

# DOWNTOWN BOSTON

is **OPEN**  
FOR BUSINESS

**Calling all businesses!** The Downtown Boston Business Improvement District (BID) is helping small business owners secure new storefront space downtown. In partnership with the City of Boston and with guidance from a local network of leaders in retail, hospitality, arts and culture, and real estate, we are launching a program to reduce vacancies, curate the retail environment, and support greater representation among BIPOC businesses within the Downtown Boston area. A vibrant retail hub for the whole city, downtown is where people come from all over to experience a cross-section of Boston.

We are specifically interested in attracting businesses that meet the following local needs and priorities:

- BIPOC-owned businesses
- Destination retail and restaurants
- Social impact businesses (ie. nonprofit-led and mission-driven restaurants and retailers)
- Childcare businesses
- Boston-based apparel stores
- Locally-owned and operated coffee shops
- Bookstores
- Specialty grocery stores
- Creative spaces (ie. galleries, studios, and theaters)



Café Bonjour, a local breakfast and lunch favorite, was opened in 2019 by owner Driss Elmokri. With support letters and marketing assistance, the BID supported Mr. Elmokri's transformation of a non-descript convenience store into a charming Parisian-style breakfast café. Creating a "café with vibrancy" was Mr. Elmokri's childhood dream—and if the lines outside his business are any indication, he has fulfilled it spectacularly.

## Bring your business downtown!

### By The Numbers

- Downtown Boston is on-track to welcome as many as **45 million visitors** in 2023, a **50% increase** from 2022!
- In 2022, weekly foot traffic in Downtown Boston was higher than in other commercial hubs such as Back Bay, Fenway/Longwood, and Seaport.
- In 2023, Downtown Boston's spending recovery is anticipated to fully return to pre-pandemic levels!
- Downtown Boston has a variety of available storefront spaces ranging in size from **250 square feet** to **25,000+ square feet**.

## Significant Funding for Small Businesses is Available

### Through the City of Boston's S.P.A.C.E. Grant Program

Administered by the City of Boston, the S.P.A.C.E. (Supporting Pandemic Affected Community Enterprises) Grant Program will prioritize helping small businesses grow, with an emphasis on sectors that were most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will provide grants of \$100,000-\$200,000 for 50 small businesses disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 that are looking to fill vacant commercial space in the City.

*Applications for the initial cohort of the S.P.A.C.E. Grant closed in February 2023. A second cohort is expected, although an application date has not yet been announced.*

## Interested in Opening Downtown?

The Downtown Boston BID helps businesses through every step of the process of opening a business downtown — from finding the perfect location to navigating permits and approvals.

Here are just some of the free services we offer:

- Providing letters of support for funding, licensing, and permits
- Offering customized guidance on available storefronts
- Advocating on your behalf with local landlords
- Providing technical expertise with the S.P.A.C.E. Grant Program application
- Expediting to assisting with permits and approvals
- Marketing and Supporting Day-to-Day Operations of your business once you open



Views of Downtown Boston in 2023.

## Contact Us Today!

Have questions? Contact Sean Webster, Program Manager, today and a member of our team will reach out to discuss your specific needs and questions.

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