.

Communicating clearly and providing ample information in a central location is necessary to help the City better meet the needs of small businesses. Because small businesses are diverse, materials and services must be made available and be distributed to businesses in a variety of ways. We must use different media, including online and in print, and multiple locations, including City sites and community organizations. Providing better information in a variety of ways is critical to ensuring that all small businesses understand how to comply with City rules and processes, know where to go if they need help, and are aware of all of the City resources that are available.

Improve Information and Services for Businesses Online

1. Create a Comprehensive Online Business Portal

Small Business First will build on the City’s existing online resources for businesses to create a new, state-of-the-art Online Business Portal that provides the central resource that businesses need. Centralizing online City services and resources for businesses will alleviate some of the administrative burden small business owners currently face in having to seek and filter scattered information. Through the portal, businesses will be able to access information and conduct transactions at convenient times and locations.

The City’s current website for businesses, NYC Business (www.nyc.gov/Business), allows potential entrepreneurs to find information on how to start a business by business type. Currently, business owners can find resources as well as check the status of permits, licenses, and violations from certain agencies. The site also links to a wizard tool that helps entrepreneurs learn what permits, licenses, and regulations are required to start and operate a business. However, there is a lot that can be improved.

Building on NYC Business, the City will create a powerful and innovative Online Business Portal that will allow a business owner to create an account that provides access from any computer or mobile device to personalized information from City records about a business including licenses, permits, certifications, inspections, and violations. The account will also allow a business owner to conduct all available online transactions with City agencies including applying for or renewing licenses and permits, making payments, and checking the status of applications. In addition, the business owner will be able to receive information distributed by City agencies such as updates on the law and renewal notices.

Other features for potential inclusion in the new Online Business Portal include a database of inspection checklists searchable by sector and business type and translated into top languages as well as information for business owners on how to pass inspections including video examples. The Portal will contain a comprehensive list of regulations searchable by category, keyword, business type, and industry. Specific regulations will be matched to relevant plain language guides that explain the regulations in easy-to-understand English and will list top violations to alert small businesses to common mistakes. The Portal will allow for submission of questions, should a business need additional assistance.

To help ensure the Online Business Portal meets the needs of users, we will continually seek feedback from business owners as we develop new features. The portal will be publicized in many ways including a link in the Business Owner’s Bill of Rights, which is distributed during most agency inspections.

Online Business Portal Features	Current State	Future State
Informational resources for businesses	✓	✓
Searchable database of inspection checklists		✓
Searchable database of regulation with plain language guides		✓
Send personalized information to business owner		✓
Personalized business account		✓
Ability to conduct transactions (applications, payments)	Limited	✓
Ability to check status of permits/licenses/violations	Limited	✓

2. Provide an Easy-to-Find Location for Businesses on Each Regulatory Agency Website

In addition to creating a centralized, primary resource for business owners through the Online Business Portal, we will also improve the information available on each regulatory agency website. Each agency site will be updated to include a uniform “Business” tab that contains all information relevant to a business as well as a link to the Online Business Portal. Agencies will also seek to improve the information and features available for businesses on their websites. For example, the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) will soon provide the ability for a business to input its address into the agency website and be given a list of the businesses’ routing times. This will help businesses understand when they can expect sanitation agents to be in their area checking for compliance with City rules, making it easier for businesses to comply and avoid violations.

3. Engage Entrepreneurs in Developing Online Services for Businesses

The City will seek to leverage innovation from the private sector through events such as a hackathon where participants will be provided with opportunities to work with the City to improve the City’s online services, including components of the Online Business Portal. A hackathon is an event typically lasting between a day and a week. During that time participants compete by developing products that are geared towards specific goals such as the creation of an easy-to-use mobile application to help businesses navigate City requirements.

Improve Information and Services for Businesses in Person

4. Create a New One-Stop Business Center

Small Business First will work to provide new and expanded resources online so that businesses have one source to consult for all their City needs. We understand, however, that many business owners may not have access to technology or may prefer to interact with the City in person, and that various City requirements necessitate a visit to an agency office (e.g., fingerprinting). We will create a One-Stop Business Center to provide an in-person option for business owners. This concept may be expanded depending on the success of the initial location.

The One-Stop Business Center will provide a clear resource for a potential entrepreneur or a small business owner to get information, receive support services, and transact with the City. In particular, the Center will house DCA and DOHMH resources, and intake functions including payment and filings. The One-Stop Business Center will also have client managers available to support businesses through the City’s regulatory requirements. These client managers will be made available to businesses at the Center as well as at regulatory agencies that interact with small businesses. In addition, the Center will house many of the business support services currently provided by SBS. To help business owners access online City resources and provide efficient services, the Center will also include public kiosks.

