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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Mayor Elicker Celebrates Opening of Orange St./9<sup>th</sup> Square Promenade & Outdoor Dining Venue**

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – Today Mayor Justin Elicker led a walking tour of one of the City’s newly-opened, COVID-19 compliant promenades in the 9<sup>th</sup> Square District: the Orange Street Promenade. The masked, socially-distant tour began at the corner of Orange and Center streets with brief remarks by Mayor Elicker and representatives of the City’s Economic Development Administration and Health Department. Other speakers included representatives of the businesses and organizations that partnered with the City on the project, including; the Economic Development Corporation of New Haven, AVANGRID, Inc., Town Green District, New Haven Innovation Collaborative, and Beacon Communities.

City officials have worked closely with local businesses to create the Orange St. and College St. Promenades – closing lanes and sections of streets to allow for outdoor dining and an enjoyable pedestrian experience consistent with COVID-19 regulations and safety guidelines. The Orange Street Promenade is on Orange St, between Center and Crown, and the College Street Promenade is between Chapel and Crown. The construction of Promenades and other outdoor venues throughout City neighborhoods are in response to the economic downturn in restaurants and small businesses due to the ongoing public health crisis. This initiative allows business owners the opportunity to expand their capacity and safely host more customers with outdoor spaces.

“Today, we celebrate the opening of a beautiful outdoor space where city residents and visitors can safely enjoy shopping and dining. It also celebrates the spirit of innovation and cooperation throughout New Haven while making it possible to thoughtfully and safely re-open our City,” said Mayor Elicker. “These businesses drive our economy, and it’s important to provide them with resources to rehire their staff and relaunch their businesses. I want to thank all of our partners in this project for helping to make this happen,” he concluded.

AVANGRID, INC., provided a \$20,000 Relaunch Grant which was matched by a grant from the New Haven Innovation Collaboration to the Economic Development Corporation of New Haven (EDC). The EDC in turn awarded the \$40,000 in micro-grants to restaurants and shops throughout the City to create

safe outdoor dining and retail spaces. The funding is helping ground-floor restaurants and shops obtain the plastic barriers, ramps, and the signage they need to set up safe outdoor dining and retail spaces. The money is also supporting a public art program focused on decorating the barriers. Businesses receiving AVANGRID micro-grants to date include JP Dempsey's, Salsa Authentic Mexican, Chouquette Crepier & Café, Escape New Haven, Koffee, and Rubamba Arepa Bar.

Restaurants and retail businesses participating in the Orange Street Promenade include Somos Handcrafted Arepas, Life Bowls, Skappo, Pho Thai, Lezeez, Elm City Games and Barcade. Restaurants and retail establishments participating in the College Street Promenade include The Anchor Spa, Be Natural Kitchen, The Owl Shop, Elm City Social, South Bay, and Pacifico.

Highlights of the tour included beautification and safety measures taken by the City and Town Green District. These enhancements included an eye-catching walkway painted by district ambassadors, over 25 new bollards with greenery, and safety signage on bollards and sandwich boards throughout the promenade created through a partnership with Market New Haven.

For an up-to-date list of New Haven businesses that are open, visit:

<https://www.infonewhaven.com/nhvbizupdates/>

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