Celebrating 10 Years of Community
A message from the Chair and the President

When we began the Hudson Square BID in 2009, no one quite knew what to make of the former Printing District: somewhere west of Soho, and south of the Village, with its half-full loft buildings and rush hour streets packed with cars bound for the Holland Tunnel, the area lacked an identity of its own. A decade later, the neighborhood has transformed into a hub for businesses on the creating edge of innovation, with seven open spaces, 250 trees, and a daytime population of 70,000 people. In this, our 10th annual report covering the fiscal year of July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019, you will see highlights from the past year and a glimpse into our major milestones over the past 10 years (see our special timeline on page 12).

Since our inception, the Hudson Square BID has brought the creative energy from inside our buildings out onto the streets with the creation of our state-of-the-art outdoor spaces and placemaking programs. Through our $27MM public-private partnership with the City, Hudson Square is Now, we have improved pedestrian safety, enlivened our streets, and created a sense of community. The plan, unveiled in 2011, highlighted four major public-private partnership projects. Eight years later, we have completed or begun the implementation of all four projects. We have established the platinum standard for urban forestry with our 250 (and counting!) Hudson Square Standard trees; designed, built, and now maintain Spring Street Park, our new space on Spring Street and Sixth Avenue; and transformed two formerly deserted and gated lots around the Holland Tunnel into the Freeman Plaza parks; and we are commencing a design-build project in partnership with EDC and DOT, which will transform Hudson Street into a grand boulevard with a protected bike lane, gardens, and outdoor seating.

But, alas, in Hudson Square, the Holland Tunnel is simply a part of life. The BID’s hope has always been to make this important regional transportation facility a background condition and not the defining characteristic of this neighborhood. In 2011 we debuted our Pedestrian Safety Managers on Varick Street, and eight years later we have expanded the program. These efforts to make Varick Street a more pleasant experience for pedestrians have resulted in a 45 percent decrease in blocked intersections and crosswalks and a 36 percent decrease in horn honks. Our efforts go beyond our crossing guard program; after our advocacy and the 2018 release of a traffic study and op-ed, the BID worked with local elected officials to change the tolling scheme on the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge (VNB) to eliminate the impact of “toll shopping” on local Holland Tunnel traffic. Our advocacy led to federal action to bring two-way tolling back to the VNB.

For the past decade, the Hudson Square BID has worked to support and celebrate this great neighborhood for what it is—one of the most energizing locations in the world’s most exciting city. This year we unveiled a new public art initiative, Hudson Square Canvas, that reinforces Varick Street as a pedestrian boulevard through a dynamic urban art gallery of large-scale street art installations. Hudson Square Canvas features original artworks from four contemporary artists, whose styles complement Hudson Square’s identity. In celebrating 10 years of community, this gallery is our gift to the neighborhood and an exhibit that captures the essence of Hudson Square’s evolution from Printing District to media and communications hub.

As we look back, we would like to thank our Board, task forces, Community Board 2, partnership with the City of New York, and most of all the creative businesses that give the place its unique vibe and foster this connected community.
Since 2009 the BID has transformed the perception of Hudson Square as a place for cars and trucks into a place for people and businesses. In 2019 our open spaces allowed pedestrians a place to come together and connect outdoors. We even reclaimed some of the extra-wide sidewalk on King Street for a new outdoor pedestrian space between Hudson and Greenwich streets. And, as part of the BID’s 10th anniversary, we unveiled Hudson Square Canvas, a new public art program that transforms Varick Street into an urban art gallery and a place for people.
In October we celebrated the ribbon cutting for our new open space, Spring Street Park. The community gathered for live salsa music and a ceremony with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, the NYC Department of Transportation, the Uruguayan Consulate, and elected officials. A big thank you to all who helped make this project possible and who attended our celebration, including Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Borough Commissioner William Castro, Consul General of Uruguay Pauline Davies, State Senator Brad Hoylman, State Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assembly Member Deborah Glick, Deputy Borough President Aktrin Bonilla, and Manhattan Community Board 2 First Vice Chair Dan Miller.

