



Uptown Partnership, Inc. ANNUAL REPORT Jan-Dec 2005

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Uptown Partnership has completed its eighth year of operation managing the Uptown Community Parking District for the City of San Diego; it began in 1998 and incorporated in 1999. The Board of Directors and staff are responding strategically to the parking challenges that the vibrant Uptown neighborhood faces. During the past year we worked on a number of projects that will help improve parking availability, traffic circulation and pedestrian mobility in Uptown.

We are pleased to present this report summarizing past activities and future plans.

Carol J. Schultz, Executive Director

Robert D. Orphey, President

Uptown Partnership Activity Areas

The activities and accomplishments of the Uptown Partnership for 2004 are clustered into three activity areas – parking availability, traffic circulation and pedestrian mobility.

CATEGORY 1 - PARKING

1) Hillcrest Parking Facility Project - In 2003, the Board of Directors embarked on a project to identify, acquire, and develop property in central Hillcrest for a public parking facility. Uptown Partnership conducted two studies that helped to project future parking needs and identify candidate sites for this facility. In 2004, the Board established an Uptown Parking Task Force, whose function is to identify the most suitable location in central Hillcrest for a public parking facility. Local business owners and residents were invited to participate on the Task Force, which has been meeting through the latter part of 2004. The Task Force has commissioned a new study beginning in 2005 to confirm parking data and look at the potential sites and financing strategies for a proposed public parking facility.

2) 2004 Parking Summit – Uptown Partnership hosted the 2004 Parking Summit on September 18, 2004 at the Recital Hall in Balboa Park. Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins and Councilmember Michael Zucchet opened the public meeting. Internationally renowned parking expert Todd Litman of the Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, Victoria, BC, Canada, provided a keynote address followed by presentations from City Planning Department staff on parking management. During the second half of the summit, over 80 members of the community participated in a design charette to explore, brainstorm and design parking solutions for parking-impacted areas throughout Uptown.

3) Normal Street at University Avenue Improvements - The City will rehabilitate the sidewalks along the south side of University Avenue, between Vermont and Herbert Streets and install a much-needed signal light at the intersection of Normal Street and University Avenue. Uptown Partnership also initiated concept drawings for one block of Normal Street north of University Avenue with the assistance and generous donation of KTU+A, a local landscape architecture firm. The project aims to generate more parking for the area using the wide, existing center median.

Construction of the southside University Avenue sidewalks and signal light has been delayed and are set to begin in early 2005. In 2004, the Uptown Partnership Board of Directors voted to contribute \$30,000 towards the installation of new street lights as part of the project. These lights will provide additional lighting for pedestrians along this well-traveled route. During construction, Uptown Partnership will work with Hillcrest Association to meet weekly with the effected property/business owners to mitigate construction impacts.

4) Mapping of On-Street Parking Conditions in Five Parking Impact Areas- In addition to Central Hillcrest, Uptown Partnership identified four additional areas of Uptown that were considered as “parking impact areas” through community complaints, sites of new infill development and busy commercial areas. The areas identified include (1) Park and University Avenue, (2) Laurel Street corridor between 1st and 6th Avenues, (3) Washington and Goldfinch Street (central Mission Hills), and (4) Washington and India Street. Staff has also identified the Medical Complex, particularly the area adjacent to Scripps Mercy Hospital (five-block area north of the intersections of 3rd, 4th and 5th Avenues at Washington Street) as an impacted area. In 2004, Uptown Partnership completed the inventory of curb uses in all of these areas and is currently analyzing these areas to identify additional on-street parking opportunities. By early 2005, graphic database of the entire area will be assembled.

5) Updated databases of Off-Street Parking Inventory and Development projects in Uptown- A comprehensive inventory of public parking lots and structures was updated in 2003. Staff also created a database of over 33+ residential/commercial developments occurring in the Uptown area.

