



Economic Opportunity & Inclusion Cabinet: MOCAL + TSE FY26 Budget Hearing

City Council Committee on Ways and Means | Tuesday, April 29, 2025



- **Segun Idowu**, Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion
- **Donald Wright**, Deputy Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion
- **John Borders IV**, Director of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment
- **Kathleen Joyce**, Executive Director of Consumer Affairs and Licensing

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION CABINET (EOI)

OFFICE OF
ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY &
INCLUSION (OEI)

OFFICE OF
CONSUMER
AFFAIRS &
LICENSING

DEPARTMENT OF
SUPPLIER
DIVERSITY

OFFICE OF
TOURISM, SPORTS,
& ENTERTAINMENT

The background of the slide is a dark blue aerial view of a city, overlaid with a white line-art map showing building footprints and street layouts. The map is centered on a large, multi-block urban area with various building shapes and sizes.

THE EOI VISION

Defining economic equity

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION CABINET



The vision of the Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet is of ***a resilient, equitable, sustainable, and vibrant city that centers people and creates opportunities to build generational wealth for all communities.***

The Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet
understands equity to be:

the proactive process of providing historically excluded communities the resources they need to live and thrive in Boston. Our focus is on establishing racial equity as a means of addressing historic inequities across the city.*

**This definition was crafted by the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet*

The background of the slide is a dark blue aerial view of a city, overlaid with a white line-art map showing building footprints and street layouts. The map is centered and covers the entire area.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Cabinet-wide staff diversity

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION CABINET



EOI Cabinet Demographics

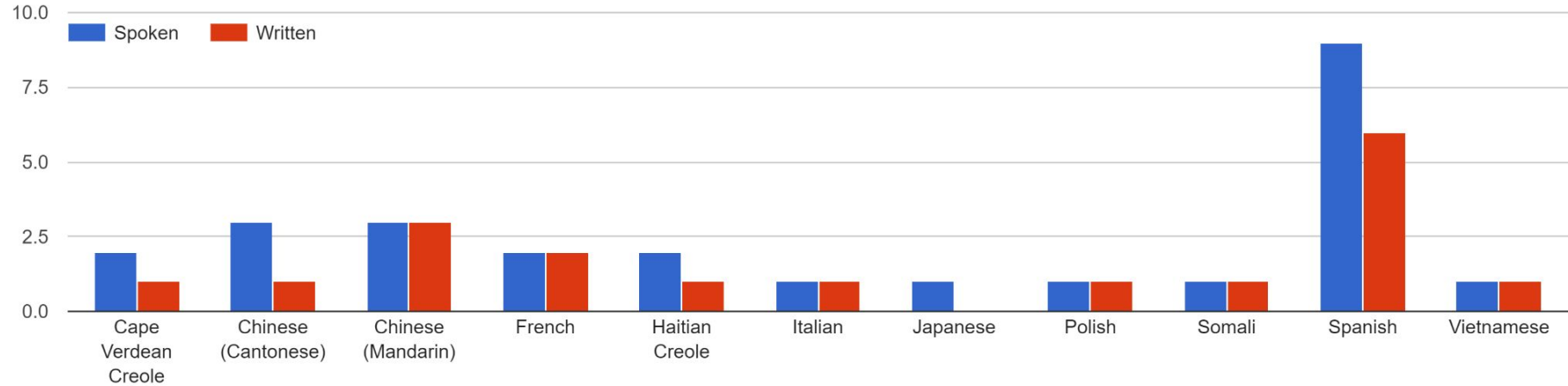


| | AAPI | Black/African American | Hispanic/Latino | White | Not Specified | % BIPOC* |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| All Staff | 7 | 28 | 14 | 38 | 10 | 51% |
| Top 10 Salaries | - | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | 50% |

**Does not calculate “Not Specified” into percentage*

EOI CABINET LANGUAGE SKILLS*

EOI conducts an annual language skills survey at the start of each FY. Our staff have advanced or fluent language skills in the following languages:



(*As of a 10/11/24 survey)

Missing from Boston's top 10 Languages: **Russian, Arabic, Portuguese**

TSE Department Demographics



| | AAPI | Black/African American | Hispanic/Latino | White | Not Specified | %BIPOC* |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------|
| All Staff | - | 3 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 40% |
| Top 10 Salaries | - | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 40% |

**Does not calculate “Not Specified” into percentage*

MOCAL Department Demographics



| | AAPI | Black/African American | Hispanic/Latino | White | Not Specified | % BIPOC* |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| All Staff | 3 | 7 | 4 | 13 | - | 52% |
| Top 10 Salaries | 1 | 2 | - | 7 | - | 30% |

**Does not calculate “Not Specified” into percentage*

The background of the slide is a dark blue aerial view of a city grid, rendered in white line art. The lines represent buildings, streets, and parks, creating a complex geometric pattern. A semi-transparent dark blue horizontal band spans the middle of the image, serving as a backdrop for the title text.