Our park, which is maintained by the BID, is open to the public seven days a week. This summer we also unveiled free Wi-Fi sponsored by Google. This partnership between the BID and Google reinforces Hudson Square’s commitment to digital accessibility. The park’s cutting-edge design and furniture and the new addition of free Wi-Fi make it evident that Hudson Square is a neighborhood adapting for the future.

Our summer programming of free meditation classes and a pop-up draw cart provided the perfect complement to our new movable furniture and bright branded umbrellas. Thank you to our partners, local meditation studio The Spring and the Uni Project/Street Lab! Our new park has already become a place to zen out or channel creating energy!

This spring, the neighborhood celebrated the sixth anniversary of Freeman Plaza West with a community event marking the start of the season. The party featured live music and free food samplings from Adoro Lei, Katchkie Farms, MAV at Hotel Hugo, and Harold’s Restaurant at the Arlo Hotel. While partygoers tasted our local treats, Children’s Museum of the Arts, The Spring, and Real Pilates provided activities on our turf lawn. We had over 400 people attend the party—thank you to the community and our partners for celebrating with us!

This summer we brought back our popular summer programming to Freeman Plaza West, with pilates on Tuesdays with Real Pilates and personalized stretching on Wednesdays with Lymbirth. We also brought back our Live@Lunch concert series by offering Freeman Plaza as a venue for young music school students. Students from The Door, School of Rock, Music Club of Gowanus, and Guitar Mash rocked out in Hudson Square, as the local community caught a glimpse into the younger generation’s creating edge!

Freeman Plaza continues to be an oasis and a place for the neighborhood to take a break, enjoy the outdoors, and come together as a community. We project that there were 54,000 visitors* to Freeman Plaza East and West during this past open season! We continue to improve our popular plazas, and this year we added new movable furniture to Freeman Plaza East, and we plan to improve the space even more once nearby construction subsides.

A wider audience has taken note of Freeman Plaza’s success—in March we won a merit award from the American Society of Landscape Architects in recognition of the plaza’s design!

*Data from Eco-Counter; spaces open mid-May to mid-November

Never know when you will run into a Little Library—in this case, a park behind the Holland Tunnel. They always bring me joy. #hudsonsquare
The community-focused art piece, Common Ground, by Risa Puno, literally brings people closer together with its unique design and seating elements. The piece celebrates harmony and diversity, two values that are core to Hudson Square’s identity. The interconnected tables and benches each have different mosaic designs inspired by NYC’s unique mix of cultures and iconic architecture.

The temporary work is presented in partnership with New York City DOT’s Art Program, with support from Hudson Square Properties and Le Pain Quotidien. We also transformed two parking spots into a DOT “Street Seat,” a social public space that is open seasonally. The space is a partnership with DOT to create an attractive setting for eating, reading, or taking a break with a friend.

Our Street Seat has the following elements:
- Chairs and bistro tables
- Planters for additional greening
- Branded umbrellas for shade

These new improvements came just in time for the warm weather and Hudson Square’s street fairs with PopUp NY. The spot has become the go-to place in the neighborhood for crafts, food, and live music.

King Street

581 SF of Temporary Open Space Created with Street Seat and Interactive Sculpture Installations

32,000+ Projected Visitors* to the King Street Activations

*Based on sample weekday counts between 9am and 5pm; Sculpture installed mid-May to September; Street Seat installed mid-June to mid-November

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Hudson Square Canvas features original artwork from four contemporary artists whose styles complement Hudson Square’s values and identity. Artist Greg Lamarche draws inspiration from typography; his artwork on the side of 200 Varick Street conjures the neighborhood’s printing past in a fresh and bold way through his use of color and fonts. Brooklyn-based artist Hellbent’s stunning hand-painted mural on the façade of 131 Varick Street uses his unique designs of interwoven color blocks and stenciled patterns that are drawn from classic fabric and wallpaper motifs. The work’s graphic design evokes the storytelling methods of our local media and ad agencies.

