



## CENTER CITY REPORTS

# Restaurant Recovery: Safe Outdoor Dining

AUGUST 2020

CENTER CITY DISTRICT,  
CENTRAL PHILADELPHIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

FIND MORE REPORTS AT:

**CENTERCITYPHILA.ORG**

MATT STANLEY

In response to health mandates requiring patrons of restaurants, cafés and other food establishments to either purchase take-out or dine outdoors, 146 businesses within the Center City District (CCD) boundaries have placed tables outside with more than 3,600 seats. After securing special approvals expedited by the City of Philadelphia, 35 of those businesses have deployed socially distanced tables and chairs in the curb lane ("streeteries") as well as on the sidewalk. Businesses on several blocks within the District are also planning for full-street closures on weekends.

In Center City, food establishments have long been permitted to place chairs and tables in defined areas on walkways. CCD's annual survey in the summer of 2019 counted 188 eating and drinking premises with outdoor seating within the CCD boundaries.<sup>1</sup> This suggests that 77.6% of premises that had outdoor seating last year have restored that service. With indoor dining unavailable, most restaurants are supplementing outdoor dining with take-out service; others are providing take-out only.

**As the number of restaurants providing take-out or serving outdoors continues to expand, Center City is slowly and cautiously beginning to recover.**

Outdoor dining has been an indicator of Center City's vibrancy since sidewalk cafés were first authorized in 1995. As the current number of restaurants providing take out or serving outdoors continues to expand, Center City is slowly and cautiously beginning to recover.

At the beginning of 2020, restaurants, food service and retail in Greater Center City accounted for 39,600 jobs, 13% of all jobs in the downtown. Citywide, these sectors provided 103,946 jobs, accounting for 15% of the total employment in Philadelphia.

<sup>1</sup> In 2019, between Vine Street and South Street, Front Street to the Schuylkill River, CCD counted 436 locations providing outdoor seating — 130 of which were at non-food retail establishments. This year's survey was limited to CCD boundaries, though there are a significant number of additional locations adjacent to the District, in Old City and along South Street that have resumed outdoor seating and added in-street seating. The City of Philadelphia is also strongly supporting outdoor seating and streeteries in neighborhood commercial corridors across the city.



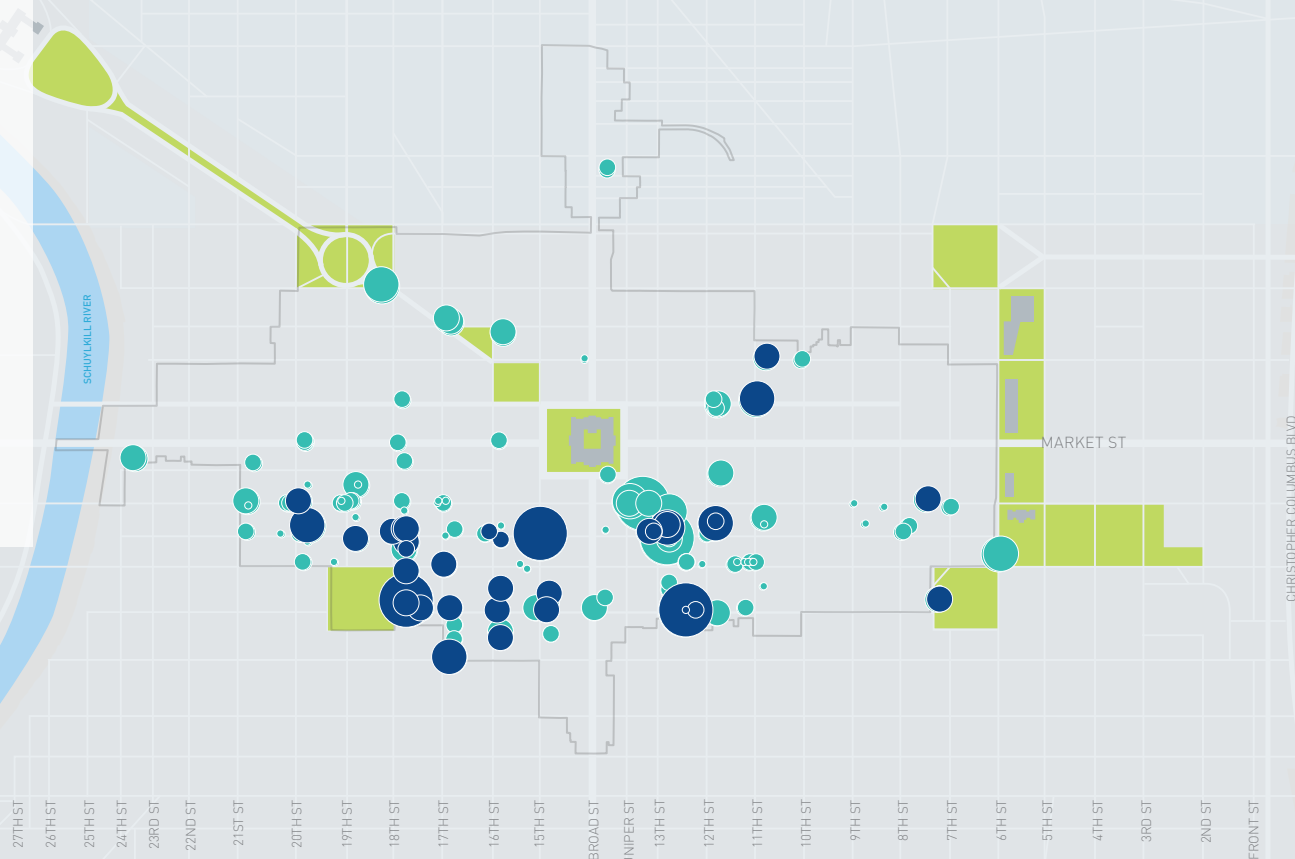
## OUTDOOR CAFE SEATING

- Curbside Seating
- Streeterery
- CCD Boundary

### Volume of Seating



Source: Center City District



Within the CCD boundaries 146 businesses have deployed tables with more than 3,600 outside seats. This includes 35 restaurants with “streeteries.” The largest circles on the map denote restaurants that have made arrangements to place seating in front of adjacent closed businesses and/or are at corner locations with access to more street frontage.



Safe, socially distanced outdoor dining supports economic recovery, including the revival of many small businesses.





Closing alleys and some streets can significantly expand outdoor seating.



MATT STANLEY





Specially permitted seating in former parking places (“streeteries”) makes productive use of public space.

