



POP-UP SHOP TOOLKIT

Useful Info & Resources from the Pop-up Shop Project



POP-UP
SHOPS!

DECA

DANFORTH EAST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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Opportunity made here.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The information shared in this toolkit features the work and commitment of over one hundred DECA volunteers, supported by staff at WoodGreen Community Services. Together this team of people turned an idea into a reality, and helped transform a neighbourhood.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A POP-UP SHOP?

Pop-up shops are temporary stores that “pop up” in a specific neighbourhood for anywhere from a few days to a few months, filling vacant storefronts and benefitting all parties involved: landlords, business owners and the community as a whole.

Landlords make their otherwise empty space available to business owners for a certain period of time, and the result is win-win. The business owner gets the opportunity to try out the space and the neighbourhood to see if the location is a good fit to start something more permanent, and the landlord gets their space cleaned, painted and staged for the community and potential renters to consider it for future use. The community, meanwhile, benefits by having a formerly empty space filled by a provider of goods or services, which creates foot traffic and a busier, more thriving neighbourhood.

BACKGROUND: THE AREA AND PLAYERS

The Danforth East Community Association (DECA) was formed in 2007 by a group of neighbours whose vision was to create a vibrant, walkable, safe neighbourhood. DECA is proud to be a community association that was formed with the purpose of actively building a better neighbourhood, rather than just fighting proposed changes. Activities DECA has initiated which have contributed to the renewal of the neighbourhood include: the Pop-up Shop project, the popular weekly East Lynn Farmers’ Market, the Halloween pumpkin parade, flash mobs, seasonal tree lighting ceremonies and a highly successful yearly arts fair.

The neighbourhood between Monarch Park to the west, and Main Street to the east is characterized predominantly by single family houses with the primary commercial area located along Danforth Ave., which acts as a major east-west thoroughfare for vehicles and also includes direct access to public transportation via the Bloor-Danforth subway line. There is an existing business improvement area (BIA), however the BIA was not involved in these activities. Historically, this stretch of the Danforth was a vibrant commercial strip and was home to many new immigrant businesses that flourished in the 1950s and 60s. In the last 40 to 50 years, commercial activity has declined along Danforth Ave. The decline was evidenced by a large number of vacant storefronts. In some cases, storefronts had been vacant for many years, or have appeared vacant due to usage as living or office space. This contributed to the aesthetic decline of the commercial area, raising safety concerns and discouraging walk-by traffic.

DECA has undertaken a range of activities to encourage the revitalization of Danforth’s commercial strip. In 2009 a group of volunteers formed the Business Revitalization Team (BRT) to organize and implement store makeovers. This group included community volunteers who offered their professional services as interior designers, branding specialists, and graphic designers to makeover local businesses. This team of volunteers worked with eight businesses providing pro bono professional services, plus community-supplied manual labour. This project proved very successful for the businesses that participated, with sales increasing significantly for some following their store makeovers.



This group of volunteers came together to spruce up an empty storefront, bringing new business—and new life—to the neighborhood.

While assisting existing businesses in creating a more welcoming storefront proved very successful, the group realized the need to actively address the high commercial vacancy rate. In late 2011, a full assessment of the state of the existing commercial activities was initiated by volunteers through the Storefront Survey. From these efforts, DECA forged relationships with many of the local business owners, building credibility and trust, and also generated information about many of the empty commercial properties. In working with the local business and property owners, DECA was poised to initiate the pop-up shop project.

HISTORY OF POP-UPS ON DANFORTH

In March 2012, DECA invited Marcus Westbury, a leader in community renewal efforts from Renew Australia, to speak.

He shared his group's experience using pop-up shops to renew lagging commercial areas. Following this presentation, the team decided to focus their efforts on a similar project along Danforth Avenue, and the Pop-Up Shop Project was born.