6) Parking Meter Debit Cards - As part of our program to make parking meters more user-friendly, the Uptown Partnership sells prepaid parking meter debit cards. In 2004 the Uptown Partnership sold over 4,025 parking meter debit cards with a total value of over \$81,250 at the Uptown Information Kiosk and business office, and its vendors - Hillcrest Association, Hillcrest Farmers Market, and Hillcrest ACE Hardware, Mail Call Plus, Postal Annex, and Bluestocking Books. In late 2004, Uptown Partnership launched a new line of custom parking meter debit cards with images created by Utility Art Box Project artists.

7) Parking Meter Reloading Terminal Program - The Partnership also continued providing reloading terminal service through 2004 to add additional time to existing parking meter debit cards. The Partnership sold over \$107,000 in reloading time at the Uptown Information Kiosk as well as the Partnership’s office. Reloading time was also sold at the Hillcrest Association and Hillcrest ACE Hardware.

8) Citywide Parking Task Force – Formed at the request of the City Council, a Parking Task Force with citywide representatives appointed by the City Manager was directed to address parking management issues in areas outside and within the existing Parking Meter District Program. The Task Force assembled a 20-page report with recommendations on how to better manage parking in busy commercial areas and provided changes to Council Policy 100-18. Recommendations were presented to the San Diego City Council in late 2004 and adopted with a unanimous vote. Immediate

Past President Cindy Lehman was the Uptown Partnership's representative to the Citywide Parking Task Force

CATEGORY 2 – PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

Two years ago, the Uptown Partnership in collaboration with WalkSanDiego, a pedestrian advocacy group, unveiled the Feet First! strategy to promote walkability in the Uptown area. The goal of the Feet First! initiative to increase walking activity in Uptown and pedestrian safety awareness in Uptown through a series of community-oriented events. Uptown Partnership sponsored two well-publicized events this year - the 2nd Annual *Just for the Health of It!* Walking, Health and Fitness Fair, and **Be Alert!** Pedestrian Safety Campaign. We also hosted several guided walks and tours throughout Uptown. The following events were produced in 2004:

1) 2nd Annual *Just for the Health of It!* Walking, Health and Fitness Fair – Uptown Partnership hosted the fair in March 2004 and provided an opportunity to introduce healthcare providers, fitness and health vendors, and recreational fitness groups to the Uptown community; educate the community about the importance of healthy living, exercise, injury prevention, and good nutrition. The goal of the fair was to promote walking as a reasonable form of transportation and healthy alternative to using a vehicle.

The fair featured over 20 community based exhibitors; free workshops about walking, nutrition, holistic health, and pedestrian safety; and a shoe drive for local charity. Over 500 people attended this year's event.

2) *Be Alert!* Pedestrian Safety Awareness Campaign was unveiled in November 2004, and encouraged pedestrians and drivers to use greater caution while walking or driving in Hillcrest, especially at high traffic intersections where there is an increased risk of pedestrian-vehicular accidents.

Promotional items such as pamphlets, reflective zipper pulls and posters with the *Be Alert!* logo were distributed at community events that included a Pedestrian Safety Walk, an educational booth at the Hillcrest Farmers Market and the Uptown Partnership website.

3) Feet First! Guided Fitness Walks and Tours – Uptown Partnership continued this popular ongoing walking program through 2004. The group walks varied by subject matter, fitness level, distance, and terrain. These walks included:

- Health Heart Walk
- Park West Walk
- Pace Yourself Walk, *10,000 Steps to Good Health*, sponsored by Scripps Mercy Hospital
- Utility Art Box Tour
- Bridges of Uptown Walk
- Tour of Historic Homes in Uptown

Over 150 people participated in the fitness walks and tours.

4) Utility Art Box Project – During 2003, the Partnership, with the volunteer help of local artists and graphic designers, painted additional utility and transformer boxes that dot the streetscape of Hillcrest, bringing the total number of decorated boxes to 97. With over 38 volunteer artists participating in seven phases of the project in 2004, The brightly-painted boxes reflect the vitality of the neighborhood and provide added visual value to both the pedestrian and driving experience. Since community response has been positive, the Partnership will continue the project in future phases.