5. Provide Individual Support to Business Owners with Client Managers

The One-Stop Business Center will be a place where business owners can receive individual support. Currently, owners of food, industrial and retail industry businesses can access client management services from the Division of Business Acceleration at SBS. Building on this model, Small Business First will make client managers available at the One-Stop Business Center to provide services to any small business upon request. The client manager will serve as the business owner's point person for navigating government and can help to facilitate all interactions with City agencies including providing advice on sequencing of services, scheduling and coordinating inspections, understanding and resolving violations, and providing information and assistance on recovering from a disaster or emergency.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE TAXPAYER ADVOCATE OFFICE

The new Taxpayer Advocate Office at the Department of Finance will be an independent voice within the agency and serve as a "last resort" option for taxpayers, including small businesses. The Office will be a resource for businesses to bring complaints and address disputes and issues concerning City tax administration and policy.

6. Promote the Use of Handheld Devices for Inspections

To improve the clarity and flow of information between City agencies and business owners, we will promote the use of handheld devices for inspections at each agency. Some City agencies, including the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), DOHMH, Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), already use handhelds during inspections to provide business owners with more accurate information more quickly and, in some cases, electronically. We will work with other agencies to implement this technology and prioritize adoption.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STREET WORKS MANUAL

The Department of Transportation is currently revising its Street Works Manual, including placing all of the material in an easy-to-access format online accessible on any device. The Manual is a comprehensive resource guide on policies and procedures relating to work on city streets. It provides contractors and business owners directions for notice, approval, and execution of street work.

Improve Informational Materials for Businesses

7. Ensure Agencies Have Plain Language Guides

All agencies have created informational materials to help clarify rules and regulations and provide guidance on required processes. We will ensure that each agency has a guide on its top three functions (e.g., licenses, violations). For example, the Department of Finance (DOF) plans to publish information for small businesses on the tax auditing process, and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities will draft a guide for businesses explaining how to comply with accessibility requirements and how to properly apply for an accessibility waiver.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC DEPARTMENT
OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
INSPECTION CHECKLISTS

The Department of Consumer Affairs makes available to business owners all 41 of the easy-to-read checklists that its inspectors use to conduct inspections. The checklists are posted online so that businesses can learn what inspectors look for during inspections. The 10 most common checklists are translated into multiple languages including Spanish, Chinese, French-Creole, Korean, Russian, Bengali, and Arabic. All others will be translated into Spanish.

8. Create Informational Guides for Inter-Agency Processes

To prevent business owners from having to comb through multiple City agency sources in order to understand City requirements, we are creating new informational guides for inter-agency processes. The guides will be subject-matter specific and will cover topics such as things a business should know before leasing a space and how to obtain a newsstand permit. Business owners will be able to find these guides in numerous locations including the Online Business Portal and the One-Stop Business Center.

**HELP BUSINESSES
UNDERSTAND AND
COMPLY WITH CITY
REGULATIONS**

Creating a supportive environment for small businesses is key to ensuring business growth in New York City. A supportive environment ensures that small business owners are not being unnecessarily burdened with violations, and helps small businesses focus on their core mission – to earn profits and expand operations.

To improve the way the City interacts with small businesses, we will promote compliance through education rather than primarily through punitive measures, and we will ensure that City agencies and employees provide the best possible customer service. In addition, we will institute more flexibility and clarity in the adjudication process to alleviate some of the burden currently felt by small businesses.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE FOR CHILD CARE

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene recently announced the launch of a Performance Improvement Initiative for child care services. The initiative represents a unique approach to addressing under-performing child care services permitted and regulated by New York City. Through data analysis and set performance indicators, the Department will identify child care centers that have a history of chronic non-compliance with the regulatory requirements of the City's Health Code. Child care centers identified as needing assistance will receive intensive technical assistance and oversight to improve their performance. These efforts will provide a useful service to small child care businesses that need support in complying with DOHMH's rules.

Help Small Businesses Learn to Comply

9. Deploy Small Business Compliance Advisors to Help Businesses Follow the Rules

The City's agencies have already taken steps to help small businesses avoid violations by helping them comply with the City's rules. For example, DOHMH recently launched a new consultative inspection program where a business can pay a fee to receive a review of its current operating practices along with an inspection, all without the risk of receiving a violation. The purpose of the program is to help businesses understand how to comply with the rules before an inspection occurs and fines are issued. Similarly, inspectors from various agencies including DOHMH and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) visit sites or provide consultative inspections as part of the Division of Business Acceleration at SBS.