The first pop-up shop opened for a weekend in October 2012, adopting a similar model as the Australian group: free access to the space in exchange for cleaning, painting and staging of the retail space for prospective tenants. In December of 2012, 11 pop-up shops opened in six different locations throughout the month. Since then, 24 pop-up shops have launched in nine locations along the Danforth. With each round of pop-up shops launched, this project has evolved to incorporate feedback from the participants; we are constantly experimenting, trying new things, and maintaining flexibility and nimbleness in our approach.

The terms of the project have varied, and a range of pop-up shop models have been adopted. As previously mentioned, the first pop-up shop term was one weekend, but month-long terms were sought by participants who wanted to test the market for a longer period of time. Meanwhile, property owners indicated that compensation was required to cover expenses associated with heating and cooling costs. In March of 2013, a community meeting was held to determine the direction of the pop-up project. At this meeting a range of short-term tenancy models were explored, and a new model with compensation to the landowners linked to sales was proposed. As a result of this meeting, the Pop-Up Shop Project currently operates with a maximum six-month term, with a base rate of \$700 plus 10% of gross sales exceeding \$7500. While the project attempts to operate within these terms, this project aims to maintain flexibility in the model (i.e. shorter terms, fixed rates, etc...) to accommodate the range of participants in the project.

KEY PROJECT LEARNINGS:

- Be flexible: seek regular feedback and be prepared to adapt
- More pop-up shops launching at the same time = better media attention
- Charge participants a small fee (\$50/mth) to help cover the costs associated with the project
- Communication with everyone (tenants, landlords and community at large) involved in the project is important to help build a buzz and also clarify project expectations

At the same time the project was getting started, DECA partnered with [WoodGreen Community Services](#), a community service provider in Toronto's east end. With WoodGreen's history in economic development and DECA's growing expertise in filling empty storefronts, this partnership supported a dedicated Community Economic Development Coordinator (CEDC), funded by the [Metcalf Foundation](#). The CEDC works closely with DECA volunteers and oversees the pop-up project, while also sharing the learnings with other groups and organizations to develop similar projects and facilitate similar grassroots economic development activities in other neighbourhoods.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit shares the learnings of the Pop-up Shop project and aims to provide practical advice to assist in negotiating the issues that have come up. A comprehensive collection of all the resources developed for this project are available for download [here](#). A full listing of these resources is included at the [end](#) of this toolkit. These resources are free to use and adapt for the purposes of your own project. It should be noted that similar projects will have their own flavour, and this toolkit serves as the basis for your own team's experimentation.

For a quick review of the key steps for a successful pop-up shop launch, a checklist can be found [here](#).

We welcome any feedback on this toolkit, please send any comments to:

renew@danfortheastcommunityassociation.com

GETTING STARTED

MAPPING COMMERCIAL STRIP/SURVEYING LOCAL COMMUNITY

As identified in the introduction, before the pop-up project started, a team of volunteers conducted a storefront survey of the existing businesses located along the area of interest. This survey generated important information to assess existing commercial activity in the area, and developed relationships with the local business owners. This represented a major investment of time on the part of the team, however this and DECA's other community based activities have provided the foundation of trust the local business owners have come to associate with DECA's efforts. This survey was also a good opportunity to discover information about the vacant properties, a useful part of approaching property owners.

The volunteers visited each storefront within a specific area and asked the owners a series of questions. All the information collected from these short interviews were compiled in a simple database all members of the team could access. A blank database, including the questions used in DECA's survey can be downloaded [here](#).

PRO TIP:
Use free on-line tools (ie Google Docs, Dropbox) to efficiently share info between team members.

GOAL SETTING

The storefront survey identified several issues with respect to the commercial activity along the Danforth, and spurred the activities outlined in the introduction. All of these activities focused on encouraging pedestrian traffic along the Danforth. The pop-up project furthered this goal by activating vacant spaces with inviting, sought-after businesses with the goal of drawing foot traffic to the area.

