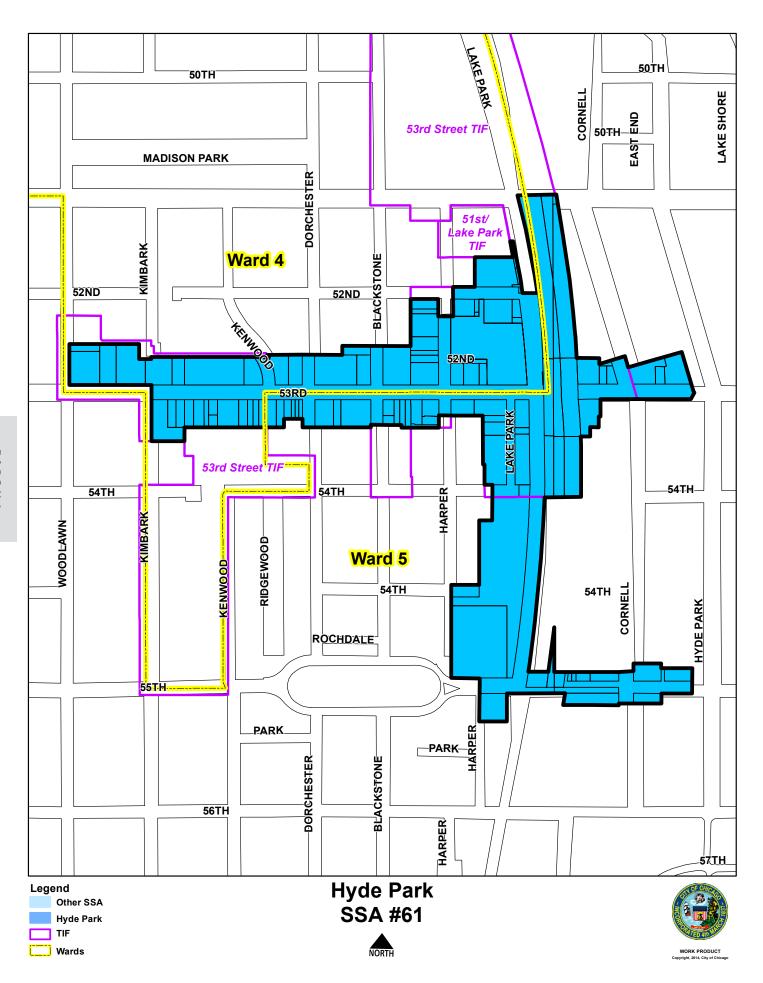


ANNUAL REPORT

2021



SPECIAL SERVICE AREA #61

Special Service Area #61 is the local business district that funds expanded services and programs through a localized property tax levy within contiguous areas. The enhanced services are provided in addition to those currently offered directly through the City of Chicago.

During 2021, there were 11 active Commissioners meeting monthly, with the exception of July and November. Special meetings were held on May 3 to approve the 2020 audit for submission to the City and on October 26 for a public discussion of the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) changes.

Due to the declared public health disaster caused by COVID-19, Commissioners primarily met via virtual video conference, with the exception of one meeting in 2021. Recordings of SSA61 meetings are available on YouTube.

SSA61 Commissioners successfully addressed a wide variety of district concerns throughout the year.

Significant topics included:

- City of Chicago pandemic safety guidance changes
- · Safe return to customer attraction events and activities
- Budget reallocations, EAV increase, and TIF management
- Streetscape maintenance and beautification of public ways
- District and community safety, increases in violence and burglaries
- SSA61 + Downtown Hyde Park brand association and marketing
- Administrator and Commissioner changes

Commissioners approved South East Chicago Commission to continue as the Service Provider.

Major Services

SSA-funded projects typically include, but are not limited to, public way maintenance and beautification; district marketing and advertising; business retention/attraction; special events and promotional activities; auto and bike transit; security; façade improvements; and other commercial and economic development initiatives.

COMMISSIONERS

George Rumsey
Chairman

Gregory Guttman
Vice Chairman

Eric L. ThompsonSecretary

Nancy Stanek
Treasurer

Anthony Beach
Angie Marks
Shaka Mitchell
Charles Newsome
James Nurss
Mary Rogel
Wendy Walker-Williams

ADVISOR

Michael McGarry

SERVICE PROVIDER

Diane Burnham *Executive Director*

Raymonde Vance

Administrator

Isaac Greene, CPA

Accountant

FISCAL YEAR 2021

The last two years were marred by several unexpected circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 Chicago experienced Phase I and II shutdowns that were dire to some businesses and major threats to others.