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF TOURISM, SPORTS, & ENTERTAINMENT (TSE)

Overview and Accomplishments

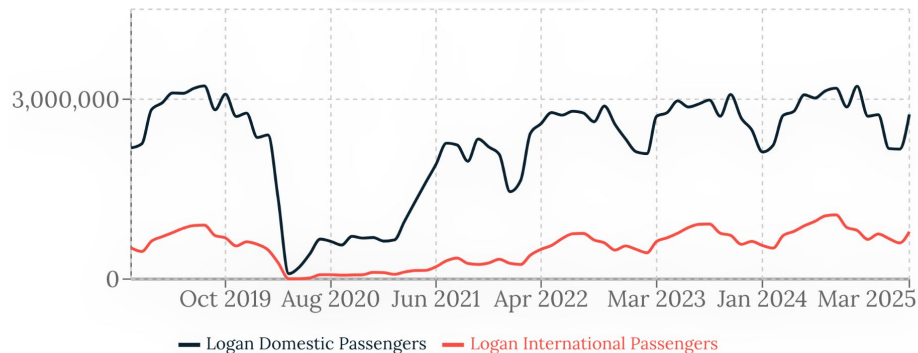
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION CABINET



Tourism and hospitality are one of the **key drivers** of our post-pandemic economic recovery.

- Passenger volume at Logan Airport has **continued to exceed 2019 levels**, showing continued interest in business and leisure trips to the city, particularly the Back Bay, Downtown, and Seaport commercial hubs.
- Hotel occupancy rates also continue to make **YoY progress** back to 2019 levels, with more large-scale events and a focus on the shoulder months helping to bring “heads in beds.”
- Tourism and leisure and hospitality sectors **returned to at or near pre-pandemic levels since 2023**, with these industries adding several thousand new jobs to the economy in recent years.

