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## Boston launches first annual holiday storefront decorating contest

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 27, 2010 09:52 AM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Boston business owners are being encouraged to put their seasonal spirit on display for the city's first annual holiday storefront decorating competition, which begins next week.

In and around the Hub's 20 Main Streets districts, small business owners who register for the contest will be judged on how creatively they can represent local style and history, along with how inviting for customers and how festive their storefront decorating is, according to a city release.

Dubbed "Deck the Windows of Boston Main Streets," the three-round contest officially begins next Friday – when participating windows must be decorated by – and ends in the third week of December, when city officials said Mayor Thomas M. Menino will recognize the city's best-dressed storefront window.

The contest was announced Tuesday by Mayor Menino alongside residents and business owners at a West Roxbury ski and snow board shop, Wicked Sharp. The release said the competition is a new component to the city's annual "[Holidays on Main Streets](#)," a small business initiative designed to highlight festive events in Boston's Main Streets districts.

"'Holidays on Main Streets' is our way of celebrating all that our neighborhood business districts have to offer at this festive time of year. We want to remind shoppers that some of the most unique gifts and holiday experiences can be found in their own neighborhoods," said Mayor Menino in the release. "This year, we're giving folks yet another reason to visit the neighborhoods during the holiday season."

The statement by Menino, who has been hospitalized this week, also reminded residents of "[Small Business Saturday](#)" campaign, the city's annual [free holiday parking hours](#) in commercial districts which began with Friday's busiest shopping day of the year, and the seventh annual "Mayor's Holiday Special" website, [www.mayorsholidaysspecial.com](http://www.mayorsholidaysspecial.com), which promotes deals on holiday events and shopping throughout Boston, the city said.

From Dec. 3 through Dec. 8, a panel of local judges chosen by each participating Main Street district will select the best window display and a photo each selected storefront will be sent to the city's neighborhood business development office and posted on the city's website,

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[www.bostonmainstreets.com](http://www.bostonmainstreets.com) or [www.cityofboston.gov/mainstreets](http://www.cityofboston.gov/mainstreets), according to city officials.

Beginning Dec. 9 and through Dec. 17, the public will be able to vote on the Main Street's [website](#) and narrow the field down to their favorite five storefront windows.

Those top five best-dressed businesses will be visited by a panel of "local celebrity" judges during the Dec. 18 weekend, said the release.






A winner will claim the "Best Boston Main Streets Holiday Storefront" title on Dec. 21, when Mayor Menino hosts a holiday celebration at the winning business during an event which will also honor the two runner-ups, the release said.

The city's Main Streets initiative was created as the first urban, multi-district Main Streets program in the country, with the goal of establishing thriving commercial districts throughout the city, city officials said. The program was launched by Mayor Menino in 1995 through a city partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Boston Main Streets provides funding and technical assistance to 20 neighborhood-based districts throughout Boston. It has served as a model to urban areas seeking neighborhood commercial revitalization, including in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Milwaukee, Detroit, and New Orleans, the release said.

Main Streets businesses interested in participating should contact their district office to register.

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