Establishing this goal, and focusing the efforts of the project on encouraging spaces that people would be interested in walking past and visiting became an important component of the selection process when seeking pop-up tenants. In establishing your own project, it is important to define the goals of your specific project, as this will also determine your selection process when recruiting pop-up tenants.



One example of how an empty space can be transformed to create an inviting shopping experience.

It is also important to regularly evaluate your project's goal and be prepared to adapt. This project has maintained a focus on increasing foot traffic and storefront beautification, however as the project has evolved, the focus has expanded to recruit pop-up tenants interested in establishing a business in the neighbourhood long-term. As the project succeeds, and there are fewer vacancies to fill, the goals need to be re-examined to assess the mix of businesses in the neighbourhood, which could include more active pop-up recruitment to fill identified gaps.

FORM COMMITTEES

There are several elements required to initiate a pop-up project. Four committees have been identified which assumed responsibility for different aspects of the project. [Landlord Recruitment](#) and [Tenant Recruitment](#) are the two most important committees, and are addressed in more detail in further sections of this toolkit. Painting and Cleaning crews, and Promotion and Events committees can be formed depending on the capacity of the people involved in your particular project. It should be noted that if there is an active and receptive business improvement area (BIA) in the area, this is an excellent opportunity for partnership.

VOLUNTEER POWER

The Pop-Up Shop project included a committee of members who cleaned and painted spaces. One of the strengths of this project is the strong buy-in by the local community who were very motivated to invest in change in their neighbourhood. One call-out for volunteers to clean and paint spaces on a Saturday morning generated offers exceeding expectations of people willing to help. Coordinating these volunteers and ensuring that they are provided with the appropriate supplies to complete the tasks is the primary role of this committee.

PROJECT BUDGET

While projects such as this can keep costs down through the use of volunteer labour, a budget is required to cover expenses incurred. The following provides a breakdown of costs associated with this project; the budget for your own project will depend on the activities you choose to engage in.

| ITEM | ESTIMATED COST |
|---|--|
| Public liability insurance policy (good for one year) | \$1500 |
| Director's insurance | \$500 |
| Photocopying and printing (per set of agreements) | \$5 |
| Poster printing for promotional activities 11"x17" | \$1 per poster |
| Cleaning supplies | \$50 or seek donations from local stores and/or volunteers. This could also be negotiated with property owner in exchange for providing volunteers to complete the work. |
| Paint and equipment | \$200 depends on size of space and ability of volunteers to provide brushes and rollers |
| Professional fees (i.e. graphic design) | Pro bono |
| Volunteer appreciation (snacks for work crews) | \$40 (depends on number of volunteers) |

This budget, in particular the insurance fees, can present a significant barrier to other groups looking to take on a similar project. You are encouraged to seek sponsorship to cover these costs from well-established existing businesses in the area, the local BIA, or other funding sources. With a committed group of volunteers, these costs represent a very small investment, with strong potential for economic development possibilities; success along Danforth Ave. includes a decrease in the commercial vacancy rate from 17% in January 2012 to 9% in November 2013. Using this data, as well as similar success stories from other cities, a strong case can be made to potential sponsors to help fund such a project.

Compensation to the property owner in exchange for the use of their space in the pop-up shop project is negotiated with individual owners. These fees are paid by the pop-up tenant to the property owner and a more comprehensive discussion

of this compensation is included [here](#). In addition, this project charges a \$50 monthly fee for program participants to assist in recovering some of the promotion and supplies costs listed in the budget.

PROJECT TIMELINES

Timelines can vary depending on your team's ability to build trust and convince landlords to participate in the project. A [checklist](#) is provided which includes the essential steps to initiating and maintaining a pop-up shop project, and also includes rough timelines for each of these steps. It should be noted that many of these steps can happen at the same time, but you should plan on the order of three to four months from project initiation to the first launch of a pop-up.

