



The **Pop-Up Downtown Program** is an initiative of the Augusta Downtown Alliance and private property owners in Augusta to offer low-rate, short-term leases to local entrepreneurs. Selected applicants will occupy vacant storefronts and/or share retail spaces throughout the summer, fall and holiday seasons with the goal of long-term occupancy after program completion.

#### **What will this accomplish?**

- Enhance the look and feel of downtown and Front Street
- Enhance the retail core of downtown with more merchants and products
- Reduce negative visual impact of vacant storefronts
- Generate more traffic and shopping downtown
- Offer a low cost option for businesses to try a new market and reach new customers
- Match entrepreneurs with available, below-market retail space in downtown Augusta
- Help landlords fill ground-floor vacancies, especially on Front Street
- Minimize costs and risks to businesses and landlords

#### **What are the dates of the program?**

The pop-ups will operate from May 24th, 2019 to September 2, 2019, and again from November 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019.

#### **What businesses will this program attract?**

The Augusta Downtown Alliance and our private property owners hope to attract local and regional establishments and start-ups that feature gifts, home goods, and decor, apparel and accessories, specialty food and drink, book stores, sporting rentals, boutiques, art items, locally-made goods, childrens' stores, etc. Pop-ups will be complementary to other offerings and businesses downtown and should be planned with intent to increase foot traffic and drive shoppers to Downtown Augusta.

#### **What are the legal requirements?**

Program participants will sign a short-term lease for the dates of the program, which stipulates the terms of the space use. They will agree to return the space to its original condition at the end of the lease. Participants shall comply with insurance requirements as well as the City of Augusta and the State of Maine rules and regulations for property use and business licensing.

Selected participants who do not comply with these rules outlined by the Pop-Up Downtown Program will be required to refund the Program and/or the landlord the grant money awarded.

**Advertising Requirements:**

Businesses will be required to have an online presence with a Facebook page, and we will recommend other social media platforms specific to the business type. The Augusta Downtown Alliance will offer free marketing & promotions support and access to discounted professional services from project partners. The Augusta Downtown Alliance will also complete an ad campaign for the Pop-Up Downtown Program and participating businesses.

**Can I alter the space I am using?**

Improvements or alterations of any kind must be discussed with the landlord and the program directors. Temporary tenants are responsible for general upkeep such as cleaning, replacing light bulbs, etc.

**What if I am interested in the program but don't have enough merchandise to fill the space?**

No problem! Indicate on your application that you would like to share a space with a complementary merchant or indicate another applicant that you would like to share space with, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

**When do I access my space?**

You may access your space once the short-term lease is signed with the landlord and proof of insurance and licensing is presented. Payment of a refundable security deposit (amount to be determined by the landlord) is required.

**Pop-Up Shop Criteria:**

- All applications are due by April 30, 2019 for the summer program, and by October 1, 2019 for the winter program. Deadline may be extended, and the program will operate on a first come first served basis, which means applicants may be approved to occupy a space before the application deadline.
- Selected businesses will receive a subsidized/reduced rent for a storefront in Downtown Augusta for the months of May, June, July, August and September and/or October, November and December of 2019.
- Unless otherwise specified, businesses must be ready to open their business for the summer program on May 24th and remain open until September 2, 2019. For the winter program, businesses must be ready to open their businesses by no later than November 1st and remain open until December 31, 2019.
- Locations will not be finalized until businesses are selected.
- Commercial kitchen space will not be available in any of the pop-up shop locations. Specialty food and drink is highly encouraged to apply, and the applicant and program directors can discuss options.
- Ideal applicants are individuals currently operating a home-based business, businesses wishing to open a second location, or business concepts with minimal startup inventory.

**Pop-Up Downtown Program Requirements:**

- Retailers must maintain regular store hours per program requirements
- Shops must maintain a fully stocked inventory during operational hours
- Retailers and their shops must have a professional appearance
- Retailers must sign a waiver of liability regarding program participation, including responsibility for any personal or property damage resulting from tenancy
- Retailers will pay all necessary sales tax on proceeds, obtain any necessary state permits and provide a certificate of insurance for liability
- Retailers must proactively market via social media, relationship marketing, etc
- Retailers are responsible for maintaining building's interior and exterior

**Selection Process:**

- Applications will be reviewed by the Pop-Up Downtown Program committee, made up of the executive committee of the Augusta Downtown Alliance and landlords.
- The committee will select applicants that fit the criteria for each particular retail space currently available at the times the applications come in.
- Applications are considered on a first come first served, rolling basis until all spaces are filled.
- The committee reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from candidates as well as to request that some make presentations.
- Evaluation criteria for selection shall be based on product mix, store concept, marketing approach, operations strategy, availability to install, events, experience, references, willingness to work with the Alliance and other retailers, store design and other issues the committee deems appropriate.
- All applications will remain confidential until accepted into the program.