The collaborative sculpture of Claudia Ravaschiere and Michael Moss uses 5,000 pieces of translucent acrylic on the fence of Freeman Plaza East, which creates a dynamic prism that echoes the architecture of our neighborhood’s expansive and sunlit buildings. And Katie Merz, known for her process of weaving personal, site-specific stories to create pictograms and hieroglyphs, uses 161 Varick and 181 Varick as her canvases for pieces that reflect both the history and present moment of the neighborhood.

We would like to thank Edison Properties, GFP Real Estate, Marriot Hotel, and the Port Authority of NY & NJ for allowing the community to use their buildings as canvases, and to Sherwin Williams Co. for donating supplies and paint for the program.
This year, the Hudson Square Business Improvement District turned 10 years old. When we began the Hudson Square BID in 2009, no one quite knew what to make of the former Printing District: somewhere west of Soho, and south of the Village, with its half-full loft buildings and rush hour streets packed with cars bound for the Holland Tunnel, the area lacked an identity of its own.

A decade later, the neighborhood has transformed into a hub for businesses on the creating edge of innovation, with seven open spaces, 250 trees, and a daytime population of 70,000 people. Our signature programs have enhanced the pedestrian environment, promoted sustainability, and mitigated traffic conditions. To celebrate 10 years of community in Hudson Square, we are taking a look back at our greatest accomplishments and at all the ways in which this great neighborhood has evolved. Check out our fun timeline on the next pages to learn more.
Even as we continue to design, fund, and implement the public improvements needed to make Hudson Square a thriving neighborhood, we’re ever mindful of the day-to-day work needed to keep Hudson Square humming. Every day, the BID staff and our contractors are conceiving and enacting programs and initiatives to ensure that the people who work, live in, and visit Hudson Square love the neighborhood as much as we do. Keep reading to learn more about our efforts to make Hudson Square a place for people.
While this year’s Hudson Square Canvas has transformed Varick Street into a beautiful and engaging pedestrian experience, traffic mitigation and pedestrian safety have long been primary areas of focus and a key reason for the BID’s formation.

In 2018 the BID released a report on “toll shopping,” showing that instituting two-way tolling on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge (VNB) would reduce traffic congestion in Lower Manhattan and help increase pedestrian and cyclist safety in Hudson Square and along Canal Street. In fact, the report estimated that instituting two-way tolling on the VNB would reduce the number of westbound trips across Lower Manhattan into the Holland Tunnel by approximately 10 percent.

During the afternoon rush hour this would remove more than 130 vehicles per hour from Hudson Square’s streets. Our study also shows that combining two-way VNB tolling with congestion pricing would have an even more significant impact on traffic mitigation and pedestrian safety.

After the publication of the study last year, the BID has worked with elected officials and other stakeholder groups to continue to advance two-way VNB tolling as the larger congestion pricing negotiations continued.

In 2019 our efforts led to federal support to bring two-way tolling back to the VNB. On April 28, U.S. Representatives Jerry Nadler, Max Rose, and Nydia Velazquez, MTA Chairman Patrick Foye, State Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assembly member Jo Anne Simon, and Council members Justin Brannan and Margaret Chin announced the news.

We would like to thank our Board and the elected officials that have helped support us in elevating this issue.

We continue to improve our Pedestrian Safety Management (PSM) program by conducting biweekly meetings to develop staffing schedules and report on current services. We coordinate regularly with our PSMs in preparation for high-traffic days and have begun to communicate with Traffic Enforcement Agents (TEAs), who are intermittently deployed on Varick Street during heavy traffic days.
Our maintenance team continues to meet our neighborhood’s needs. In 2019, our team grew to two full-time maintenance workers and a part-time summer employee, which enables us to be fully operational seven days a week. And with our use of the Salesforce data system, our maintenance tracking has grown more sophisticated. Through Salesforce we are able to link maintenance issues to the building or streetscape element in which they are related. This allows us to pinpoint the areas that contain the most maintenance issues and deploy our maintenance staff to these areas.

