

## New Pedestrian Plaza Opens on E. 25th St.



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KIPS BAY — Cafe tables, planters and purple umbrellas have replaced cars on one block of East 25th Street, thanks to [Baruch College](#)'s new pedestrian plaza.

The school held a ribbon-cutting Wednesday morning for the plaza between Lexington and Third avenues, which [was closed to traffic late last year](#).

"Baruch is an urban vertical campus, and it has had no outdoor gathering spaces, and for the first time, we've gotten that," said Mitchel Wallerstein, president of Baruch College.

Over the next two to three years, the school will transform the current plaza into a more permanent one, a project that includes raising the level of the street to meet the curb and may also add benches and more greenery.

In the meantime, the pedestrian space will provide opportunities for Baruch students to study and hold outdoor events, and it will be open for community events on the weekends, including an outdoor market if resident would support one, Wallerstein said.

Baruch College is paying for the construction and maintenance of the plaza.

"The community and local businesses have been very supportive," Wallerstein said. "Overall they've expressed that the impact on the community will be a net positive."

Still, the plan has gotten its fair share of complaints from community members who [said during a public meeting last September](#) that they were concerned about an increase in noise, trash and traffic.