

New Supermarket Openings

Good News for Boston's Neighborhoods



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Ten years ago, the closing of four neighborhood supermarkets prompted concern on the part of Boston residents and city officials. Not only did the closings of these stores create inconvenience and expense for those living nearby, but they seemed to indicate a lack of confidence in the city itself. There were concerns that these closings might initiate a trend that could seriously damage the city's livability and economy.

In fact, the opposite result has occurred. Since 1992, 21 new or expanded supermarkets have opened in Boston's neighborhoods, bringing the total number in the city to 35 with a combined selling space of over 900,000 square feet. These supermarkets not only provide residents with more convenience and choice, but their existence displays an increased confidence in the city.

Boston Redevelopment Authority

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Introduction

Beginning around 1950, Boston, like other American cities, saw a change in the retail food industry. Large supermarkets (defined within the industry as stores occupying more than 10,000 square feet of selling space or with annual sales of more than \$2 million) gradually replaced the smaller "corner store" as the place where residents bought most of their food. By 1990, according to one retail authority, 20 to 30 large supermarkets in Boston had replaced between 500 and 600 of these smaller stores.

1992 and 1993 Closings

In 1992 and 1993, however, four of these supermarkets closed their doors. The four stores, totaling over 85,000 square feet, included a Flanagan's Market and a Stop & Shop, both on Gallivan Boulevard in Dorchester; a Family Foodland on Morton Street in Mattapan, and an A & P on Tremont Street in the South End. These closings sparked concern, because residents had come to depend on their convenience, the wider selection of products, and lower prices these stores offered. City officials wondered if these closings signaled a lack of confidence on the part of the supermarket industry, which, at that time, seemed more interested in expanding in the suburbs, where family income was higher, land was cheaper and sites were more available.

Supermarket Openings 1992

It turned out, however, that the closing of those supermarkets was only a temporary aberration - because even as those four supermarkets were closing, four new stores - totaling over 100,000 square feet - more than took their place.

In the Upham's Corner area of Dorchester, an America's Food Basket - supported by construction of an adjacent city-owned parking lot - opened at 780

Dudley Street. In Brighton, a Bread and Circus, specializing in natural foods, replaced the former Stop & Shop supermarket on Washington Street. But the two largest supermarkets to open that year were both Stop & Shop stores - a 50,000+ square foot facility on Everett Street in Brighton and a 30,000+ square foot facility in the Hyde Square area of Jamaica Plain, a welcome sight to residents there who had been without a supermarket for many years. Rather than leaving the city, Stop & Shop had begun a program of building new, much larger stores throughout Boston.

1993

In 1993, two more new supermarkets opened in Boston - each very different, but each a kind of trailblazer in its market. The first was a giant (almost 70,000 s.f.) "Super" Stop & Shop that in addition to becoming Boston's largest supermarket served as the "anchor store" for the South Bay Mall, an ambitious - and successful - development at the intersection of Dorchester, South Boston and Roxbury that demonstrated just how strong Boston's inner-city retail market actually was. The second was the "88," a much smaller store (just over 15,000 s.f.) on Herald Street in the South End that catered to the growing Southeast Asian population in and around Boston.

1994 - 1997

Responding to Stop & Shop's "discovery" of the buying power in Boston's neighborhoods, Star Market - now in the process of being transformed into Shaw's Supermarkets - began its own expansion in Boston neighborhoods. In 1993, Star expanded its Back Bay supermarket as part of the major renovation of the Prudential Center. Then, over the next three years, new Star Markets opened in four Boston neighborhoods - on Commonwealth Ave. in Allston, in 1994; on Spring St. in

West Roxbury in 1995; on Western Ave. in Allston, and on Morrissey Blvd. in Dorchester in 1997. The Star Market on Hyde Park Ave. in Hyde Park was also expanded in 1995.

Over that same period, a Wollaston's Market opened at the site of a former Stop & Shop store in the South End; a Bread & Circus did the same in the Fenway; an America's Food Basket took the place formerly occupied by a Flanagan's in Hyde Park, and a new Shaw's opened on Border St. in East Boston.

1998 – 2002

Over the next four years, two new supermarkets keyed the resurgence of separate neighborhoods. The opening of the Roslindale Village Food Market in 1998 was the culmination of years of effort by Roslindale residents and the City of Boston in that community's successful Main Street program. Three years later, the opening of a Stop and Shop supermarket at the Grove Hall Mecca highlighted the campaign by Roxbury residents and the city to revive that important section of Blue Hill Avenue. During this same period, a Stop and Shop supermarket replaced a Flanagan's market in South Boston and the Wollaston's Market closed in the South End.

The largest supermarket to come on line during this period was a nearly 40,000 s.f. "Super" 88 market that opened right next door to the "Super" Shop and Shop in the South Bay Mall – dramatic proof of the strength of both the urban and the ethnic market in Boston. Recently, a third 88 supermarket opened in Brighton, and a new Roche Brothers - with double the selling area of its predecessor – opened on Centre Street in West Roxbury .