LOGAN PASSENGERS



HOTEL OCCUPANCY RATE IN BOSTON

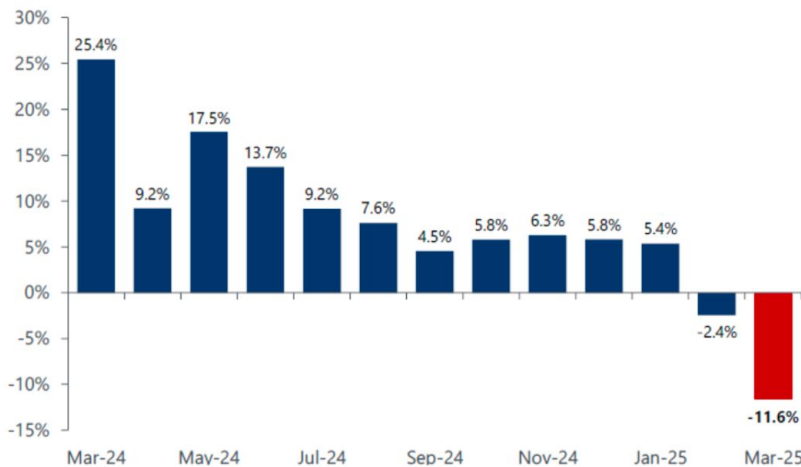


International Updates – Visitation Forecasts from Tourism Economics

Chart 2: Overseas arrivals to the US dropped in March

Overseas visitor arrivals to the US

Year-over-year change

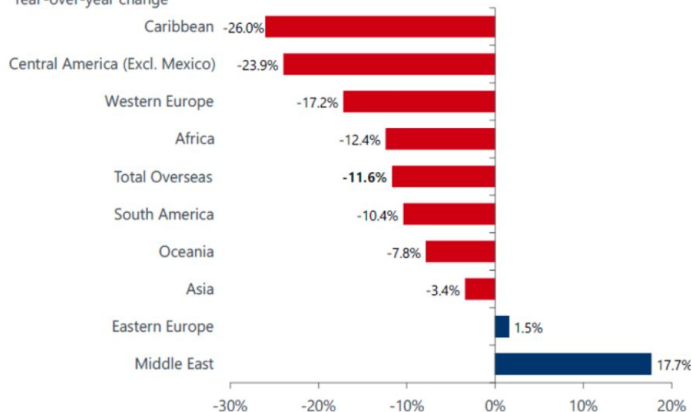


Source: National Travel and Tourism Office

Chart 3: Overseas arrivals dropped across most regions

Overseas visitor arrivals to the US by global region

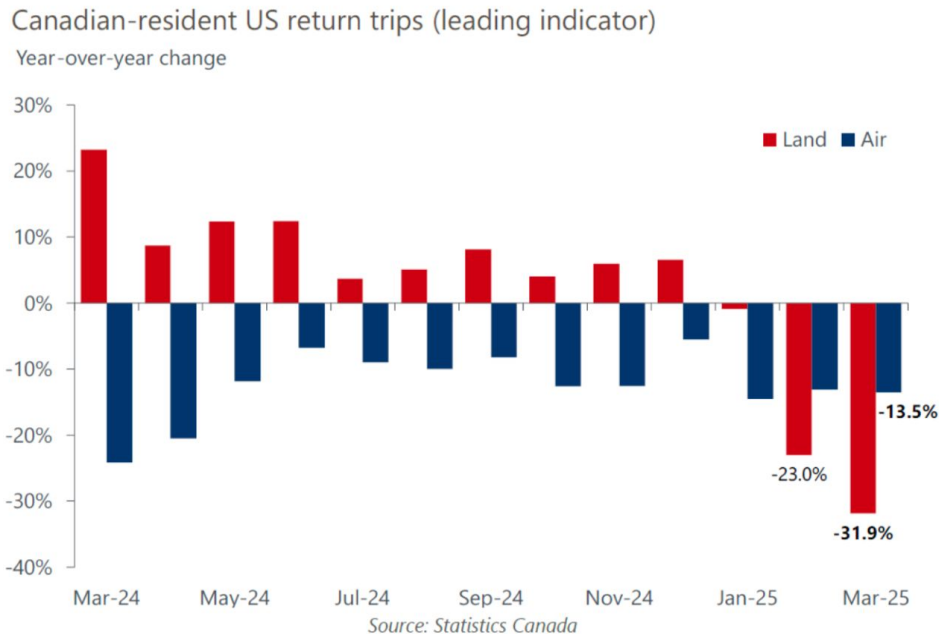
Year-over-year change



Source: National Travel and Tourism Office

International Updates – Visitation Forecasts from Tourism Economics

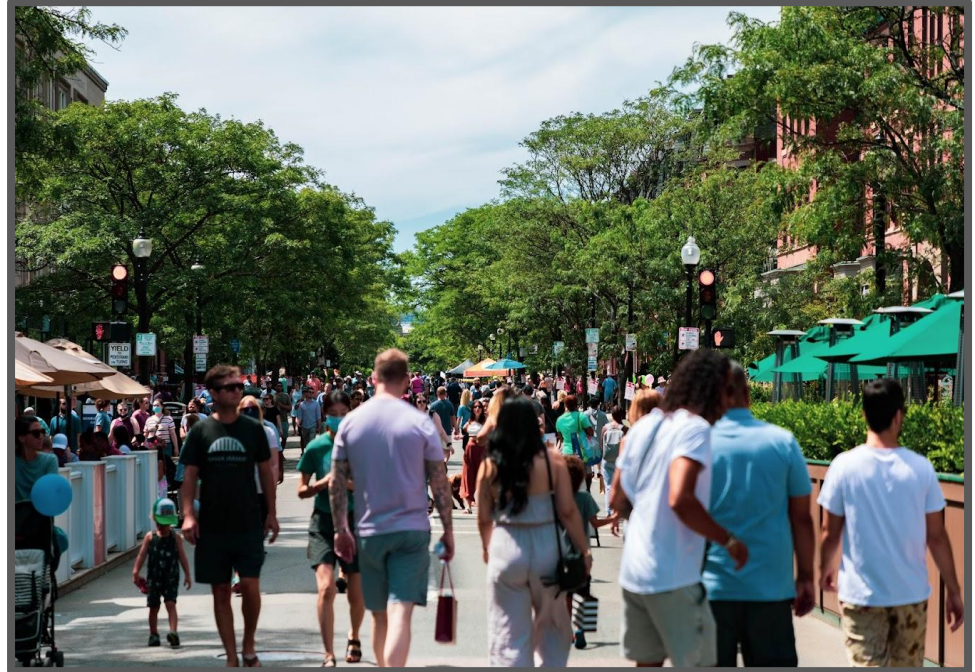
Chart 1: Canadians returning from trips to the US plunged in March