One of the challenges associated with this project is landlords are often not willing to commit to this project until the second half of the month, when they are confident that their property will not be rented for the upcoming month. Often, the pop-up team must mobilize quickly as there are only a few weeks between a property coming available, and the tenant taking occupancy. This concentrates the activities to clean storefronts, place the selected tenants, and co-ordinate all the necessary paperwork and, on the flip side, requires that selected tenants be able and willing to mobilize equally quickly when a space becomes available.

LEGAL ISSUES

There are many legal issues associated with occupying a space. Through the efforts of this project, insurance arrangements and legal agreements have been created to ensure everyone participating in this project is protected. The legal agreements used in this project were developed to mirror the ones in used by similar projects. The contracts are an alternative to a lease, but none-the-less, a legally binding agreement. Copies of these agreements are available for download [here](#). They are available for use, but you are cautioned that in using these agreements, you assume the risks associated with their use. DECA or its Directors are in no way liable for any losses incurred as a result of using these agreements.

LEGAL AGREEMENTS

In working closely with a lawyer, legal agreements were drafted and consist of a Licensing Agreement and Participation Agreement. DECA (or the Administering Body) acts as the intermediary in the project, with the landlord granting DECA access to their space through a License Agreement. DECA can then legally make the space available by signing the Participation Agreement with the Program Participants (tenant.) These agreements are an alternative to a lease, but are none-the-less, legally binding. The owner, or program participant can each give 30 days notice at any time should they wish to end the arrangement. This addresses concerns of property owners seeking a longer-term tenant, and ensures that the space can be leased or sold when a viable offer is presented.

WHICH AGREEMENTS TO USE?

There are two versions of the legal agreements available for use:

- Flat licensing fee
- Fee linked to sales (included for download is a basic sales tracking sheet for tenants to report sales)

The fee structure you apply to your particular project will dictate which set of agreements to use

HOW TO PREPARE LEGAL AGREEMENTS FOR SIGNING:

Two copies of each agreement should be prepared, one kept by the respective Licensor or Program Participant, the other copy kept by the Administering Body. The agreements have been drafted in a manner that the missing details be inserted in Schedule A (page 11 of the Licence Agreement, page 13 of the Participation Agreement.) This information needs to be filled out in full to include the following:

- ▶ Name and address of the Administering Body
- ▶ Name and address of Licensor/Program Participant
- ▶ Commencement date

- ▶ Termination date
- ▶ Notice Period (generally 30 days)
- ▶ Service Contribution (applies to Participation Agreement)
- ▶ Permitted Use
- ▶ Insured Amount (applies to License Agreement)

The agreements are signed on page 10 of the License Agreement and page 12 of the Participation Agreement by the respective parties.

INSURANCE

The legal agreements in use for this project require the Administering Body to provide commercial public liability insurance policy. DECA used Paul Spark, Group Consultant (Paul.Spark@hubinternational.com) —a broker specializing in not-for-profits—to secure their policy. Other insurance brokers can also help you to find appropriate insurance coverage for your project. The policy costs \$1500 per year, covers multiple locations and events, and is based on full disclosure of the organization’s activities. In addition, it is suggested that your organization obtain Director’s and Officer’s liability to limit personal liability exposure, due to the involved nature of this project. The cost for this for DECA is an additional \$500 per year.

PRO TIP:
**Work with a broker
 who specializes
 in insurance for
 not-for-profits!**

Landlords require a certificate of insurance when their space is occupied, which must be generated by the insurance company. In order to generate the certificate, the insurance company requires the following information: name of the property owner, the address of the space in use, and basic information of the type of business operating in the space.

Providing this insurance coverage, as part of the pop-up shop project, represents significant value to the tenant occupying the space, as this covers their responsibility to maintain commercial liability insurance. However, it should be clearly stated to the incoming tenant that they understand the scope of this coverage is limited. The tenant would be responsible for securing any additional coverage of the contents in the space.

LANDLORD RECRUITMENT

Securing spaces is truly the key to the success of any pop-up project. Ideally, the landlord recruitment team includes a range of people, such as local residents, real estate agents, and existing landlords. It is also useful if local politicians are willing to get involved and approach property owners, lending credibility to the project. Building on and gaining the trust of the landlords is key to getting them onboard for the project. When you are launching a pop-up shop initiative in a new neighbourhood, convincing the first landlord to give it a try, will be a challenge.