Our landscaping services have grown as we have added outdoor spaces and more trees. With our new Street Seat, we installed nine new planters to add greenery to the outdoor space. Our horticulture efforts have now lead to a total of 56 planters around the neighborhood. The urban environment can be bruising, and it has been six years since we started planting and retrofitting Hudson Square Standard trees all over the neighborhood. We have amped up our efforts to protect both young and old trees in areas of concentrated construction by providing additional watering, pruning, and fertilizing.

Reported Cases

- 31 Tree Guard Repairs
- 18 Graffiti Removals

In 2019, Our Team Completed:

- 217 Reported Cases

Tree Health, Horticulture, and Maintenance
The BID continues to serve as a resource for local businesses and stakeholders by reporting neighborhood conditions, conveying important information, and serving as a liaison with City government.

This year we reported 62 ‘311’ cases and 38 Street Activity Permits to local businesses, allowing them to optimally conduct business in the midst of the City’s bustle. We also hosted our annual property manager’s breakfast at 325 Hudson Street where we invited NYPD’s Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs) to hear concerns and develop relationships with local stakeholders. The NYC Department of Sanitation also attended and provided a briefing of the Administration’s Commercial Waste Zone proposal. And as the number of buildings under construction has grown, the BID has also become a source of information for the community. This year we communicated 19 construction updates to local businesses and property owners.

In response to the continuing demand for living and working space in Hudson Square, our neighborhood is experiencing a significant uptick in construction. In 2018, the Walt Disney Company announced plans to develop 4 Hudson Square into the new home for Disney’s New York headquarters, and this spring they began construction on their 1.3MM SF building. The St. John’s Terminal site, under development by Oxford Properties and Atlas Capital, will be 1.3MM SF. Hudson Square is a growing and vibrant neighborhood!
Hudson Square is a creative, industrious, and passionate community. In FY19 the BID created a variety of opportunities for our community to volunteer, come together, and show their passion on a neighborhood-wide scale.
A Growing Community

One of Manhattan’s most energizing neighborhoods, Hudson Square remains a magnet for new cutting-edge companies. In December, Google announced a new NYC campus in Hudson Square with leases in 559 Washington, 340 Hudson, and 318 Hudson. 2019 also saw great growth in our retail options, with Soluere at 260 Hudson, Blue Bottle Coffee at 75 Varick, Cutter Saler at 229 Hudson, and Hudson Square’s own brewery, Terch & Down, at 12 Varick.

And our community has expanded even more with the completion of our 1855 expansion process. As of July 1, 2019, following a three-year outreach and public approval process, we have welcomed our new community members and have begun marketing services for the expansion area.

We will be extending our signature custom holiday lights to our new boundaries this holiday season. We are excited to extend our streetscape and traffic services to our new businesses with an expansion of our tree planting program and the deployment of crossing guards on Clarkson and Varick.

We are gearing up for a new community-planning initiative later this year. In the meantime, we are excited to see our map finally represent the neighborhood’s complete boundaries.

Hudson Square is where ambition meets action—where dreamers and doers thrive. Our local companies seek opportunities to connect, make a positive impact on their local communities, and produce tremendous results.

This year our mentorship program with CTE High School was awarded a nomination by the NYC CTE network. This program partners local students with local creative mentors from Edelman, Open, United Entertainment Group, and Bellwood. The community also gathered to network and discuss big ideas with tangible results on how to create a more connected neighborhood.

This year’s annual HR Breakfast was hosted by Concentric Health Experience and sponsored by Vivri. Participants discussed ways for employers to engage the LGBTQ+ Pride. We also gathered a steering committee of local CSHI (Corporate Social Responsibility) representatives from Horizon Media, SquareSpace, Medidata, Edelman, Wang Pritzker, and Manhattan Museum, and began to discuss about creating a more eco-friendly and sustainable neighborhood. Look out for more to come!