This concept will be expanded through the creation of the new role of Small Business Compliance Advisors. Based at SBS, Small Business Compliance Advisors will be trained in the requirements of multiple agencies and will be available to visit businesses and provide an on-site walkthrough designed to help a new or existing business understand how to comply with the City's regulatory requirements. Up to 10 Small Business Compliance Advisors will be trained on specific, compatible topics by City regulatory agencies in order to maximize efficiency for business owners and help businesses avoid violations.



10. Provide Proactive Support to Businesses Needing Education

In order to provide all small businesses with the information they need to comply with the City’s requirements, the City will also promote small business compliance through on-going and proactive educational support. This initiative is modeled on similar educational efforts provided by other agencies, such as DCA’s “Business Education Days” where inspectors visit businesses to provide information and answer questions and DOT’s outreach related to new commercial bicyclist laws. By providing interactive sessions business owners will better understand the regulations and agency staff will better understand the challenges faced by businesses.

Small Business First will build on those programs by working with the Mayor’s Office of Data Analytics to compile and analyze data, including violations, from a variety of sources in order to identify neighborhoods with significant incidence of non-compliance that might benefit from additional education and outreach. Data will be analyzed regularly and used by City agencies, particularly SBS, to target those areas for support including direct, one-on-one engagement with business owners, local informational events, and informational guides – all with the goal of helping small businesses better understand City regulations in order to reduce the future incidence of violations.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES NYC BUSINESS ACCELERATION

Business Acceleration, a unit within Small Business Services, assists individuals and groups opening or operating a food and beverage, industrial, or retail business as well as pre-kindergarten programs. The program is designed to help these businesses open or expand more easily and faster, operate more smoothly and with fewer challenges, and recover from emergencies. Specifically, Business Acceleration provides free client management, plan reviews, consultations with inspectors, and inspections from City agencies including Buildings, Fire, Health and Mental Hygiene, and Environmental Protection.

11. Provide Better Customer Service

The City will also better support businesses by making sure that the City's employees are properly trained and well-equipped to interact with the public – whether in person, over the phone, or online. Specifically, the City will improve the way its employees work with business owners by ensuring that all agency personnel who have significant interaction with the public, including inspectors and intake staff, receive extensive customer service training. Not only will agency personnel be trained, but they will also be evaluated on their provision of customer service. This will encourage more constructive interactions between small business owners and agency personnel.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION NOISE CODE OUTREACH

The Department of Environmental Protection has taken a number of steps to help small business owners understand and comply with the City's noise requirements. DEP holds Noise Compliance Workshops, informational seminars to walk business owners through the steps they must take to comply with the noise code in order to keep New York City an economically vibrant and desirable place to live. DEP has also developed an educational video about commercial music requirements that it distributes to bars, clubs, and restaurants.

Make the Adjudication Process Easier

12. Create One-Stop Hearing Centers for Business Regulatory Issues

After previous consolidation efforts in 2008 and in 2011, the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH), the City's independent adjudicative body, now oversees the OATH Tribunal, the Environmental Control Board, the Health Tribunal, and the TLC Tribunal. As a result, OATH manages the adjudication of violations for all business-related violations, except for violations of the DCA rules.

Each of the City's tribunals has jurisdiction over different types of cases and hears violations from different agencies. The various tribunals have different rules, procedures, forms, and office locations. Requirements for responding to summonses may vary depending on the tribunal hearing the summonses, on the type of case, and on the agency that issued the summonses. The result is an inconvenient and confusing process for small businesses who receive violations.

“[The adjudication process] is way too time-consuming and degrading to the business. Many businesses hire someone to handle the summons, but that costs the small business more money.”

–BID, Brooklyn, NY

To make the adjudication process easier to navigate, the City will create One-Stop Hearing Centers across the five boroughs. OATH locations will be transformed into hearing offices that can handle any type of case from any agency all in one site. The One-Stop Hearing Centers will provide individuals and small businesses with the opportunity to deal with summonses and violations issued by any City agency before an independent and impartial tribunal with one uniform procedure.

13. Provide a More Flexible Adjudication Process by Expanding Alternative Hearing Options

Receiving a violation is often a stressful and confusing time for a business owner. This is due, in part, to the time-consuming nature of correcting a violation. As a result, a business owner may be required to take time off from running her or his business in order to participate in a hearing at one of the City’s administrative tribunals.

With the permission of the various regulatory agencies whose rules it enforces, OATH has already taken steps to mitigate this problem. OATH currently provides alternative methods of adjudication for many violations issued by City agencies such as DOHMH, DOT, and DSNY. A business owner can choose to have a hearing for many types of violations via telephone, online, or mail. For instance, most restaurant violations can be contested by any of these methods.

