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Albany's Newest Neighborhood Gathering Spot The Boulevard Now Open

Long-Time Albany restaurateur Cheri West Brings An American Grill With A Taste of Italy to the former Sam's Italian American Restaurant Space at 125 Southern Boulevard

ALBANY – A new neighborhood gathering spot, The Boulevard, officially celebrated its grand opening on Wednesday with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The newly renovated sports bar and restaurant is located in the former Sam's Italian American Restaurant space at 125 Southern Boulevard.

Developed and owned by returning restaurateur Cheri West who formerly owned the seasonal barge restaurant Riverfront Bar & Grill along with Park View Pub which both closed in 2017, The Boulevard brings back classic dishes from Sam's and also pays homage to the American pub fare of her former restaurants. West is reenergized and encouraged by the community support in returning to running a restaurant after eight years.

"Returning to the restaurant community has been incredibly energizing, and I'm grateful for the warm welcome we've received," said West. "With The Boulevard, we wanted to honor the legacy of Sam's while bringing back some of the classics people loved from the barge and Park View Pub. This space has always been about family, good food, and feeling at home — and we're excited to build on that tradition with our neighbors."

"The Boulevard is a fantastic new addition to Southern Boulevard and a great example of how small businesses continue to strengthen our neighborhoods," said City of Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan. "Cheri has brought new life to a beloved local space, creating a welcoming gathering place for residents and visitors alike. I'm thrilled to celebrate this opening and the continued momentum it brings."



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“Cheri West’s revitalization of this site and the opening of The Boulevard marks an exciting day for Albany,” said Senator Patricia Fahy (D--Albany). “The City of Albany’s small business facade program continues to open doors that allow entrepreneurs and restauranteurs to invest in the region, and these investments will give people another reason to stay after work and create community between local business owners, our residents, and people looking to explore Albany. Congratulations to Cheri and I look forward to your continued success and investment in the Capital Region.”

“The Boulevard is a wonderful addition to the Southern Boulevard neighborhood where people can come together to connect and enjoy some great food,” said **Assemblymember Gabriella A. Romero (D, Wf-Albany, Guilderland, New Scotland)**. “It’s exciting to see a familiar space reimagined as a welcoming gathering spot that reflects the heart of this community, while maintaining some of the classics people love. City investments like this are critical to helping our small businesses thrive and strengthening the Albany community at large.”

The menu features former classics from Sam’s, the barge and Park View Pub with direct support from Sam’s former owners. “Clams a la Sam’s” as well as chicken and eggplant parm is featured. The Barge’s seafood chowder and other items return along with a full bar, burgers, wings and salads.

The 1,260 sq. ft. bar and restaurant seats 80 guests, elements of Sam’s were kept as part of its renovation. Exterior improvements including benches, awning and signage installation were made possible with a City of Albany Small Business Façade Improvement Program grant award.

“The Boulevard shows how reinvestment can transform a familiar location into a renewed community asset,” said Capitalize Albany Corporation president Ashley Mohl. “These facade grants help breathe new life into neighborhood establishments — enhancing the exterior, reactivating vacant or underutilized space, and supporting small business owners as they create welcoming destinations for the community. Cheri’s vision for this restaurant adds to the vibrancy of Southern Boulevard.”

“The opening of The Boulevard highlights the positive impact of the Small Business Façade Improvement Program and the role Capitalize Albany plays in supporting local entrepreneurs and revitalizing our commercial corridors,” said Albany County Executive Daniel P. McCoy. “Investments like these help small businesses succeed, bring new energy to existing spaces, and strengthen our neighborhoods. I congratulate Cheri West on this opening and look forward to seeing The Boulevard become a welcoming gathering place for the community.”



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The citywide matching grant program is designed to provide matching grants to assist eligible small businesses and not-for-profits with up to \$10,000 for exterior renovations. Administered by Capitalize Albany, it's supported by the City of Albany Capital Resource Corporation (CRC) and the Albany Community Development Agency (ACDA).

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About Capitalize Albany Corporation

A catalyst for economic growth, Capitalize Albany Corporation facilitates transformational development projects, serving as the City of Albany's economic development arm. A registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization implementing programs and resources to create, retain, and attract business in the City of Albany. www.CapitalizeAlbany.com