Future

Evidently, the purchasing power of the residents of Boston's neighborhoods and the strength of Boston's economy continues to generate additional demand for supermarkets – because more are coming on line.

A new, larger Shaw's supermarket is currently under construction on Huntington Ave. at the Prudential Center and scheduled to replace the existing Star Market there sometime next year. Ground has also been broken for another new Shaw's on River Street in the Lower Mills area of Dorchester to replace the Star Market a few blocks away. Tropical Foods, a fixture in the Dudley Square area of Roxbury, is negotiating to build a new, much larger store as part of a development off Morton Street in Mattapan and a new supermarket is also planned for the long-awaited development of the "Ledge Site" that has begun near Brigham Circle on Mission Hill.

Conclusion

Beginning in 1992, Boston witnessed the reversal of a brief trend in supermarket closings that had threatened to disrupt the patterns of family life in Boston's neighborhoods. Since that time, 21 supermarkets comprising more than 660,000 s.f. square feet of selling space have opened or expanded; two more containing 72,000 square feet of selling space are under construction and another two supermarkets are being proposed.

In addition to providing local residents with more convenient shopping and greater choice at lower prices, these new, larger supermarkets in Boston's neighborhoods generate jobs for Boston residents, serve as anchors for their neighborhoods and promote additional commercial development in the neighborhoods. Their emergence is another signal of the stability of Boston's neighborhoods and the strength of the city's economy.



Today

Currently, there are 35 supermarkets in Boston, totaling 919,913 square feet of selling space. They include the following:

Supermarkets in Boston Today

Stores Existing Prior to 1992 and Stores Opened Since

Neighborhood	Store	Address	Year	Selling	Type
			Open	Space	
Allston	Star	1065 Com. Ave.	1994	.47000	new
Allston	Star	370 Western Ave.	1997	.41000	new
Allston	Super 88	1095 Commonwealth Ave.	2002	.20000	new
Back Bay	Star	Prudential	1993	.35000	expansion
Brighton	Bread & Circus	15 Washington St.	1992	.20000	new
Brighton	Stop & Shop	60 Everett St.	1992	.50800	new
Charlestown	Foodmaster	51 Austin St.	pre1992	.20000	existing
Chinatown/So.End	The 88	5 Herald St.	1993	.12000	new
Dorchester	Super Stop & Shop	South Bay	1993	.68150	new
Dorchester	Capitol	502 Geneva Ave.	pre1992	.14400	existing
Dorchester	Stop & Shop	545 Freeport St.	pre1992	.22050	existing
Dorchester	Am. Food Basket	780 Dudley	1992	.13000	new
Dorchester	Star	45 Morrissey Blvd.	1997	.34000	new
Dorchester	Super 88	101 Allstate Rd. South Bay	1999	.38000	new
East Boston	Shaw's	220 Border St.	1997	.45000	new
Fenway	Star	1360 Boylston St.	pre1992	.19000	existing
Fenway	Bread & Circus	15 Westland Ave.	1995	.11000	new
Hyde Park	Star	1377 Hyde Park Ave.	1995	.39000	expansion
Hyde Park	Stop & Shop	1025 Truman Highway	pre1992	.19700	existing
Hyde Park	America's Food Basket	942 Hyde Park Ave.	1997	.20000	new
Jamaica Plain	Hi-Lo	413 Centre St.	pre1992	.10000	existing
Jamaica Plain	Stop & Shop	301 Centre St.	1992	.32600	new
Mattapan	Mars Farmers Market	926 Cummins Hwy.	pre1992	.12000	existing
Mattapan	Star	90 River St.	pre1992	.22530	existing
Roslindale	Save-A-Lot	650 Am. Legion Hwy.	pre1992	.15000	existing
Roslindale	Stop & Shop	950 Am. Legion Hwy.	pre1992	.19250	existing
Roslindale	Ros. Village Food Market	24 Corinth St.	1998	.15000	new
Roxbury	Family Food Land	333 MLK Blvd.	pre1992	.17500	existing
Roxbury	Tropical Foods	2101 Washington St.	pre1992	.8500	existing
Roxbury	Stop & Shop	Grove Hall	2001	.24233	new
South Boston	Stop & Shop	713 E. Broadway	2001	.15000	new
South End	Wollaston's*	400 Tremont St.	1994	.12000	new
West End	Stop & Shop	181 Cambridge St.	pre1992	.20400	existing
West Roxbury	Stop & Shop	1230 VFW Parkway	pre1992	.36800	existing
West Roxbury	Star	75 Spring St.	1995	.42000	new
West Roxbury	Roche Bros.	1800 Centre St.	2002	.42000	replacement

(*closed in 2001)