CATEGORY 3 - TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

1) 4TH/5TH/6TH Avenue Traffic Calming Study –In early 2003, the Uptown Partnership embarked on a study to reduce speeding through traffic-calming measures consistent with the City of San Diego’s Street Design Manual. A project steering committee consisting of community business owners and residents, City Traffic Engineering and Planning Department representatives, Traffic Police officers and MTDB representatives met through 2004 to develop a draft plan for the study area. Staff completed work on the final report and presented it the Board, Uptown Planners, and Hillcrest Association.

2) Phase I of the Washington/Goldfinch Intersection Improvements in Mission Hills
The Uptown Partnership worked closely with the City’s Community and Economic Development Department and the Mission Hills Association to improve the intersection of West Washington and Goldfinch Streets in Mission Hills. In 2003, the Board allocated \$168,000 towards the project - to date, the largest investment by the Partnership for an infrastructure project. Construction to begin in mid-2005.

3) Pedestrian Improvements in Central Hillcrest Intersections - In conjunction with the Be Alert! Pedestrian Safety Awareness Campaign, the City of San Diego modified/upgraded seven intersections to improve pedestrian visibility. These modifications included pedestrian countdown and 3-second head start pedestrian signals (Lead Pedestrian Indicators) at the intersections to aid in pedestrian crossing, enhanced crosswalk markings to better define the crosswalks and improved limit lines to indicate where vehicles need to stop.

4) Additional Traffic Diversion Signs in Place – Uptown Partnership requested additional traffic signs to direct motorists to freeway on-ramps at 10th and University Avenue and on-ramp at Washington and Lincoln Avenue to encourage through traffic not to enter the congested central Hillcrest area.

5) Uptown Transit Corridor Project – In 2004, the Uptown Partnership submitted a grant to Caltrans to conduct additional analysis on transit lines along 4th and 5th Avenues. Although the grant was not funded in the first cycle, SANDAG has resubmitted the grant for the next round of funding review.

UPTOWN PARTNERSHIP’S COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1) www.uptownpartnership.org -The Uptown Partnership website www.uptownpartnership.org was updated on an ongoing basis through 2004. Staff is able to keep up-to-date information about meetings on the Partnership’s website, copies of our parking map and the popular “Parking 101” brochure. Staff is currently working on a page that will monitor impacts to traffic and pedestrian circulation as a result of construction or roadwork.

2) *Uptown Partnership Report* – The Uptown Partnership produced three issues in 2004. This publication is sent to a mailing list of over 2,000 addresses and is posted on the Partnership’s website.

3) The Uptown Information Kiosk - provides information regarding transit and the Uptown community, and sells transit passes and parking meter debit cards. In 2004 the kiosk scaled back its sales but continued to provide community information. The Board of Directors voted later in the year to close the kiosk due to ongoing concerns about

maintenance and liability. Staff is currently looking for an alternate location indoors to resume activities.

4) Uptown Partnership Board of Directors and Committee Structure – The Board of Directors added three new members in 2004, bringing the total to nine members. They also revised the bylaws to allow greater community participation on advisory committees to the Board.

WHAT'S IN STORE IN 2005

The Partnership will continue to work closely with community and business organizations along with the City. Together, we can create a better neighborhood for all to enjoy.

- 1) To identify, acquire and develop property in central Hillcrest for a public parking facility
- 2) Complete final drawings, permitting and begin construction on the Normal Street Parking Improvement Project.
- 3) Amend Facilities Financing Plan to include 4th/5th/6th Avenue Traffic Calming Project. We will continue to identify funding for analysis and implementation of the project.
- 4) As part of the *Feet First!* campaign, host the 3rd Annual *Feet First!* Walking Health and Fitness Fair, host 8 guided walks in Uptown, assess the Be Alert! Pedestrian Safety Awareness Campaign, and develop a promotion to encourage walking in the Hillcrest business area.
- 5) Complete four more phases of the Utility Art Box Project,
- 6) Develop a planned giving and capital campaign for the funding of infrastructure projects throughout Uptown.
- 7) Conduct a Resident Parking Survey to look at parking habits of Uptown residents.

UPTOWN PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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