

# Defining Our Future

Downtown Boston  
Business Improvement District  
Strategic Plan 2017–2022

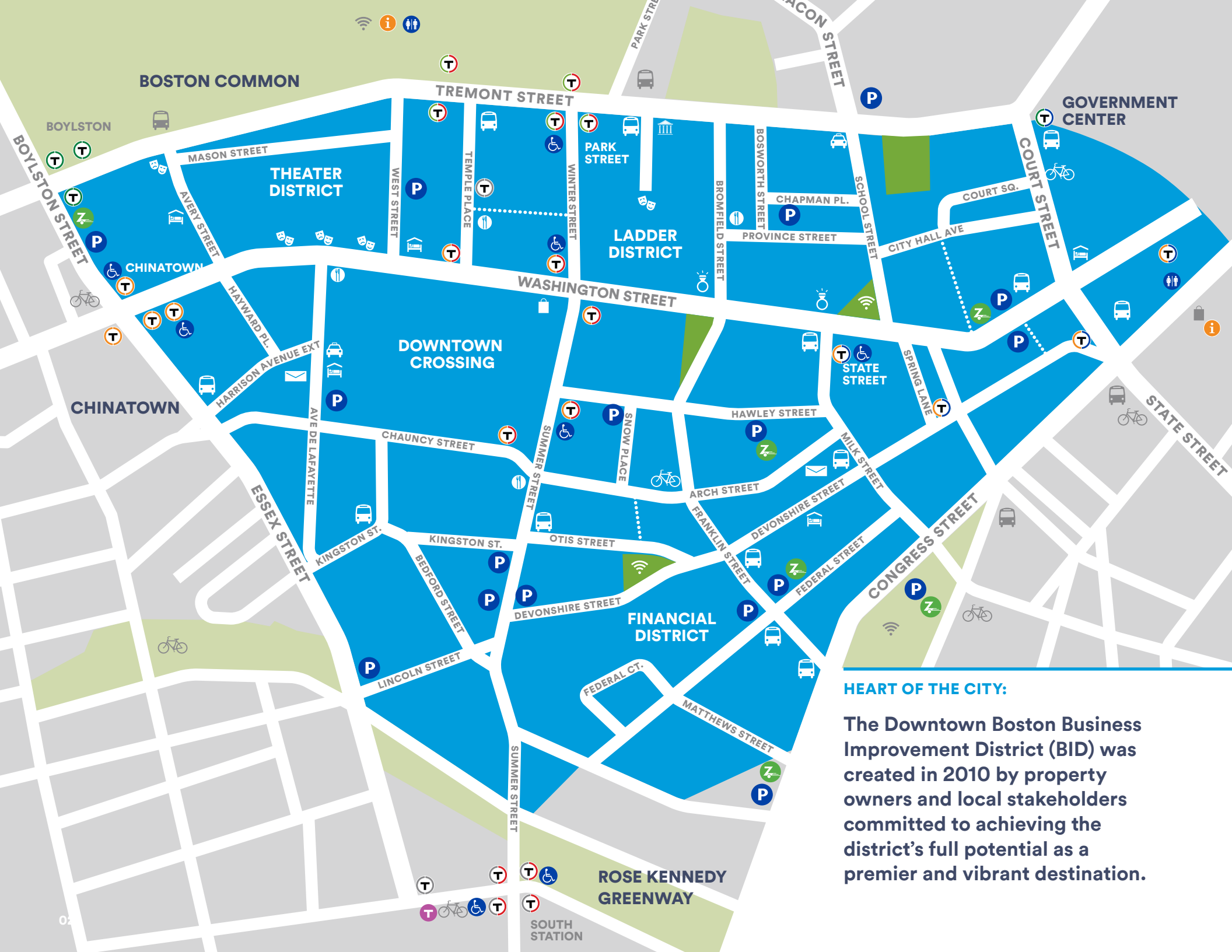
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Progress Report  
September, 2017



#### ABOUT:

In 2010, commercial property owners responded positively to a campaign to establish a Business Improvement District that would advocate for and enhance the commercial and residential environment, set new standards for cleanliness and safety, and create a welcoming atmosphere. Since its debut seven years ago, the Downtown Boston BID has served as stewards of a 34-block area that includes Downtown Crossing, the Ladder District, and portions of the Financial and Theater districts. A 33-member BID board of directors represents the cross section of Boston's business and residential community found within the district. The BID's efforts bolstered a resurging economy, leading to a Downtown Boston renaissance. The area is now home to sparkling new buildings, a surging retail and restaurant scene, a grocery store serving the district's many residents, a vibrant academic community and exciting street life that lasts well into the evening.



**HEART OF THE CITY:**

The Downtown Boston Business Improvement District (BID) was created in 2010 by property owners and local stakeholders committed to achieving the district's full potential as a premier and vibrant destination.