Fiscal year 2021 was focused on Chicago's recovery from the shutdown of the City and non-essential businesses.



The year was nearly a tale of two halves with the first five months in Phase III – cautiously reopening offices and indoor dining and limiting businesses to 25% capacity or 25 people per room. Vaccination options were rolled out heavily the first six months, and the City saw significant reductions in key markers such as infection rates, hospitalizations, and deaths.

On June 3, the City announced Phase IV – gradually resuming in time for Summer events and before the 4th of July holiday weekend. More good news arrived in mid-August when the City simplified guidance, bridging Phase IV and V, yet still requiring face coverings/masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. The second half of the year, businesses operated well under the new guidance. Outdoor activations were implemented. Downtown offices and culture were reawakened. Travel was less threatening, and the businesses benefited from consumer spending to warrant new employment opportunities.

During 2020 and 2021 small business survival was largely based on available loans, personal finances, and funding through a myriad of COVID-19 relief options.

As Chicago businesses re-opened, new economic challenges arose. Government stimulus, unemployment benefits, and lack of interest contributed to worker shortage. While businesses began hiring new or re-hiring previous staff, higher wages and different benefits were needed to attract candidates. Supply chain disruptions created shortages of essential products, which increased business operating costs that would ultimately impact consumer prices.

Before the 2022 new year arrived, the City announced Phase V of coronavirus mitigations will begin January 3, 2022 despite the continued disruptions and impacts of the novel virus and its variants.









BUSINESS RETENTION AND ATTRACTION

Special Service Area #61 partners with South East Chicago Commission to deliver services as a Neighborhood Business Development Center (NBDC). In 2021, SSA61 performed outreach to 78 renewing or newly licensed businesses identified in the district footprint. In 2021, SECC performed 194 free business consultations in which 77 businesses were located in Hyde Park.

78

BUSINESS LICENSES CONSULTATIONS WITH NEW OR RENEWED HYDE PARK BUSINESSES

NEW ARRIVALS

Green Collar Cleaners

1314 E 53rd St (January)

Stan's Donuts

5225 S Harper Ct - Harper Court (June)

sweetgreen

1500 E 53rd St (August)

What's Krackin' Southern Seafood

1310 E 53rd St (August)

Deep Purpl

5225 S Harper Ct - Harper Court (September)

Sweet Drip Dessert Café

1658 E 53rd St (September)

Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce

1525 East 53rd - Hyde Park Bank (October)

Lululemon (pop up)

1451 E 53rd St (November)

Suuri Design

5225 S Harper Ct - Harper Court (November)

Fruvé xPress Juicery

1374 E 53rd St (November)



PUBLIC WAYS

STREETSCAPES

- 23 Street Pole Banners Replaced
- 86 Flower Baskets Filled 2x (Summer and Winter)
- 46 Street Poles Decorated with Holiday Garland
- 1 Flower Basket Repair/Replacement 53rd & Cornell

GRAFFITI REMOVAL

With assistance from Metra, Divvy, CREO and Cleanslate, SSA61 addressed significant increases in graffiti under viaducts and on private property – including Office Depot, Akira and the Downtown Hyde Park billboard on Valois wall.

LITTER ABATEMENT

SSA61 released an RFP for litter abatement, recycling and sign removal in March 2021. Through the November reporting period, Cleanslate serviced 126 receptacles, emptied 1,466 bags of trash, recycled 555 bags of materials, and removed 40 unwanted signs.

POWER WASHING

SSA61 released an RFP for sidewalk power washing in May 2021. Sidewalks, including the viaducts under 53rd and 55th Streets and Lake Park Ave, were serviced for Spring and Fall by Advanced Pro Clean.









SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Lake Park Median Landscape project included \$60,000 for improvements. There
 are 8 locations total between 52nd and 55th Streets on Lake Park Avenue.
- United Church of Hyde Park received a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant to assist with front lawn improvements, floral, and clean up. SSA61 provided matching support funds for low, garden-level fencing. The final project included donations of plants from a community gardener and trash receptacles from QCDC.
- 53rd & Woodlawn Corner landscape project introduced a curated entrance of plantings in partnership with the Kimbark Plaza cooperative.
- Placemaking Murals project transformed the vacant walls into artist landscapes at 1601 E 53rd St and 1601 E 55th St.