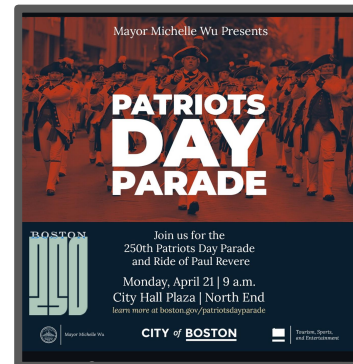
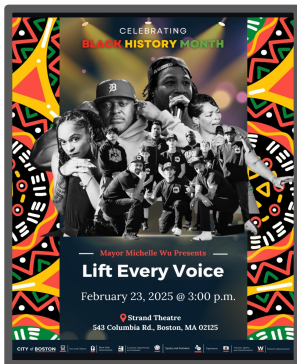
Department Work & Mission



- The Mayor's Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment supports these industries in Boston by producing events, supporting film and TV production, and marketing the City to world class events, conventions and visitors.
- Our mission is to advance tourism, sports, and entertainment in Boston and to promote participation in public celebrations from Boston residents and visitors from around the world.



Annual Events We Produce for the City



Annual Events We Support



- Anderson Tree Lighting (Hyde Park)
- BAMS Fest (White Stadium, Franklin Park)
- Boston Caribbean Festival (Roxbury)
- Age Strong Black History Month (Roxbury)
- Boston Police Memorial Mass (Roslindale)
- Caribbean Parade (Mission Hill)
- Chinatown Lion Dance Parade (Chinatown)
- Crispus Attucks Memorial (Downtown)
- Firefighters Memorial at Forest Hills Cemetery (Jamaica Hills)
- Fisherman's Feast (North End)
- Greek Parade (Bay Village)
- Hyde Park Juneteenth (Hyde Park)
- Haitian Parade (Mattapan)
- Italian Heritage Celebration (North End)
- Jazz in The Park at the Greenway (Downtown)
- Allston/Brighton Parade (Allston/Brighton)



Future Events

United States Semiquincentennial



Culminating in 2026, 250 years since the American colonies declared independence from the British Empire, we will pull together residents, visitors, planners, educators, artists, students, the business community, and politicians to recognize the importance of our culture and values.



Future Events

2026 FIFA World Cup, Sail 250

B



- Boston is one of 17 U.S. host cities.
- The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be the largest to date with 80 matches featuring 48 national teams slated to take place: 60 in the United States, 10 in Canada, and 10 in Mexico.
- The Boston Consulting Group's research has estimated that individual 2026 FIFA World Cup host cities can expect to see up to **450,000 visitors** and a potential net economic impact of up to **\$480 million**.



- Boston is an official port of Sail250®, a global gathering of tall ships to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the United States.
- Since 1992, Sail Boston, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, has hosted **more than 500 international tall ships and vessels** of interest to Boston and many Massachusetts coastal communities.
- Taking place between July 11-16, 2026, the event expects 28 class A vessels (29 nations) and may attract millions of visitors to Boston

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MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND LICENSING (MOCAL)

Overview and Accomplishments

Department Mission



- The Mayor's Office of Consumer Affairs and Licensing (MOCAL) supports and regulates various industries and entertainment activities, including restaurants, bars, hotels, cannabis establishments, and other businesses that bolster Boston's nightlife and overall economy.
- The Office also educates and mediates on behalf of Boston area consumers in order to facilitate successful resolution of consumer related complaints.