However, not all violations can be adjudicated remotely. In order to make this process more convenient for small businesses we will expand the violation categories available for alternative hearings. By using these alternative methods, a business owner will no longer have to take as much time away from running their business.

**REDUCE THE
BURDEN IMPOSED
BY COMPLEX
REGULATIONS
AND FINES**

Small businesses consistently ask that we make the rules easier to understand and follow. They express frustration with the fact that the processes to comply are time-consuming and can overlap or be duplicative. To address these issues, we will not only provide businesses with more information and support, but we will also build on previous efforts by the City to make changes to the regulations and processes that create New York City's complex regulatory environment. In partnership with business owners, the City Council, and City agencies, we will update and simplify laws and rules to better meet small business needs. In addition, we will promote coordination among agencies and streamlining of agency processes to ensure faster and more efficient services.

Update and Simplify City Law

14. Create an Advisory Board to Provide Feedback and Review City Laws

In order to receive public feedback on upcoming City regulatory and process changes that impact businesses, we will create a Small Business Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will have five core functions:

1. Provide feedback on plans to implement Small Business First.
2. Act as a sounding board for potential new initiatives.
3. Raise issues that the community is facing in their interactions with the City, so that Small Business First can find ways to improve processes.
4. Select a topic (e.g., signage, dry cleaning industry) for an annual focused review of regulations; and
5. Ensure that the potential impact of legislation on business owners is a formal consideration in the legislative process by reviewing legislation introduced in the City Council.

By institutionalizing a public feedback channel as well as a review of City laws and rules, we will establish a mechanism for the regulatory system to continuously improve.

15. Eliminate and Consolidate Licenses and Permits

In order to make the regulatory system easier to understand, we will eliminate outdated or unnecessary licenses and permits, and consolidate overlapping or duplicative licenses and permits from the City Administrative Code and Rules. These efforts will begin with a variety of DCA's licenses and permits. Once consolidated and eliminated, these licenses and permits are estimated to save businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars per year in fees paid to the City. DCA's efforts will be replicated in other agencies, where applicable.

16. Repeal or Modify Unnecessarily Complex or Obsolete Rules

As part of a larger review being led by Operations, we will also clean up and simplify the City's laws by repealing or modifying rules and regulations that are not consistent with modern business practices, are overly complex, or are obsolete. This will include, as part of our work with the Advisory Board, conducting a review of regulations focused on a particular topic.

17. Make it Easier for Gyms and Health Clubs to Open in New York City

Based on a regulation enacted in the 1970s, physical culture establishments (facilities such as exercise gyms, martial arts studios, and spas) are not automatically allowed to open anywhere in the City "as-of-right." Each facility must obtain a special permit from the



City's Board of Standards and Appeals. The process for obtaining such a permit is extensive and lengthy – potentially adding approximately six months and \$50,000 in costs for the opening of a gym. Considering that health clubs are a valued service in New York City, the Department of City Planning will study the Physical Culture or Health Establishments special permit to determine a more appropriate framework for regulating these facilities.

Streamline City Processes

18. Improve Coordination between the Department of Buildings and the Fire Department

A business seeking to modify its property or perform certain activities within its space must receive a variety of approvals from both DOB and FDNY. Both agencies provide plan review, permitting, and inspections in relation to facilities. They have overlapping or interdependent responsibilities in many areas, including fire alarm, fire suppression, and place of assembly.

Efforts have already been made to streamline some of these dual-agency processes to save time and money for customers. For example, although an applicant must still file and receive permits from DOB for fire alarm, plan review only occurs at FDNY. In addition, the City recently changed the process for renewing Place of Assembly Certificate of Operation by removing DOB's role and making the entire renewal process the responsibility of FDNY. These changes are still being implemented, but will eventually reduce the number of steps and the renewal time for businesses.

Notwithstanding these previous efforts, we know that we must do more. The overlapping requirements between DOB and FDNY result in inefficiencies that waste time and money for businesses. Small Business First will engage in a detailed operational review to

“My general comment is for the city to stop creating more and more layers of compliances and fees and consolidate the process.”