- **Be prepared to approach landowners numerous times.**
- **It will take time to build a rapport and trust between the parties.**
- **Personalities play a huge role in selling the idea - a team approach can be useful.**

Don’t give up, this is the hardest part!

IDENTIFY VACANT PROPERTIES

The storefront survey, [described above](#), will assist in identifying vacant properties. The properties will either be listed by the owner directly or realtors.

At this initial stage, it is helpful to photograph each vacant property, as this can be used later to demonstrate “before and after” photos. The photo should include the street number and capture any contact information on a sign in the photograph. As this information is gathered it can be documented on a spreadsheet that all members of the team can access (e.g. in Google Drive). This document provides an overview of all the information collected in your survey including

the addresses of vacant properties, the contact information, the number of square feet of space available, the name of people contacted, dates, and other relevant information including the owner's names and contact info.

Where possible, find out who owns the vacant properties. Sometimes the owner's contact information is included on the signage, but often a realtor or property manager is involved. You want to build relationships with everyone who is responsible for leasing the property. Realtors and property managers can champion your project and get owners on board but it's also helpful to find out who the owners are in order to contact them directly. Search title for properties at your local registry office or get someone on your team who can do this electronically, such as a realtor or real estate lawyer.

SELLING THE IDEA

Approach the landlords armed with the successes of similar projects in other areas. It is also important to clearly explain the goals of the project, emphasizing what the landowner stands to gain by participating.

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- **The project aims to provide an alternative tenancy model, providing short term access to otherwise empty space until a long-term tenant can be secured.**
- **Participating in this project represents a low risk way to assist with covering some of the carrying costs of the property until a long term tenant can be secured.**
- **The legal agreements are designed so that properties are vacated by the pop-up tenant with 30 days' notice.**
- **Save on insurance and security costs, by ensuring the owner's property is occupied.**
- **DECA's project has worked with 9 different landlords throughout the course of this project, and all have said they would recommend this project to others.**

Landlord marketing materials developed to demonstrate the success of the Pop-Up Shop project are provided [here](#). Testimonials from participating landlords, before and after photos, and statistics that prove results will help build your case. As your project grows, compile your own successes and use these to demonstrate how the project is helping revitalize your commercial area. Another technique is to find someone who can "Photoshop" a photo of a vacant store, creating a fictional "after" image, to show the owner what you're aiming to do.



"DECA's Pop-up Shop program found us a quality tenant after our building was empty for a few months. They made it easy and took care of all the details like the liability insurance and the contact with the tenants. They even spruced up the inside space with a coat of paint at no cost. This project is a win, win. If the tenant stays on it's a bonus and if not, most of your costs are covered, someone is occupying the empty space, making it beautiful and bringing in foot traffic. I would recommend the program to any landlord."

KLAAS HART, OWNER 1765 DANFORTH AVENUE

COMPENSATION FOR ACCESS TO EMPTY SPACES

One of the most common questions asked by property owners is regarding compensation for participating in the project. How you choose to structure your project will determine the answer. The Pop-Up Shop project initially asked property owners to donate their empty space, providing the use of the space in exchange for cleaning and painting by the community. Our project learned this was feasible for short-term (weekend –1 month long) pop-up shops. As the project evolved to longer pop-up terms, organizers had to negotiate with the property owners to address concerns of wear and tear, utility costs, and potential property tax rebate losses. Landowners should be compensated for any costs incurred for the use of the space during the term of the agreement (i.e. utilities). The current model is a 6 month term, and compensation for

the use of the space is set at a base rate of \$700 (+HST). This fee was established to cover the utilities, plus some of the carrying costs. If the focus of the project is on community participation, and volunteers will be improving the space with cleaning and painting, this provides some leverage when working to convince landlords to offer their space.