## a collective vision

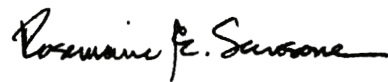
### LETTER:

In our continuing effort to realize the collective vision of our members, the Downtown Boston Business Improvement District is building upon the past five years by working with constituents to explore what its next steps should be as a transformative organization. This progress report describes our strategic goals and the values which guide the organization. This exercise reflects the hard work of many individuals, for which I am enormously grateful. We are excited about acting on the strategic plan through our members, staff and our continuing collaboration with Mayor Walsh and members of his administration.

Just as the district is always evolving, the BID must be ready to seize new opportunities and rise to any challenge. Recognizing the importance of engaging with our community as we work with our board of directors to move forward, we have developed a strategic plan for the next five years, based on feedback from members, residents and people who visit downtown. A wide range of community members engaged in focus groups, meetings and surveys to suggest added or enhanced BID services—some of which were presented as necessary, others aspirational.

Many responses reinforced the work the BID already had begun or was considering. Other good ideas were implemented without waiting for finalization of the strategic plan, and still more are in the works. This executive summary is organized to reflect the status of strategic objectives.

Once again, thank you to everyone who participated and we look forward to our continued work together.



Rosemarie Sansone  
President & CEO

Based on the input of many stakeholders, the BID has created a strategic plan addressing the following principal areas:

- **Continually improve activities that ensure a clean, safe and welcoming downtown.**
- **Create a dynamic public realm featuring active streets, improved transportation and attractive infrastructure.**
- **Boost economic vitality based on data research.**
- **Market our compelling brand: This is Boston.**
- **Train and prepare for the unexpected.**

# mission

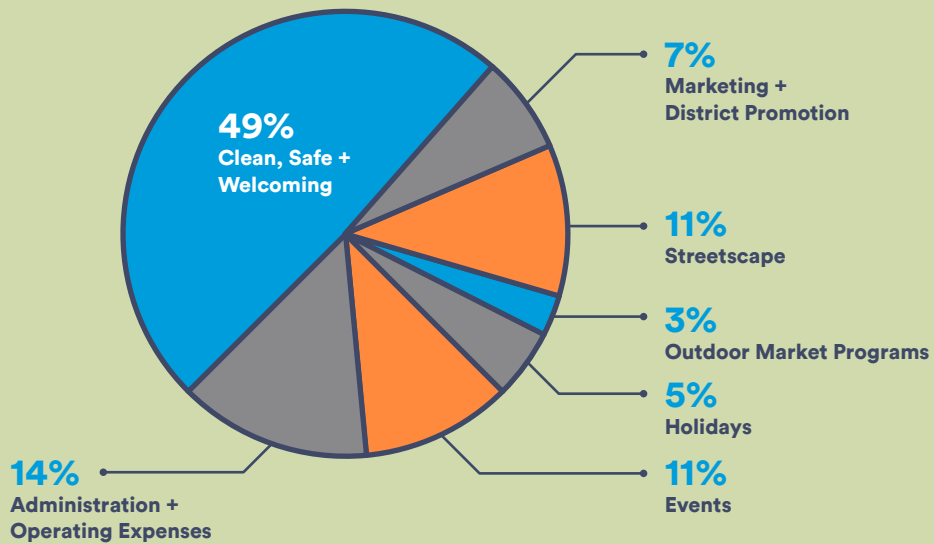
**The BID works to significantly improve the experience of all who live, work, visit, go to school or shop in the Downtown Boston BID by:**

- Providing supplemental services to keep the streets and sidewalks clean, upgrade the aesthetic appearance of the district, and make people feel welcomed and safe.
- Promoting and fostering an energetic and thriving business climate in the area.
- Serving as the voice and advocate for the district.





## Downtown Boston BID FY18 Budget



# BID values

- We **collaborate** with others, working face-to-face and **connecting** people with one another.
- We follow the **highest professional standards**.
- We are **results oriented**.
- We are **data driven**.
- We are **centered on our constituencies**.
- We strive for **excellence** in all we do.
- We acknowledge and **embrace the district's diversity** in our programming and hiring.
- We are **responsive** and **highly engaged**.
- We value **personal advancement** and **professional development**.

### GOAL:

# clean, safe + welcoming

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#### CURRENT:

- Create a Clean, Safe and Welcoming Committee.
- Maintain strong ambassador presence, with staff deployed to enhance daytime safety.
- Continue outreach in collaboration with Boston Police Area A1 and social service agencies.
- Work with Boston Police Department to increase police presence during key day and evening hours.
- Pilot a private-security walking patrol.
- Cigarette disposal units added.