–Owner, Architecture Office,
New York, NY

streamline processes at DOB and FDNY related to small business regulation. This review will include, at minimum, the processes for fire alarm, emergency action/fire prevention plan review, equipment use permits, fire suppression, and place of assembly. It will identify specific opportunities to make these efforts more efficient and enhance coordination. We will consider a variety of options to improve the City’s ability to serve businesses including eliminating duplicative steps, responsibilities, and functions between agencies as well as reshaping processes.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT | NYC DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS THE DEVELOPMENT HUB

The Department of Buildings operates the NYC Development Hub, a center designed to expedite the approval process. The Hub coordinates electronic filing at DOB and allows applicants to have their plans electronically reviewed with input from multiple City agencies in a virtual environment. In 2015, DOB plans to launch a new online scheduling system, Hub Inspection Ready, where users will be able to schedule nearly all inspections.

19. Streamline Fire Suppression Plan Review by Removing Department of Buildings’ Review

Currently, a business that needs to install a fire suppression system for a restaurant kitchen or certain other types of facilities (e.g., gas station) has to have the plan for the fire suppression system approved by both DOB and FDNY. This process involves multiple steps at each agency. Two separate plan review processes create the potential for unnecessary conflict that can result in added costs, paperwork, time, and effort for small businesses. We will streamline this process by designating FDNY as the sole agency reviewing fire suppression plans. Businesses will no longer need to seek separate DOB review and approval of their fire suppression plans. Additionally, businesses installing a commercial kitchen fire suppression system will no longer need to go to DOB to file or receive a permit. These changes will save businesses an estimated \$1.6 million and decrease the amount of time and complexity for a small business to have a fire suppression plan reviewed and, ultimately, installed so that it can open for business.

20. Allow Licensed Fire Suppression Contractors to Submit Plans for Commercial Kitchen (Rangehood) Fire Suppression Systems

In order for a food business to open in New York City, it must obtain approval for the installation of a rangehood fire suppression system for the kitchen. This requires the submission and review of plans for approval. Under the current system where a small business has to get approvals from both DOB and FDNY, the plans must be submitted by a licensed architect or engineer, as required by DOB. Rangehood system designs are pre-approved and pre-engineered. Thus, professional architects and engineers add little value – but substantial cost – to the applications. Transferring the responsibility for rangehood plan review to FDNY, as discussed above, will allow licensed master fire suppression contractors, instead of architects or engineers, to submit applications for rangehood plans since this is allowed by FDNY.

21. Streamline the Department of Buildings' Process for Determinations

An architect or engineer working on behalf of a business owner may request a Construction Code Determination or Zoning Resolution Determination (Determination) on an objection made by a DOB plan examiner. The Determination must be made in order to obtain plan approval, get permits, and begin construction.

In order to streamline the Determination process, DOB will leverage technology solutions to improve the speed of determinations, such as facilitating electronic submission of requests and communication of decisions.

22. Streamline and Standardize the Process for Obtaining a Department of Buildings' Letter of No Objection

A Letter of No Objection is used where there is no Certificate of Occupancy or the “use” of a location needs to be confirmed (e.g., to meet City agency requirements for day camps). Oftentimes, when the “use” of a location is unclear on the Certificate of Occupancy, a business owner has to request a Letter of No Objection issued by DOB to confirm the “use.” However, the process of having a Letter of No Objection issued can take a significant amount of time and may delay the opening of the business.

The City will streamline this process. Starting with food and beverage businesses, DOB will work to clarify the accepted “use” listed on Certificates of Occupancy. This should result in fewer businesses requesting Letters of No Objections, which will, in turn, create a faster and more efficient process.

23. Standardize Department of Buildings' Plan Objections

Similar plan objections by DOB’s plan examiners may take different forms due to variations in plan examiners’ styles and methods of description. This may cause difficulty for the licensed professionals working on behalf of small business owners in interpreting and resolving these objections, ultimately prolonging the time it takes to get a business opened.

The City will improve the plan review process by ensuring that plan examiners use standard language to describe plan objections. One way this goal will be achieved is by providing plan examiners with lists of standardized objection language that they can select from – the plan examiner would be able to add or edit the standardized language as necessary to fit unique situations. This will provide added clarity to the licensed professional and improve a business owner’s ability to understand and participate in the process.

24. Create a Sidewalk Shed Notification System at Department of Transportation

Sidewalk sheds are erected to protect pedestrians from debris caused by construction. Small businesses responsible for erecting sidewalk sheds complain that, despite receiving a permit for construction of a sidewalk shed from DOB, they receive fines from DOT for blocking the street and sidewalk while they are erecting or taking down the shed.

In response, the City will create a sidewalk shed notification system at DOT to increase coordination with DOB and reduce violations for businesses. A notification system will allow a scaffolding business to avoid DOT violations by notifying DOT that the business will be erecting or taking down a sidewalk shed that has been permitted by DOB.