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND LICENSING (MOCAL)



**Licensing
Board**

**Cannabis
Board**

**Entertainment
Division**

**Consumer
Affairs**

**Special
Events**



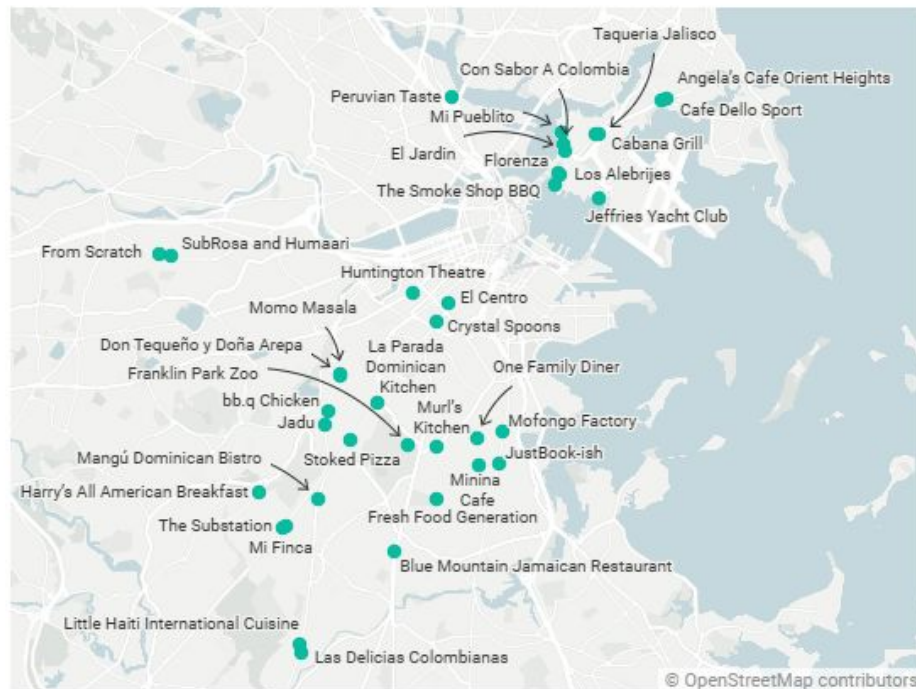


- The Licensing Board is a three member mayoral-appointed Board that issues and regulates the following categories of licenses:
 - Common Victualler
 - Alcoholic Beverages
 - Innholder
 - Dormitories/Lodging Houses
 - Billiards & Bowling
 - Fortune Tellers

- Received 225 new liquor licenses from the state, to be distributed over three years, through a successful Home Rule Petition.
- Developed process to review, hear, and approve applications for newly-available liquor licenses in batches.
- Approved the first round of 37 liquor licenses and announced the second application deadline, May 23 (see distribution map on next slide).
- Partnered with the Office of Nightlife Economy to distribute drink covers to licensed premises, following continued reports of non-consensual drugging.
- Processed and approved over 420 Special One Day Alcohol licenses.

Boston's newest liquor licenses

The Boston Licensing Board approved 37 new liquor licenses for these restaurants, bars, community spaces and other establishments.



- The Licensing Board engaged in significant community outreach to raise awareness of the new licenses and educate potential applications about the process and timeline. This outreach included:
 - *Informational Webinars*
 - *Presentation to Main Streets Directors*
 - *Neighborhood Information Sessions*
 - *Multilingual FAQs on the Board's Website*
 - *Postcard Campaign*
 - *Bi-Weekly Office Hours*

- The Boston Cannabis Board (BCB), established in 2020, is a mayoral-appointed seven member Board tasked with siting cannabis establishments within the City of Boston.
- The BCB's duty is to ensure equity in the issuance of cannabis licenses. Its enabling ordinance mandates that at least 50% of all cannabis establishments within the city have been certified as equity applicants by OEOI.

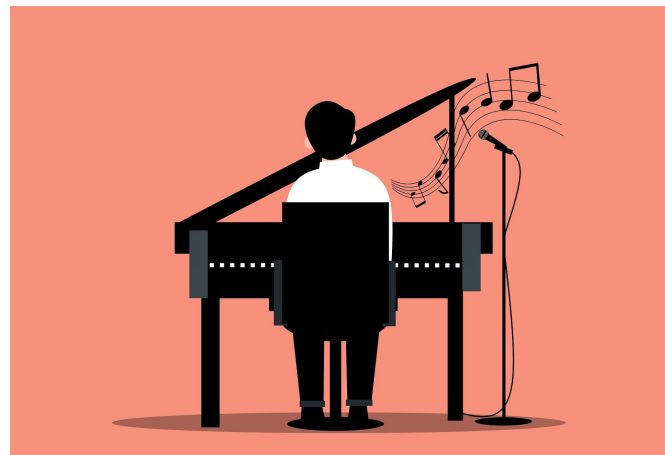
- The BCB issued **3** Cannabis Licenses in FY25
 - 3 Non-Equity
- The BCB executed **4** Host Community Agreements in FY25
 - 3 Equity
 - 1 Non-Equity
- There are **34** Cannabis Establishments open and operating:
 - 27 Marijuana Retailer Only
 - 5 Co-located Marijuana Retailer & Medical Treatment Center
 - 2 Marijuana Delivery Operators