Community service opportunities continue to gather large numbers of volunteers from Hudson Square companies. At our annual diffused planting, we had 46 volunteers from TED, Logistics, Veecom, TED Bank, Workbar, Justgiving, Forstar & Robertson, and NYC Tech School.

We also began a new green volunteer program that resulted in a volunteer to plant our tree guards and clean litter from our streets, helping keep our neighborhood clean. Appropriately, it was Earth Day; this year’s program garnered about 350 participants from Centerline Media, Concentric Health Experience, LogisticsWorks, Walden Brewery, Medidata, and Accenture. Thank you to all of our volunteers!

Affinity Groups and Volunteer Opportunities

@ashunt813 said: New year's colors so pretty #hudsonsquare

@glareless said: Earth Day 2019. EDM NY team getting ready to clean Hudson Square #environment

@NEW1027 said: Doing our part on Earth Day, cleaning up, painting a water tap, together to make our area awesome! #HudsonSquareNYC a little brighter #EarthDay19
Elves and Holiday Decorations

Since 2012, we have illuminated Hudson Square with custom light pole decorations to brighten our neighborhood during the cold wintry nights. This year we continued to adorn our streets with snowflakes and expanded our collection of outdoor holiday decorations to include beautiful paper lanterns, creating an even more festive look in the neighborhood. And while our holiday lights and jingly lanterns brightened up the neighborhood, Santa’s little helpers were back again for another year of jolly dancing and singing on Varick Street! Our crossing elves made the colder nights a little less gloomy for pedestrians and highlighted our PSM program, which helps keep pedestrians safe all year round.

Local companies celebrate Halloween as a moment to show off their creativity. Each year the Halloween Parade lines up in our streets with costumes, floats, and a creative theme. As the festive vibes continue to grow during October, so too does our Hudson Scare program. In 2019 we expanded our signature spooky cocktails program to include custom concoctions from local cafes and restaurants. We highlighted these beverages and cafe items and encouraged the community to explore our retail through a Hudson Scare digital scavenger hunt with curated Hudson Square trivia and Halloween tasks throughout the neighborhood. We also activated the ground floor experience by placing 32 “Cabinets of Curiosities,” body parts of various mythological creatures, in retail windows. These former Halloween Parade props further cemented Hudson Square as home to Halloween and brought a festive atmosphere to the neighborhood.
Hudson Square Business Improvement District
Since July 2009, the Hudson Square Business Improvement District has overseen the transformation of Manhattan’s former Printing District into a thriving creative hub. Hudson Square is buzzing with more than 60,000 office workers in some 1,000 businesses, complemented by thousands of students, visitors, and a growing residential population. In Hudson Square, imagination and technology come together to redefine what it means to be creative.

The area we manage is generally bounded by Clarkson Street on the north, Canal Street on the south, Sixth Avenue on the east, and West Street on the west. Incorporated as a 501(c)3, not-for-profit organisation, our formal name is the Hudson Square District Management Association, but we do business as the Hudson Square Business Improvement District. The geographic area we manage is a Business Improvement District (BID), one of 76 such areas around the city. Our signature programs include our Pedestrian Safety Managers, the award-winning Hudson Square Standard—considered the platinum standard in urban forestry—and our nationally recognized streetscape program Hudson Square is Now, a $27MM public-private partnership with the City of New York. Our goal is to foster the physical, social, and cultural connections that give rise to a community where the spirit of innovation can flourish inside and out.

The BID was unanimously approved as the 64th BID in New York City by the City Council on January 28, 2009. The BID is funded primarily by the payment of an annual assessment on commercial property with an annual budget of $2.5MM. The NYC Department of Finance disburses these funds to the BID through a contract with the Department of Small Business Services. In part, we measure the returns on this investment by the success of our businesses and the comfort and pride our workers, residents, and guests take in this exciting community.