25. Expand the Department of Transportation’s Online Permitting System to Include All Permit Types

In order to save business owners time, the City is working to expand DOT’s online permitting system to include all of its permit types. This will allow business owners more flexibility, and will save them time by allowing them to submit permit applications online rather than in person.

DOT’s NYCStreets Permit Management System currently allows applicants to obtain permits for street openings, sidewalk reconstructions, building operations, commercial refuse containers, emergencies, and utilities. DOT will add the following permit types to its online permitting capabilities: canopies, vaults, and sidewalk sheds. These additions will result in nearly all of DOT’s permits being accessible online.

**ENSURE EQUAL
ACCESS FOR
ALL BUSINESS
OWNERS**



A large number of small businesses in New York City are immigrant-owned. In fact, 52 percent of self-employed New Yorkers are foreign-born. In addition, many small businesses in New York City are located far from City agencies. These factors, among others, add layers of complexity to navigating an already-complicated regulatory system.

Small Business First seeks to provide information and services to all small business owners in all five boroughs, by overcoming hurdles such as distance from City resources, language, and cultural barriers. To achieve this goal we will provide information in multiple languages, simplify documents by removing jargon and overly technical terms, and ensure resources are available to businesses in all neighborhoods throughout the City.

Decrease the Distance between Small Businesses and City Agencies

26. Train Community Groups to Assist Local Businesses

Community-based organizations and other groups are often trusted resources for local business owners, because they are located in their neighborhoods and speak their language. We will “train the trainer” by providing neighborhood organizations with tools to assist small business owners, especially immigrants, in finding City information and services. In doing this, we will further our reach into communities through newly formed partnerships with community groups that will help business owners throughout the City receive the information and services they need.

27. Support Businesses by Providing Educational Events in Communities

City agencies will hold educational events in neighborhoods where business owners can get their questions answered directly from regulatory and business support agency staff. Many agencies already engage in outreach efforts either on an ongoing basis or around specific initiatives. We will expand this concept by holding events where multiple City agencies come together at convenient times in neighborhood locations (e.g., community centers) that are easily accessible to potential and existing entrepreneurs. These events will feature staff from relevant regulatory and business support agencies that will be available to provide information, answer questions, and link business owners to needed resources.

DOB will also welcome small businesses to its Homeowner's Night. This program includes weekly sessions in each borough where non-professionals have the opportunity to meet with Department representatives. Business owners will now have direct access to have their questions answered from DOB personnel.

28. Help Small Business Owners by Connecting Them to Personal Financial Counseling

DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment will increase its efforts to provide financial services to business owners. We will develop connections between the Office of Financial Empowerment and regulatory agencies that work with small business owners so that valuable financial counseling services reach the business owners who need it. For example, we will place a Financial Empowerment counselor on-site at a regulatory agency customer service site so that business owners can easily learn about and access services.

Help All New Yorkers Understand How to Comply With the Law

29. Simplify Critical Materials for Small Business Owners

Business owners often have a hard time understanding City regulations and how to comply with them. Some of this confusion stems from written communication from City agencies that is overly complicated or too technical. Thus, City agencies will provide more information to business owners and their representatives in an easy-to-understand language and format. In order to achieve this, we will provide plain language training to agency staff responsible for creating written messages for the public. Training these staff members to write more clearly and less technically will ensure that business owners are provided with notices and resource materials that are more straightforward.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT

NYC TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION PLAIN LANGUAGE RULES

The Taxi and Limousine Commission simplified all of its rules to make it easier for businesses to understand the agency's requirements. This included re-organizing them to make it easier to find the right rule, converting all of the agency's rules to plain language, and ensuring that all potential penalties are clearly defined and easy to identify.

30. Make Key Materials and Services Available in More Languages

Increasing translations of critical materials needed by businesses and informational guides from agencies is necessary in a city where half of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Each agency will translate informational materials about, at a minimum, its top three functions (e.g., licenses, violations). Added translations will help limited English proficient business owners have the information they need to comply with the laws.

Similar to translations, the need for interpretation in the field by inspectors is also important – non-English speaking business owners and managers need to be able to understand what is required of them in order to comply with City regulations and laws. That is why it is imperative that City personnel use interpreters as often as possible to communicate with non-English speakers. Small Business First will promote the use of telephone interpretation services during inspections to communicate with non-English speakers. Agencies will provide the contact information for an interpretation service to inspectors and will train inspectors on the use of this service.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHT

NYC OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE TRIALS AND HEARINGS DOCUMENT TRANSLATION SERVICES

The Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings is the City's central independent adjudicative body. OATH provides free professional language interpretation services for all languages at trials and hearings. Recently, OATH began allowing individuals responding to violations to submit any form or application to OATH in the language of their choice. OATH will then translate the submission into English at no cost to the respondent. Since implementing this program at the beginning of 2014, there has been a more than 1,500 percent increase in the number of forms received in foreign languages and being translated by OATH.