TENANT RECRUITMENT

Filling vacant storefronts with businesses that will further the project's goal is important to the success of the project. The Pop-Up Shop project recruits and assesses potential tenants. This team consists of local community members and business owners. All the materials developed for the tenant application and recruitment of pop-up tenants are available for download [here](#). You are encouraged to adapt these materials to meet the goals of your own project.

The process for tenant recruitment involves developing an application and a method to accept applications. The team advertises the open call for applications on a range of websites, and promotes that applications are being accepted (see [media resources](#)). This team is then responsible for shortlisting the applicants, and conducting interviews with these candidates. A sample evaluation tool to assess applications and interview questions is included in the [materials for download](#). The tenant recruitment process should ideally be initiated approximately two months before you intend to launch the pop-up shops, allowing one month of open calls, followed by another month of selection and placement.

ASSESSING APPLICATIONS

Hosting a pop-up shop represents a significant opportunity for a starting entrepreneur. The selection criteria should therefore address the goals of the project with consideration of local market forces. The team evaluating the tenant applications should be representative of the community and even the local business (where possible.) The more people who can assist in assessing the applications, the better the process will be.

As this pop-up project has evolved, the length of the pop-up tenancies increased from one weekend, to one month, to up to six months, as did the financial commitment by participants. The tenant recruitment process has therefore been adjusted to determine the capabilities of potential tenants to demonstrate:

HOW TO GET TENANTS:

- craigslist
- Kijiji
- Social Media (Twitter, Facebook etc.)

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

- Scope of project
- Timelines
- Location
- Participation costs (approximate)
- Direct potential clients to a link to the project's website for more information

DECA's application can be found [here](#).

1. **A professional approach**
2. **The ability to create a vibrant and inviting space**
3. **The ability to draw foot traffic to the area**
4. **The ability to operate a storefront with regular set hours for the duration of the tenancy**

This was achieved by encouraging applicants to include supporting materials with their application. Suggested supporting documents include: a [basic business plan](#), resume, pictures of how their proposed pop-up store will look, and other documentation that demonstrate their commitment to the pop-up opportunity and professionalism. These documents as well as the application are evaluated as part of the shortlisting process by the tenant recruitment committee.

The interview is an opportunity to meet the potential pop-up tenant and ask questions about the application. It is also an opportunity for the applicant to showcase samples of the work or products they will sell and demonstrate their ability to create an inviting and beautiful space. At least three selection committee members should interview potential tenants, and ideally at least one member is able to attend all the interviews. Sample interview questions are included in the [tenant application materials](#).

MARKETING AND PROMOTING THE NEW SHOPS

Creating a buzz when pop-up shops open is key to encouraging people to visit and shop in the new stores. Promoting the shops in the local area is therefore very important, and generating media attention also helps to spread the word. A range of promotional activities have been organized to aid in helping draw foot traffic to the new and existing stores in the neighbourhood.

PRO TIP:
Match tenants
with the most
suitable space for
their business
needs.

MEDIA PROMOTION

This project has received significant media coverage, providing exposure of the project and building credibility within the community. Media coverage has included TV, radio, and print stories. This was achieved by a team of volunteers with media experience who wrote and sent out press releases when new pop-up shops launched. A sample press release and press release template, plus a list of Toronto news desk contacts can be downloaded [here](#).

TIPS FOR PROMOTING POP-UPS:

- Use local print media options in your neighbourhood.
- Establish a strong following on social media; share information that is relevant and current.
- Use existing successful businesses to cross-promote (display business cards, flyers, create combo deals, etc.)

SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to traditional media coverage, the pop-up project activities are also promoted within the community through a variety of social media sites (i.e. well-subscribed blog, Facebook and Twitter) These accounts are managed by volunteers who have built a large following in the neighbourhood. These marketing and communication tools are free and the results are impressive: DECA's following on social media has more than doubled in one year, and the sharing of relevant items of interest builds a strong sense of community between residents and business owners. Residents have demonstrated they are eager to learn about pop-up shops, local businesses, other amenities and goings on in their neighbourhood, and often spread the word on their social media sites. It's in everyone's interest in the neighbourhood to see these projects succeed, so people tend to get behind the mission statement.