**Elected Officials**
- The Honorable Bill de Blasio: Mayor of New York City
- The Honorable Gale A. Brewer: Manhattan Borough President
- The Honorable Scott M. Stringer: Comptroller of New York City
- The Honorable Corey Johnson: Speaker of the New York City Council and Council Member District 3

**Staff**
- Ellen Baer: President and CEO
- Suzy Changar: Vice President Communications and Marketing
- Emily Goldstein: Planning Associate
- Helena Goodman: Marketing Coordinator
- Megan Irving: Marketing Associate and Community Moderator
- Corey Kunz: Vice President Operations and Administration
- Jacob McNally: Director of Planning and Capital Projects
- Nina Yabut: Operations Assistant

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**Board of Directors**
- Liz Neumark: Chair
- Christopher Lee: Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
- Jeffrey Sussman: Vice Chair and Treasurer
- John Matz: Greiner-Matz
- Steve Marvin: Secretary
- Phil Mouniquinho: Olmstead Properties
- Corey Johnson: Speaker of the New York City Council
- Anthony Borelli: Edison Properties
- John Maltz: Greiner-Maltz
- Phil Mouniquinho: PJ Clarkon Restaurant
- Chris Roth: Hines
- Susan Sakin: Resident
- Susie Sherling: Jamestown Properties
- Casa Smith: CCS Architecture + Interiors
- Kate Swann: Blue State Digital
- Donna Vogel: GFP Real Estate
- Eric Weingartner: The Door

**Representative**
- Trinity Church Wall Street
Financials

Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget

The majority of our Master Plan is completed or nearing completion. In FY2019 final design and construction of Hudson Street, the remaining major project of the Plan, will be underway.

Statement of Activities

2019 | 2018
---|---
SUPPORT AND REVENUES | 
Assessment Revenue | $2,500,000 2,500,812 |
Program Service Revenue | $34,517 19,532 |
Government Grants | $ |
Interest and Other Income | $20,629 16,822 |
Total | $2,555,146 2,537,166 |
EXPENSES | 
Traffic and Streetscape | $694,160 547,634 |
Marketing & Econ Development | $887,864 647,658 |
Public Realm Operations | $753,746 640,433 |
Public Realm Improvements | $57,317 1,516,510 |
Administration | $409,895 394,985 |
Total Expenses | $2,603,082 3,747,221 |
Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets/(Deficit) | $(47,936) $(1,210,055) |

Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Budget

SUPPORT AND REVENUES

Program/Operating Expenses

Contract Services | $1,056,000 247,000 82,333 82,333 82,333 |
Management & General | $1,056,000 112,000 352,000 352,000 240,000 |
Purchases & Other Expenses | $631,000 205,000 48,000 368,000 22,000 |
Capital Project Expenses

Contract Services | $3,024,000 444,000 |
Streetscape Plan Private Contribution | $700,000 2,324,000 |
Total | $7,053,000 403,000 918,000 1,368,000 896,000 954,000 2,339,000 175,000 |

FUNDING SUMMARY

Revenues

Program/Operating Expenses | $3,085,000 403,000 918,000 1,368,000 896,000 |
Capital Project Expenses | $3,468,000 954,000 2,339,000 175,000 |
Operating Reserve Contributions | $40,000 23,000 17,000 |
Fond Assets | $2,000 2,000 |
Total | $7,095,000 428,000 918,000 1,385,000 896,000 954,000 2,339,000 175,000 |

Statement of Financial Position

2019 | 2018
---|---
ASSETS | 
Cash & Cash Equivalents | $9,532,618 4,080,810 |
Accounts Receivable | $313,698 320,745 |
Prepaid and Other Assets | $228,523 8,990 |
Total | $10,074,839 4,410,545 |
LIABILITIES/NET ASSETS |
Liabilities | $11,611,107 5,440,877 |
Net Assets/(Deficit) | $(1,086,268) $(1,038,332) |
Total | $10,074,839 4,410,545 |

1. Assessment revenue is allocated proportionally across programs based on size of program budget.