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Mayor Fulop and the Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services Release 50 New Mobile Food Vendor Licenses

Fulop Administration Measure Enhances Jersey City's Desirability as a Destination & Expands Opportunities for Local Entrepreneurs

JERSEY CITY – As Jersey City's vibrant dining and cultural scene continues to flourish and expand, **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** and the **Department of Health and Human Services** announced today that **50 mobile food vendor licenses** will be made available to the public as the Administration continues to both create Jersey City as a destination and increase entrepreneurship.

"The food truck scene in Jersey City is one of the biggest and most diverse in the country and we want to expand that presence even further," said **Mayor Fulop**. "We are always looking for ways to encourage entrepreneurship in Jersey City and this an exciting opportunity for our residents and small business owners."

Until now, new food truck licenses have been unattainable by the public as HHS conducted a full audit of existing licenses and worked on amending the existing ordinance. Beginning June 1, 2015, the Department of Health and Human Services will release 50 food truck licenses on a first come, first serve basis.

The Mayor tasked Health & Human Services with conducting an audit of current food licenses. It was found that there were 237 licensed vendors across the City, which has been capped for several years. In 2014, the City Council amended the City ordinance to streamline and improve the application process to ensure that those seeking licenses had a vehicle to utilize licenses. Following the 2015 renewal period, approximately 50 mobile food vendor licenses were found to not be in operation, and these license holders were unable to renew their licenses per the 2014 ordinance amendments.

"The mobile food industry in Jersey City has made an exponential leap since our first official meeting with the Fulop Administration," said **Romm Gaddi, owner of incrediBALLS LLC**. "The Mayor has always been pro-entrepreneur/pro-small business and his team reflects this. The Jersey City mobile food industry has united as an organization to be a positive force in our community, and we are very excited to work on projects and events with all the municipal agencies and local organizations and to see the mobile food industry grow."

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Since taking office, the Fulop administration has made bolstering services to the small business a community a focus, specifically streamlining the permitting process and utilizing tablets in the field at the Building Department to expedite approvals. The Building Department has also expanded weekday hours and added weekend hours. As a result, more than 150 small businesses have opened - including 50 restaurants - creating thousands of jobs for local residents. Last month, the Fulop Administration also introduced an ordinance limiting the number of chain retail stores and restaurants in downtown Jersey City to further support the small business community and diversity of the city.

The release of the new licenses comes after several years of food truck operators paying to “transfer” a license, leaving new business owners with additional debt before starting their business. Prior to the audit, mobile food vendors were paying upwards of \$8,000 for a transferred license from other vendors. By releasing the 50 available licenses, the City can encourage more mobile food vendors at an equitable entry price that is consistent with what other food vendors have paid citywide.

Food trucks and mobile food vendors are located throughout the city, and during summer months are found not only at transportation and employment hubs, but at farmers’ markets, festivals and other community events, showcasing Jersey City’s diverse culinary scene.

“As someone who’s been trying to book food trucks for different events in every corner of the city, and having a hard time at it, this is great news,” said **Mory Thomas, Founder of the Washington Park Association and Vice President of the Jersey City Parks Coalition**. “The Jersey City community is hungry for more food trucks, and as our city grows, so too do our appetites for better and more food options. Mobile food vending is not just about your corner hot dog cart or Mr. Softee truck anymore, but has grown to reflect the diverse culinary scene in Jersey City, bringing communities out into the streets to get to know one another and fostering a friendly competitive spirit with existing neighborhood commercial zones while igniting entrepreneurship.”

The mobile food vendor industry has been so successful in Jersey City that a number of vendors have actually opened brick and mortar establishments, including Kraverie, Mod Cup, and Milk Sugar Love Creamery and Bakeshop.

“Operating as a mobile business first allowed me to test my product out in the marketplace without taking on all the overhead that goes with opening a storefront,” said **Emma Taylor, owner of Milk Sugar Love Creamery and Bakeshop**. “It also allowed me to market my product directly all over town and build a following so that when I did open a storefront, I already had a customer base that followed me from the cart to the store.”

On June 1st, interested applicants must arrive at 199 Summit Avenue 8 a.m. to complete an application/reapplication process (\$50 fee) with the following documents:

- Certificate of Registration issued by the NJ Division of Taxation
- Proof of ownership or rental of an approved vehicle or pushcart
- Proof of general liability insurance providing a minimum of one million dollars coverage for NON-motorized coverage (LLC/Business coverage)
- Proof of motor vehicle insurance per NISA 39:6B if mobile food vendor operates from a motor vehicle, in addition to general liability insurance, must prove motor vehicle insurance with a minimum of one million dollars of coverage
- A type 2 propane permit from the JCFD, if a vehicle of pushcart is carrying propane

At that time, the Office of Licensing will schedule a pre-operation inspection with a Registered Environmental Health Specialist. Few inspections are available for the same day. All applicants have up to 60 days to schedule an inspection or until all licenses are issued, whichever comes first. The cost for an annual license for 2015 is \$600.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-376-0699.////