ACCOMPLISHING OUR GOALS

Through Small Business First, we will prioritize the needs of small businesses. Over the coming weeks, months, and years we will transform the regulatory environment and provide the solutions that business owners have long sought. We will improve the way information is provided to businesses through investments in technology, educational resources, and infrastructure. We will also change the way the City works with businesses by promoting an environment where a real partnership can develop through more supportive services. In addition, we will simplify rules and processes to make the overall regulatory system less complex and make it easier for small businesses to start and operate, and we will ensure that the system is accessible to all small businesses regardless of language ability or location.

These changes will not be easy. They will require tremendous support from City agencies and may require legislative action. Small Business First will rely on the Agency Liaisons, created by Local Law 34 of 2013 to work with the regulated communities of each regulatory agency, to help ensure the successful implementation of our initiatives. These changes will take time and will require an enormous shift in the way our city operates.

Provide Clear Information with Coordinated Services and Support

Recommendation		6 months	2015	2016+	
1	Create a Comprehensive Online Business Portal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add links to Business Owners' Bill of Rights. • Begin construction of portal features • Complete portal 				
2	Provide an Easy-to-Find Location for Businesses on Each Regulatory Agency Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin installation on agency websites • Complete installation 				
3	Engage Entrepreneurs in Developing Online Services for Businesses				
4	Create a New One-Stop Business Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Center • Roll out additional centers, as appropriate 				
5	Provide Individual Support to Business Owners with Client Managers				
6	Promote the Use of Handheld Devices for Inspections				
7	Ensure Agencies have Plain Language Guides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin developing new guides • Complete all guides 				
8	Create Informational Guides for Inter-Agency Processes				

INCREASED COST SAVINGS

INCREASED TIME SAVINGS

INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

INCREASED PROCESS STEPS SAVED

INCREASED GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Help Businesses Understand and Comply with City Regulations

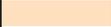
Recommendation		6 months	2015	2016+
9	Deploy Small Business Compliance Advisors to Help Businesses Follow the Rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine appropriate topics for cross-training Hire and cross-train advisors 			
10	Provide Proactive Support to Businesses Needing Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze data and train staff Use data to provide regular support to businesses 			
11	Provide Better Customer Service at All Levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include customer service measures in staff evaluations Provide customer service training to agency staff who have significant interaction with the public 			
12	Create One-Stop Hearing Centers for Business Regulatory Issues			
13	Provide a More Flexible Adjudication Process by Expanding Alternative Hearing Options			

Reduce the Burden Imposed by Complex Regulations and Fines

Recommendation	6 months	2015	2016+
14 Create an Advisory Board to Provide Feedback and Review City Laws			
15 Eliminate and Consolidate Licenses and Permits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update first group of licenses and permits • Identify and modify additional licenses and permits 	 		
16 Repeal or Modify Unnecessarily Complex or Obsolete Rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update first group of rules • Identify and modify additional rules 	 		
17 Make it Easier for Gyms and Health Clubs to Open in New York City <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the appropriate framework for regulating health clubs • Implement new framework for regulating gyms and health clubs 	 		
18 Improve Coordination Between the Department of Buildings and the Fire Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review to assess the best methods to improve coordination • Implement improved coordination 	 		
19 Streamline Fire Suppression Plan Review by Removing Department of Buildings' Review			
20 Allow Licensed Fire Suppression Contractors to Submit Plans for Commercial Kitchen (Rangehood) Fire Suppression Systems			

<p>21 Streamline Department of Buildings' Process for Determinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate current processes for Department of Buildings' Determinations and design a template for a new database • Streamline Department of Buildings' process for Determinations 		
<p>22 Streamline and Standardize the Process for Obtaining a Department of Buildings' Letter of No Objection</p>		
<p>23 Standardize Department of Buildings' Plan Objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the list of objections that can be standardized • Standardize the Department of Buildings' plan objections 		
<p>24 Create a Sidewalk Shed Notification System at the Department of Transportation</p>		
<p>25 Expand the Department of Transportation's Online Permitting System to Include All Permit Types</p>		

Ensure Equal Access for All Business Owners

Recommendation	6 months	2015	2016+
26 Train Community Groups to Assist Local Businesses			
27 Support Businesses by Providing Educational Events in Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Department of Buildings' Homeowner's Night to include small businesses • Hold educational events in local neighborhoods where business owners can interact with agency staff 	 		
28 Help Small Business Owners by Connecting Them to Personal Financial Counseling			
29 Simplify Critical Materials for Small Business Owners			
30 Make Key Materials and Services Available in More Languages			

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

As we move forward with implementing the various initiatives outlined in this report, we know that it is critical for us to measure our progress so that we can hold ourselves accountable to the businesses of New York City. Each City agency will track its progress toward accomplishing each initiative. In addition, Small Business First will monitor overall improvement in the ability of small businesses to open, operate, and expand in New York City. Specifically, we will focus on time savings, cost savings, and regulatory steps saved for businesses. We will also ensure that we are improving business owners' satisfaction with City services.