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#### UNDER WAY:

- Undertake a security study of the district with an emphasis on the pedestrian zone and develop a menu of actionable steps the BID can undertake.
- Develop new ambassador uniforms for a more modern and welcoming appearance.
- Evaluate the use of overnight ambassadors.
- Build security managers roundtable to share information and data.
- Train BID staff and ambassadors to recognize and respond to new risks.
- Research best practices for commercial and residential trash removal.
- Explore feasibility of introducing a security ambassador program.
- Develop a Winter/Summer streets engagement plan, including a security analysis.
- Design smaller, more mobile iCarts to bring ambassadors to the district's gateways and become more nimble in responding to needs.



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**GOAL:**

# dynamic public realm

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**CURRENT:**

- Continue efforts to keep people engaged in after-work activities downtown.
- Continue to program public spaces.
- Expand welcoming, comfortable, high-quality public spaces throughout the district
- Ensure quality control for all additions to public realm.
- Install popup exhibits and public art installations.
- Develop an enhanced and mobile-friendly website that features parking facilities.
- New bicycle racks installed, with more to be added.

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**UNDER WAY:**

- Undertake pedestrian zone study to define optimum hours of operation and develop safety and usage plans.
- Work with city to maintain an appealing and safe pedestrian zone.
- Work with MBTA to accomplish needed repairs and improved maintenance.
- Work with city on improved street and sidewalks.
- Survey stakeholders regularly about their needs and desires.
- Engage stakeholders and private partners in improving the MBTA experience within the district.
- Visually survey and inventory all public furniture, branded items, planters and rolling stock as we develop a cohesive visual identity for the district.
- Collaborate with city planners on Tontine Crescent to develop a new green space on Franklin Street.

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**GOAL:**

# economic vitality

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**CURRENT:**

- Economic Vitality Committee established.
- Enhance communications through new materials, meetups and marketing clinics for small and independent retailers in partnership with the Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC).
- Train staff in Salesforce customer relationship management for closer tracking of interactions with property owners, businesses and residents.

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**UNDER WAY:**

- Study new tools for researching “real-time” pedestrian counts, consider potential vendors, and launch.
- Research social media tools that capture engagement within established areas with input from technologically savvy BIDs throughout the country.
- Develop inventory of spaces for pop-up retail.
- Collect data to support informed decision-making.
- Work with leasing agents and brokers to fill empty storefronts.
- Promote diversified retail.
- Be the go-to resource for data analysis and support for property owners.

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**GOAL:**

# marketing a compelling brand

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**CURRENT:**

- Marketing Committee created.
- Award-winning design agency is updating and refreshing our brand style guide.
- Brand material messaging now ties to Boston's strengths and our place in the city.
- Created a Welcome Kit shared with all members.
- Developed key relationships including sponsorship of Commonwealth Shakespeare, the Boston Cup Car Show, and Illuminus.
- New website is enhanced for mobile users.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships formed with government entities, including the Boston Mayor's Office and MBTA.
- Streets animated with entertainment and programs that emphasize Boston history and area architecture.

- Developed and deployed an orientation program for concierges.
- Partnered with a renowned event-planning company to expand signature events.

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**UNDER WAY:**

- Develop media relations with local and national outlets.
- Create suite of integrated marketing materials for multiple audiences.
- Offer marketing materials in languages other than English.
- Place new advertising in multiple languages to engage travelers from around the world.
- Build the BID brand and promote it within the district and regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Leverage our location to include authenticity and historical accuracy that engages and educates our visitors.
- Develop RFP for search engine optimization.
- Build upon the successful newsletter with mobile-friendly versions.



## Downtown Boston BID Board of Directors

**Chairman:** John “Jack” Spurr Jr., *A.W. Perry Inc.*

**Vice-Chair:** Joseph Larkin, *Millennium Partners*

**Treasurer:** William Cowin, *B&B Ventures*

**Clerk:** Brian Awe, *DLA Piper*

**President & CEO:** Rosemarie E. Sansone

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Scott Brown, *Lincoln Property Company*

Stacy Cawley, *Boston Properties*

Brian Collins, *Clarion Partners*

Jeffrey Cook, *Fidelity Real Estate*

Rory Cuddyer, *City of Boston/Mayor’s Office*

Ronald Druker, *The Druker Company*

Christine Dunn, *Dunn Associates*

David Epstein, *The Abbey Group*

Steve Faber, *Related Beal*

Paul Filtzer, *Equity Office*

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Sam Flood, *TIAA-CREF*

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Jim Robertson, *Origen Ventures*

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Doug Sickler, *Pi Alley Garage*

Peter Standish, *Northland Investment Corp.*

Samuel Tyler, *Boston Municipal Research Bureau*

Doris Wong, *Doris Wong Associates*

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BOSTON

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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