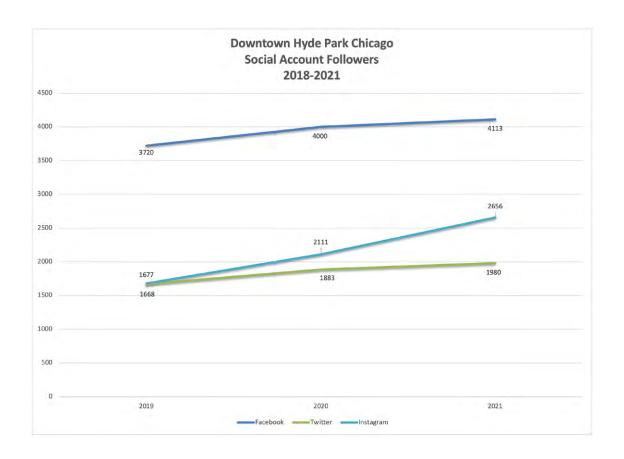


DISTRICT MARKETING

SSA61 continues to present the **Downtown Hyde Park Chicago** brand as a virtual and physical destination for consumer and community identification. Residents, neighbors and visitors are invited to eat, drink, shop, play, and stay safely together.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

SSA61 markets the district using social accounts under the **Downtown Hyde Park Chicago** brand identity. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are the primary communication platforms employed.





Growth of followers is simply one metric monitored and reported to City of Chicago. Social media engagement, reach, and impressions are also tracked for specific campaigns and events during the year.



BRANDING CAMPAIGN

At the end of August, SSA61 made an additional commitment to strategic marketing. Recognizing the sprawling growth of the **Downtown Hyde Park Chicago** brand and the need to refresh its look, communications, and purpose, SSA61 Commissioners approved an initial plan for re-branding.

SIMPLIFIED OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Start an awareness campaign that builds toward a favorable reconstitution
- 2. Create a direct correlation between Special Service Area #61 and its own Downtown Hyde Park identity as a brand and destination
- 3. Educate the community on SSA61 services and executions

PROJECTS:

- Design a modified brand logo to incorporate Special Service Area #61
- Incorporate modified branding for new collateral including marketing, banners, digital content, etc.
- Develop a new direct mail promotion to support the Hyde Park Farmers Market
- · Increase promotion of service-based businesses, including non-retail/storefront locations
- Capture fresh photos of SSA61 businesses that include the new arrivals to the district
- Develop and design shop local program specifically for SSA61 that compliments the SECC's program in its five footprint neighborhoods



During this year's shop local campaign, SSA61 hired a consultant to increase business participation and to develop an updated database of businesses in the district. On November 30, 2021, SSA61 also issued an RFP for website redesign to consolidate and improve the branding and communications of **downtownhydeparkchicago.com** and **hydeparkcares.com**.

CUSTOMER ATTRACTION EVENTS

By June the City announced Phase III – cautiously reopening just in time for summer. Some of Hyde Park's customer attraction activities and community events made a return after the hiatus of 2020, but with varying degrees of limitations for City compliance.

SSA61 and SECC jointly presented a brand new **Hyde Park Farmers Market** with a new location, date, times and marketing.

While large festivals and neighborhood concerts were not feasible in most cases, SSA61 was able to support the 4th on 53rd Street Picnic (without the parade), Shop Local, and Hyde Park Holly Day.

Events and activities traditionally hosted on the University of Chicago's property -- including the Harper Court Summer Music Series, the spring and fall garden shows, and Jazz in the Courtyard -- were not planned.

Commissioners were tasked with reallocating the budget to support local businesses facing numerous challenges throughout the year.









HYDE PARK FARMERS MARKET

After a year hiatus due to the pandemic, the new market revealed an entirely fresh look with all new logistics, giving residents and visitors a chance to shop on the weekends and to experience an infusion of healthy food, lifestyles, arts, and culture.

The Hyde Park Farmers Market was held 15 weeks on Sundays from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at its new location on 54th Street and Old Lake Park Ave West in the Hyde Park Bank parking lot.