EVENTS AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In order to further support the pop-up shops, events and activities have been hosted to encourage visitors to the shops. Examples of events hosted include live music, historical walks, a passport program and late night shopping. The events organized by your organization should capitalize on the interests of the people involved in the project. Use the natural talents of the people in your group and create an event that will encourage people to come out and visit the shops you worked so hard to get in place. Engaging the local businesses and working with them in promotional activities is important to build the trust of the existing businesses in the area. Examples of events in support of all the businesses in the neighbourhood include sidewalk sales, late night shopping or a passport program, which encourages people to patronize stores by getting stamps, coupons, discounts, etc. for frequenting those establishments.

Promotional materials to support newly launched pop-up shops were also produced and displayed in the immediate neighbourhood. The existing local businesses have been very supportive of the project, placing posters in their stores to assist with pop-up promotion. Posters are displayed 1-2 weeks before the pop-up shops open, and include basic information about the shop such as the address, type of business, the store's hours and their logo. A pop-up shop burst was also developed to identify pop-up shops in the neighbourhood, which is available for use and can be downloaded [here](#).

SHOP LOCAL

In addition to specific events in support of the pop-up shops, a shop local campaign encouraging the local community to support the local businesses was initiated. A September Shop Local campaign included developing and distributing posters to all the businesses in the area.

Building on the Shop Local poster campaign, a coupon book for local businesses was produced over the Christmas season, and distributed to over 5000 households in the neighbourhood. Businesses that chose to participate in this promotion paid a small fee to be included, which covered the printing and distribution costs. Examples of these campaigns can be viewed [here](#).



CASEY E. PALMER

A “Danforth East Dreams” event had locals gathering to share their dreams and ideas for improving the community.

BUILDING THE TRUST OF EXISTING BUSINESSES

While this project has been received very well by many of the existing businesses in the area, some tension has developed from local businesses who perceive this project as unfair (in terms of subsidized rent, and possible competition with their business.) We take these concerns very seriously, and aim to address them with the business owners directly through education and ongoing dialogue. We re-iterate the overarching goals of the project: filling empty storefronts aims to attract more customers, which stands to benefit everyone running a business in the area.

We also focus some of our efforts on including the existing businesses in promotions, such as the Shop Local coupon book and passport promotions. Aiming to work with the existing BIA, is also another strategy as an avenue for education and awareness of the project.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

This project has acted as a catalyst for renewal along Danforth Avenue, building a more vibrant commercial area and encouraging the neighbourhood to frequent local businesses. We hope that you are inspired to take on a similar project, and below are just a few more of the strategies we adopted to help grow the project to what it is.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Volunteers have been key to the successes of the Pop-Up Shop project. Hundreds of volunteer hours have gone into this project. Its success has also been due to strong local champions who are skilled in community building. Coordinating the volunteers so they remain engaged is therefore an important part of this project.

The willingness of volunteers to contribute to this project stemmed from a local community who were strongly motivated to help transform their neighbourhood. Volunteers have had many opportunities to take ownership of the project, directly contributing to its success; when people walk past a shop they helped paint, or helped secure as part of this project, they are immediately reminded that their actions have directly benefitted their neighbourhood.

One of the most effective ways to keep volunteers engaged is to keep things fun. As Jim Diers, author of *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*, says: “Why have a meeting when you can have a party?...” Meetings to discuss this project have usually involved an element of food and drink, with the purpose of the gathering clearly stated, and the focus of the meeting on “doing” rather than “discussing”.