Establishing a Baseline for City Performance

Individual agencies assess metrics such as processing times for applications, compliance levels, and violations issued. The City, however, does not currently have a system to combine these metrics across agencies to track the experience for businesses. Since opening and operating most small businesses involves interactions with multiple agencies, developing and calculating these aggregate metrics is critical to improving the regulatory system.

To address this, Small Business First will consult with the Mayor's Office of Operations, especially the Mayor's Office of Data Analytics, to establish baselines for key overall metrics such as:

- Median time to open a business by sector/business type;
- Median time from application submission to issuance, by application type; and
- Business owner satisfaction with City services, as measured by an annual customer satisfaction survey that will commence in 2015.

In addition to establishing a baseline measure and tracking the aggregate measures described above, we will aggressively pursue target goals related to the each Small Business First area:

Provide Clear Information with Coordinated Services and Support

- Number and growth rate of Online Business Portal accounts;
- Available business-related applications and status updates, with the goal of having 95 percent of all business applications be able to be submitted online, and the top 20 most-commonly used applications have online status updates; and
- Number of simple guides available in plain language, with the goal of having more than 50 percent of the most common small business violation areas covered.

Help Businesses Understand and Comply with City Regulations

- Number of new businesses assisted each month through business acceleration services, including businesses in the retail, industrial, and food service sectors, with a target minimum of 400 businesses assisted;
- Monthly and annual utilization rate of Small Business Compliance Advisor services;
- Number of businesses receiving repeat violations, with the goal of reducing the incidence of repeat violations by 10 percent in neighborhoods targeted for outreach, training, and support; and
- Availability and use rates of alternative hearing mechanisms (phone, email, mail).

Reduce the Burden Imposed by Complex Regulations and Fines

- Update regulations or processes, with the goal of ensuring that 10 outdated or overly complex regulations and/or processes are updated initially, and working with the Advisory Group to identify additional regulations for review;
- Savings to businesses of at least \$50 million per year by reducing time and resources spent on City processes, and avoiding fines and penalties;
- Steps and time involved in the top 10 inter-agency processes for businesses, with the goal of reducing each by at least 50 percent; and
- Time required for a business to open or work with the City on an annual basis; with the goal of saving businesses at least 50 percent.

Ensure Equal Access for All Business Owners

- Number of training workshops held with community groups, with a target of 50 community groups being trained in the first full year of operation;
- Plain language guides (described above) are available in six languages other than English; and
- Availability of interpretive services at each agency, with the goal of increasing the agencies' utilization rate of such services.

Goals for other elements of the program will be defined as implementation progresses.

There is a lot of work ahead of us. Regardless of the challenges we face – we will continuously work to improve our services to small businesses. These changes are only the beginning. They are this Administration's first steps towards a New York City that is more supportive of small businesses than ever before.

For example, we estimate that removing the Department of Buildings from the rangehood fire suppression plan review process could save businesses 50 percent of the time currently required for this process.

NOTES

Executive Summary

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Small business employment figures are based on 2012 County Business Patterns.

Introduction

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Small business data is based on 2012 County Business Patterns.

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For details on data, see 2012 Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

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Employment data is based on 2012 Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

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For details on small business survey and data, see <http://www.nfib.com/surveys/small-business-economic-trends/>.

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Ninety-nine percent of the businesses in the accommodation and food services and retail industries have fewer than 100 employees. Businesses in the Other Services category are 98 percent small. See County Business Patterns (2012).

Help Businesses Understand and Comply with City Regulations

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Although the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene inspector will not typically issue a violation during a consultative inspection, “any public health hazard will have to be corrected before the end of the inspection, or the Department may have to order the restaurant to close temporarily until the condition is corrected.” <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/permit/consultative-inspections.pdf>.

Ensure Equal Access for all Business Owners

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The total number of self-employed in incorporated and unincorporated businesses is 362K. This number is based on 2013 American Community Survey (1 Year Estimates).

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For details on data, see http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/census/pop_facts.shtml.

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