Participating Vendors

Pop Up Vendors

Community S Partner Weeks Market Activations Total

\$4,605

Revenue from Vendors \$700

Revenue from Pop Ups +42.1%

Facebook
Page Followers

Estimated Economic Impact

\$60,000

SHOP LOCAL CAMPAIGN

In collaboration with the South East Chicago Commission, SSA61 launched its cooperatively-branded Southside Shop Local Campaign to activate shopping in the business district.

This year's campaign started earlier to coincide with nationwide retail promotions and shopping patterns. The month-long campaign began Monday, November 8th and ended December 6, 2021. Shoppers that reported an eligible purchase at participating businesses received a FREE entry to win the Grand Prize Southside Shopping Spree, which included gift cards from local businesses (\$500 value).

The SSA61 campaign included branded marketing materials, social media promotion, an interactive portal on hydeparkcares.com, plus a new online shoppers guide.

64 Total Business Participation 26 Participants from SSA61(Double the participation over 2020)

\$98.64 Avg Purchase

Leading SSA61 Businesses Total Receipts Registered

- 1. Toys et Cetera
- 2. First Aid Comics









HYDE PARK HOLLY DAY

The University of Chicago, SSA61, SECC, and Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce collaborated to celebrate Hyde Park Holly-Day in Downtown Hyde Park! The celebration offered FREE holiday-themed outdoor activities including ice carvings and sculptures stroll, *Buddy the Elf*, and live reindeer photo opportunities.







MURALS PLACEMAKING

Two new murals were uveiled in Downtown Hyde Park. Building upon the history of local Hyde Park murals, SSA61 selected two artists to bring new creative art, culture, and vibrancy to the community.

Nico Berry installed the mural titled "Harold's Parakeets" adjacent to the 53rd Street Metra viaduct. Izze Ortiz installed the "Essence of Growth" mural adjacent to the 55th Street Metra viaduct.













SAFETY

HYDE PARK CARES

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SSA61 made a strong commitment to improve communications and centralize resources for businesses in the district.

Under the new brand identity "Hyde Park Cares," SSA61 launched a new website (www.hydeparkcares.com) in 2020 and used the site as its primary communications portal during 2021.



REBATE PROGRAM

In 2020 and 2021, SSA61 offered a sanitation rebate program to help offset some of these unanticipated COVID-19 costs. Business expenses eligible for reimbursement included personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning supplies, and ancillary sanitation supplies. Eligible applicants received a rebate of up to \$300 per business.



SAFETY GRAPHICS

SSA61 offered businesses access to a stock of storefront guideline posters and social distancing floor decals for public areas. Digital graphic reminders were shared on social media and City of Chicago safety posters were promoted through the **hydeparkcares.com** website.



COMMUNITY SAFETY

On November 17, SSA61 partnered with the Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce to host a retailer's safety forum featuring guidance from professional security officer Eric Watson and contributions from University of Chicago Police.

On November 23, SSA61 partnered to host a community safety conversation with the University of Chicago, DuSable Museum, Emerald South Collaborative and SECC to discuss recent violence in Hyde Park. Community leaders joined in making recommendations to the City and other elected officials as a call to action.

These meetings were prompted by an unusual series of gun-related, violent incidents that occurred in Hyde Park.



NOTABLE NEWS



George Rumsey successfully completed his term as Chair of the SSA61 Commission and was met with exceptional gratitude for his excellence in leadership. **Gregory Gutman**, representing MAC Properties, was nominated and elected to become the new Chair beginning 2022.

Shaka Mitchell of Anthos Training and **James Nurss** of First Aid Comics joined the list SSA61 Commissioners this year.

Brandon Evans accepted a new career opportunity, vacating the SSA Administrator role at the end of June 2021. **Diane Burnham**, Executive Director, South East Chicago Commission assumed responsibility for all communication temporarily. The search for a qualified, fitting replacement continued through the end of 2021. The role is expected to be filled in early 2022.





Eric E. Reaves, the first SSA61 Director and the "architect" of the original Downtown Hyde Park Chicago branding concept, passed away on August 19, 2021.





























DOWNTOWN HYDE PARK CHICAGO

1511 E 53RD ST, 2ND FLOOR CHICAGO, IL 60615









#SSA61

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