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**MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON ISSUES REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXPANDED SMALL BUSINESS VACANT STOREFRONT ACTIVATION PROGRAM**

*Under the Johnson Administration, the newly expanded program will provide support for up to one year to increase vibrancy and promote small businesses in the city's commercial corridors.*

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) have issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Small Business Storefront Activation Program. Through this RFP, the City will select community and economic development organizations that will be responsible for identifying vacant storefronts in their respective community areas, negotiating short-term leases with landlords, sourcing local small businesses for storefront activations, managing preparation and operations for the space, and providing ongoing support to small businesses operating pop-up stores. These activations will boost local spending and draw additional foot traffic to commercial corridors across all 77 neighborhoods.

“Through the Small Business Storefront Activation Program, property owners will be able to build relationships with potential tenants, and entrepreneurs will have the ability to access pop-up spaces in prime locations and explore new markets,” **said Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “So we are extremely excited to expand this program that will drive growth in our neighborhoods by activating commercial spaces and supporting small businesses, which are part of the backbone of our city’s economy.”

“As the post-pandemic economic recovery continues, we want to reinvigorate the interest in shopping local by activating storefronts in our neighborhoods,” **said BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer**. “By continuing our efforts, we will help local entrepreneurs and property owners create vibrant commercial corridors that encourage Chicagoans to support local businesses.”

The COVID-19 pandemic left significant increases in commercial corridor vacancy rates across the City. Brick and mortar businesses that rely on foot traffic to drive sales were particularly affected as commercial corridors across the city saw major



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reductions in economic activity. Participants in these programs, known as “grantees,” will work with small business owners and landlords to provide rapid relief to small businesses by designing and implementing activations in vacant storefronts on commercial corridors.

RFP grantees will negotiate short-term leases for move-in ready vacant storefronts, and partner with local small businesses to launch pop-up stores, community markets, or other commercial activations that support local businesses. The grantees will also assist the businesses with business coaching and support them in managing a storefront.

The RFP submissions must be completed by October 13, 2023. Those interested in learning more about this opportunity can [register for the pre-submittal conference](#) taking place on October 3, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. CST. The pre-submittal conference is optional but highly encouraged. For information about the RFP and pre-submittal conference, please visit [Chicago.gov/BACPrecoveryplan](https://Chicago.gov/BACPrecoveryplan). To view this RFP, visit the [City's eProcurement website](#) and search by RFP #9649.

The [Small Business Storefront Activation Program](#) is a part of the Chicago Recovery Plan, the City's plan to amplify once-in-a-generation federal funding to create an equity-based investment strategy to catalyze a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chicago Recovery Plan invests holistically in communities and industries hardest hit by the pandemic to support equitable economic recovery across the city.

To learn more about BACP's Recovery Plan efforts, please visit [Chicago.gov/BACPrecoveryPlan](https://Chicago.gov/BACPrecoveryPlan).

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