SUPPORTING POP-UP SHOPS

The Pop-Up Shop project aims to support the pop-up shops once they have opened by enlisting a volunteer to visit the shops regularly and check-in with the tenants. We have worked with a range of entrepreneurs, some with lots of experience running a storefront, others for whom this is their first experience in a bricks and mortar setting. Volunteers with this project drop-in to new pop-up shops several times per week to provide moral support, answer any questions they may have, and to ensure they feel welcome in the neighbourhood. Maintaining an ongoing relationship with the pop-

up tenants also allows us to direct them to available services that can help them build their business, such as improving window displays (see boxed text below), or providing basic social media tutorials (i.e. How to use Twitter). In addition, the pop-up shops can be supported by sharing opportunities of workshops available through Enterprise Toronto, or other entrepreneurial seminars available to new businesses.

WINDOW DISPLAY

Use an experienced window dresser (approach existing businesses with strong window dressing abilities) to create an inviting, appealing storefront and encourage pedestrian traffic to stop in! This is the #1 way to get people into a business.



Colourful window dressing for a Pop-Up shop.

TRACKING SUCCESSES: LEARNING WHAT WORKS WELL

This project continues to experiment, evaluating and adapting as we move forward. To assist in this evaluation several tools have been developed to assist in tracking the project's impact. These tools include foot traffic tracking, exit interviews (for both the participating landlord and tenant) and maintaining contact with previous tenants to assess how the project impacted their business in the long-term. Examples of the foot traffic tracking form and exit interview questions are included in the [toolkit resources](#).

In addition, a visual record of the impact of this project is very important. If your group only focuses tracking efforts in one area, before and after photos are the single most important tool to demonstrate the transformation. (see the following examples along the Danforth here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/danforth-east/>) By using a shared on-line space such as Google Drive, the workload can be shared, and, any volunteer can photograph an empty or new storefront and the photos will be stored, by address, in one place.

CHECKLIST: KEY STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL POP-UP

<http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-project-checklist>

FULL LISTING OF RESOURCES FOR DOWNLOAD

The following lists all the resources available for download from the folder Toolkit Resources on a shared Google Drive here: <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-toolkit>

Evaluation Tools (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-evaluation-tools>

- Foot Traffic tracking form
- Landlord Exit survey
- Tenant Exit survey

Landlord Marketing (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-landlord-marketing>

- Before and After storefront photos
- One page pop-up info sheet (pdf)
- Pop-up Quick Facts (pdf)
- Project Promo Before and After + testimonials (pdf)
- Try Your Business Here Poster

Legal Agreements (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-legal-agreements>

- License Agreement with Landlord –flat rate
- License Agreement with Landlord –rate linked to sales
- Participation Agreement with Tenant –flat rate
- Participation Agreement with Tenant –rate linked to sales
- Retail sales tracking spreadsheet (for use with agreements linked to sales)

Media Lists (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-media-lists>

- Media Contact list Toronto news desks 2014
- Toronto media 2
- Sample pop-up press release
- Press release template Tina to double check names of these documents after upload

Pop-up Shop Logos (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-logos>

- Logo Pop-up shop “coming soon”
- Logo pop-up shop burst (ai)

Samples Pop-up Promotions (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-promo>

- Sample Posters (folder)
- Pop-up/local biz passport promo –June 2013 (pdf)
- Sample: Danforth Mosaic BIA Promo to biz flyer (pdf)
- Sample: pop-up A-frame sign (photo)

Shop Local Sample Promotions (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/shop-local-promo>

- December-2012-Pop-up-shop-brochure (pdf)
- Holiday Danforth Coupon Booklet (pdf)
- Shop Local poster (pdf)
- Top 10 Reasons to Shop Local

Tenant Application Materials (folder) <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-application>

- Business Plan Template
- Pop-up Tenant Application
- Tenant Application Evaluation Form
- Tenant Selection interview questions

Checklist - Steps to running a successful pop-up project <http://tinyurl.com/pop-up-project-checklist>

Storefront Survey Questions (Inventory of storefronts and businesses) (document) <http://tinyurl.com/storefront-survey>