

A neon sign for Hillcrest is illuminated at night, set against a dark sky. The sign is blue and white with a stylized font. The background shows a building with windows and other lights.

HILLCREST

The Hillcrest Business Association 2020 Annual Report



When I was elected HBA Board President at our annual meeting last year, while we gathered on Normal Street to celebrate the approval of the Normal Street Promenade, none of us had any idea what 2020 would bring. I am happy to report that while 2020 did not work out as anyone had expected, the HBA has much to make us proud.

The Corona Virus upended our entire neighborhood, reformatted the business association, and unfortunately, struck down many of our businesses. The HBA immediately engaged with this challenge by assisting our members in this difficult time. For example, HBA staff were at the forefront of advocating that neighborhood businesses be able to use street parking spaces and sidewalks for expanded patios. The HBA ensured that these new regulations were available to businesses within weeks of re-opening rather than months as had been proposed by City staff. The HBA quickly moved to reopen the Hillcrest Farmers Market (the second in the City to re-open), providing a safe environment for customers to purchase critical food supplies and support dozens of small businesses.

I am proud to say that during these difficult times, our business community came together in a responsible way to address challenges. The businesses in Hillcrest had fewer outbreaks than other districts as a result of acknowledging the seriousness early and taking appropriate actions. Our business rose to the occasion in finding creative ways at working together to be safely open. As always the businesses, along with the community as a whole, came together in supporting important social movements, such as Black Lives Matter, with positive peaceful protests rallying at our Pride Flag Monument, once again showing our diversity and strength. As we move forward into 2021, reviving our popular events and enacting our plans to build new clean and safe programs, I know that this spirit of cooperation and support will continue.

Paul Smith
HBA Board President





Marketing and Promotions

A clear focus of the HBA is ongoing promotional activities. In 2020 many of these promotions were scaled back, however, they were replaced by information campaigns designed to support neighborhood businesses through this difficult time. Hillcrest Taste 'n' Tinis, Hillcrest Farmers Market, SHOP Hillcrest for the Holidays, networking events and member communications still occurred before the onset of the pandemic.

Hillcrest Farmers Market

After closing due to the pandemic, the HBA revived the market after only six weeks. Since returning with a capacity of only fifty people, the market has seen many safe expansions and became a model for other markets to follow. By the end of the year the market has rebuilt to over 50% of what it was prior to the pandemic.

Hillcrest Classic Car Show

This partnership with Great Autos of Yesteryear and local businesses sees a monthly car show on Normal Street. Hundreds of people and over forty classic cars turn out for this family friendly event. This event was held in January and February.

Hillcrest Taste 'n' Tinis

Hillcrest Taste 'n' Tinis continues to be a popular holiday promotion featuring over thirty neighborhood businesses and attracting hundreds of holiday shoppers. In 2019 Taste 'n' Tinis raised over \$6,000.

“#getbacktofabulous” Campaign

The HBA created a new campaign to promote the businesses that re-opened during this pandemic. Get Back to Fabulous featured a variety of social media posts and videos.



Shop Hillcrest for the Holidays

In 2019 the HBA expanded this holiday campaign by increasing the number of participating member locations and prize pool. This event gave over \$3,000 of Hillcrest business gift certificates to lucky neighborhood shoppers.

Networking Events and Member Communications

The HBA maintained communications with members and customers through a targeted communications program that featured print and online newsletters, social media, and member meetings. The HBA's communications network regularly reaches over 20,000 people.



HBA's beautification services continue to be in high demand. From trash pickup and steam cleaning to flower baskets and security, the HBA served to keep Hillcrest clean and meeting the needs of the membership.



Rainbow Crosswalk installation

The HBA raised funds at the 2019 Pride Block Party to create a rainbow crosswalk in the heart of the neighborhood. Continuing to build a sense of place at Pride Plaza, the decorative crosswalk which connects to the Hillcrest Pride Flag, was installed in January.

Weekly Walkabout

The HBA's weekly neighborhood tours feature staff and volunteers touring the neighborhood reporting issues, talking to neighbors, and solving problems. Each week a different quadrant of the neighborhood is toured and hundreds of graffiti tags, stickers, and other issues are addressed.

Security

Security guards patrol the Hillcrest core every day of the week through an on-call service providing homeless relocation services and keeping an eye out for criminals.

Neighborhood Cleaning

The HBA cleaned neighborhood sidewalks every second day in 2020. From litter pick up throughout the core and outlying areas of the neighborhood to the emptying of neighborhood trash cans, the HBA's cleaning activities are one of its primary functions. The HBA also steam cleans the core business district every month. These services were not impacted during the pandemic.

Gardening

The HBA maintains hundreds of trees throughout the neighborhood and many small garden areas. The HBA recently trimmed seventeen large "heritage" trees on Fifth Ave. and the many smaller trees throughout Hillcrest. These services were not impacted during the pandemic.

Subscription Programs

The HBA has developed a program to provide discounted steam cleaning and security to outlying areas. By leveraging its sidewalk pressure washing and security purchases, the HBA is able to offer discounted rates to its members. Over thirty neighborhood businesses take advantage of these cleaning and security programs.



The HBA has always sought to be a leader for the Hillcrest community. In 2020 the HBA's Executive Committee has advocated for policy improvements to benefit the neighborhood.

Advocating for outdoor dining options

HBA was at the forefront of advocating that neighborhood businesses be able to use street parking spaces and sidewalks for expanded patios during the Covid 19 pandemic. The HBA ensured that these new regulations were available to businesses within weeks of re-opening rather than months as had been proposed by city staff.

Managed discussions concerning new assessment districts

The HBA managed competing discussions concerning new assessment districts in Hillcrest including "The West End" proposal. The HBA negotiated an outcome that was beneficial to HBA members.



Managing constricting budgets

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the HBA has had to cancel all its one time events in 2020. This reduction of fundraising has had dramatic effect on the HBA budget. HBA reduced staff and cut costs so as to continue offering services to the membership while keeping the organization on a revenue positive footing.

Annual financials

Income:

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Sales: | \$39,510 |
| Contracts: | \$213,276 |
| Events: | \$509,047 |
| Other: | <u>\$12,330</u> |
| Total: | \$774,163 |

Expense:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Operating: | \$312,299 |
| Promotions: | |
| Events: | \$2178,846 |
| Other: | \$64,510 |
| Physical Improve: | <u>\$246,686</u> |
| Total: | \$841,341 |
| Balance | (67,178) |

Financials are preliminary and are not audited. For current information please contact the HBA directly.