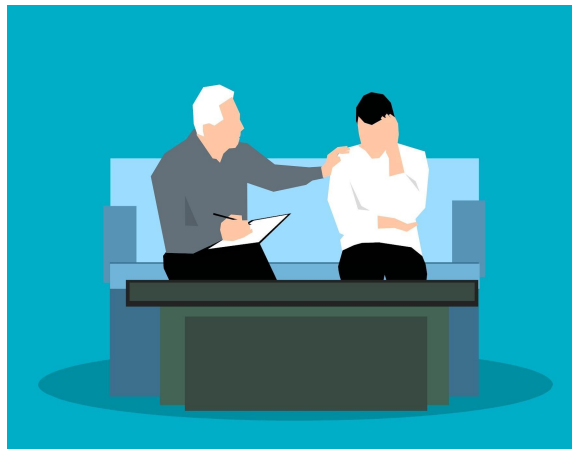
Number of opened establishments in each neighborhood:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Allston/ Brighton | Back Bay | Charlestown | Dorchester | Downtown (includes Chinatown Leather District) | East Boston | Fenway/ Kenmore | Jamaica Plain | Mattapan | Roslindale | Roxbury | South Boston | West End | West Roxbury |

- The Entertainment Division grants and regulates various licenses and holds hearings on violations and license applications. The Division issues licenses for:
 - Annual Non-live entertainment (ex. Background music including radio)
 - Annual Live entertainment (ex. DJ, band)
 - One-time Entertainment (temporary license for non-live and live entertainment)
 - One-time Carnival (temporary license for carnival games and rides)



- Approved **39** FY25 YTD new **non-live** entertainment licenses and **59** in 2024 including East Boston, Roxbury, Mattapan, and Downtown areas such as WNDR Museum and Museum of Ice Cream.
- Approved **15** FY25 YTD new **live** entertainment licenses in and 23 in 2024 including Dani's Queer Bar, Axe Throwing Club Boston, Titanic: Artifact Exhibit, F1 Arcade, and Broadway Golf Club.
- Approved **1,621** FY25 YTD **one-time** entertainment licenses (3.84% increase from FY24 YTD) and in **2,091** in 2024.
- Made updates to the Entertainment Licensing process to reduce the number of application hearings required.



- The Consumer Affairs Division works with the MA Attorney General's Office to educate consumers and help fight deceptive business practices within the City of Boston.
- In FY25, our catchment area expanded to assist in case mediation in Everett.
- The most frequent consumer complaints that our advocates mediate include:
 - *Online retail (Ex. Temu, Amazon, Wayfair, etc...)*
 - *Car Repairs & Sales*
 - *Phone & Cable Bills*
 - *Car Rentals*

Consumer Affairs

FY25 Accomplishments



- The office received a **\$94k** grant from the Attorney General's Office for the local consumer aid fund.
- We recovered over **\$325k** for Boston residents in 2024. **\$196k** FY25 YTD.
- Completed **11** consumer outreach events including tabling and presentations on scams/fraud.



- MOCAL regularly convenes a committee to assist applicants through the process of permitting outdoor events across the city.
- This committee includes the **Boston Police Department, Inspectional Services Department, Boston Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, Boston Transportation Department, Department of Public Works, Office of Neighborhood Services, Boston Parks & Recreation Department**, and others depending on the details and location of the event.
- Processed of **730** special event applications (FY25 YTD) and **880** in 2024.

- Moved the special event application to a new portal and made significant updates to the application to collect more information up front.
- Worked with DoIT on updating the special event process.
 - *Categorize events into three tiers which will determine permitting requirements, deadlines, and processing times. Interactive tier tool available to help applicants determine the tier of their event.*
 - *New special event map to assist applicants where applicants can plug in an address and find out who the property owners are and how to reserve the space.*
- Created new google slide guides to help applicants understand the special event process better before they apply and the permitting process after they apply.
- Created a seasonal special event guide for applicants with several repeat events to reduce the number of special event applications required.

The background of the slide is a dark blue aerial view of a city, overlaid with a white line-art map. The map shows various building footprints, streets, and a prominent curved road or highway. The text 'THANK YOU!' is centered over the map.

THANK YOU!

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION CABINET

