

# The BOULEVARD

El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association  
[www.theboulevard.org](http://www.theboulevard.org)



The El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association is an association of local businesses committed to improving the physical and economic conditions along the El Cajon Boulevard corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods in Mid-City San Diego.

## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**The Gateway  
and Central  
Business  
Improvement  
Districts**

# 2019 Annual Report

## What is a Business Improvement District?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is an assessment district approved by the City Council to perform agreed-upon tasks within its boundaries. Once the BID is established by the City Council, each business license in the area is assessed a mandatory charge that is payable to the City at the same time as the business license. Our business owners pay \$60-\$90 per year, depending on the location and type of business, to support BID activities. The El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association was established to:

- Assist member businesses in problem solving
- Organize civic events and decorate the streets and public spaces
- Work toward alleviating parking and traffic problems
- Improve the image of the area
- Facilitate and encourage revitalization projects

## ECBBIA Committee Structure

The ECBBIA follows the four-point “Main Street” approach towards revitalization which is designed to the needs of the business community it serves. This strategy accomplishes the goals of the mission statement. In addition to the four committees, the ECBBIA is a community partner and hosts the meetings for MCTIP, the Community Parking District and the Mid-City Landscape Maintenance Districts.

<p><b>Organization</b> - Develops policies, procedures and strategic plans; builds community support and cooperation with the many organizations, groups and individuals that have an interest in small business issues.</p>	<p><b>Economic Development</b> - Foster greater relationships with public and private entities to create projects that enhance the Boulevard, and create an improved environment for residents and businesses through continued advocacy, business development, a retention and retention program, and incubation strategies at our hubs.</p>
<p><b>Design</b> - Enhance and maintain the physical environment and multimodal safety of El Cajon Boulevard by implementing innovative and cohesive streetscape solutions.</p>	<p><b>Promotions</b> - Promote small business, host theme specific events, initiate more public art and placemaking, highlight ethnic diversity, and work in parallel with other committee goals, all to showcase and communicate positive activity on The Boulevard.</p>

## Overview

- The Boulevard has seen a recent influx of new development. New investment is not only bringing attention to the area, but also new residents living on El Cajon Boulevard. These are new customers to existing businesses and will also serve as eyes on the street. This continued growth is crucial to the success of the business district.
- We have revived recruitment, retention and incubation efforts. This is exemplified by our pop-up lots, markets and outreach to the business and development community, and through our partnerships with Civic San Diego and LISC.
- We are currently working on multiple mobility projects. Our commitment is to transform our historic six-lane former highway into a slower speed thoroughfare that works for pedestrians, cyclists and automobile traffic and drives customers and neighbors to Boulevard businesses with safety and access in mind.
- In-line with our goals of creating and supporting places to gather, as spelled out in our BLVD 2020 Plan and our desire to make our sidewalks more walkable and our parks more playful and accessible, we have launched our Mid-City Parks Collaborative to encourage greening along the Boulevard to address the cities climate goals and to bring next level activation to our neighborhood parks.

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## Design

- Provided oversight to two Landscape Maintenance Districts (LMD) through regular meetings with City staff. Twice a week street clean-ups and landscaping services continue. Funds have been dedicated to increase services on side streets and into the 6 neighborhoods the Boulevard passes through.



- Maintenance of streetscape improvements along El Cajon Boulevard, sidewalks and gutters happens bi-weekly.

- Pavers decorated with artwork have continued to be added to parkways in the Little Saigon District.

- Seventeen new trees were added along The Boulevard.

- In a continued partnership with the Little Saigon Foundation, six new pagoda style trash cans have been added to the Little Saigon area.

- Five new benches were added to the east end of the district. Additional benches will be added in the coming year.

- Twinkle lighting on median trees and required maintenance is ongoing.

- The holiday holiday bridge lighting program on the 805 and 15 had another successful year. This is the 31st anniversary of the project.

- Worked closely with Climate Action Campaign to secure large grant from local funder for 54 new tree planting east of the I-15 along El Cajon Boulevard in the Mid-City. Installation scheduled for FY 2020

- Launched prototype of Street Side Park concept, a bench with built in planters at Fair@44 in partnership with UrbanLife



## Economic Development

- Economic growth strategies are underway within active business hubs throughout our district, which include the BLVD West, 30ECB, Little Saigon and BLVD East, where we are incubating clusters of business activity within each hub through placemaking, public art and regularly occurring events in partnership with anchor businesses.

- Based on a series of town halls around housing and mobility, goals were established to guide the Blvd 20/20 Vision.

- Initiated and partnered with MTS and city staff to capitalize on the first pilot bus/bike lane in the City of San Diego, furthering our organization's goals of seeing El Cajon Boulevard as a leading example of TOD (Transit Oriented Development).

- Working closely with MTS, City staff and SDSU graduate students to capture data of the pilot bus/bike lane



- Hosted City Heights Business Expo with community partners at Fair@44 to showcase new businesses and resources available in City Heights

- Hosted a street vending workshop at Fair@44 to further promote a new policy being adopted by the City of San Diego in support of street food vending in public spaces

- Partnered with USD, The Brink and County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher to host a 4 class series on business start-up. Hired a PR specialist to support outreach and capture media attention for our Blvd 20/20 Plan and pilot bus/bike lane.

- Activating POPUP15 in partnership with Bikes del Pueblo, who offers free bicycle clinics every week, and a variety of other groups who have hosted events on the lot throughout the year.



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- Continue to support activation of Fair @ 44 through regularly occurring events including Salsa Sabado and Musica en la Calle, placemaking, and garnering more community partnerships
- Worked closely with the Dojo Cafe at Fair@44 to support ongoing activation and community engagement.
- Continue to gain a firm understanding, and monitor future developments on The Boulevard.
- A list of properties for sale and lease has been added to the website and is continually updated
- Continuing to attract many new faces to our Economic Development committee meeting and forge positive relationships with developers, investors and non-profit partners, including Civic San Diego, Housing You Matters, Urban Land Institute, LISC, and Price Charities.

## Parking



Mid-City Division. It has been deployed near 50th street in response to requests from businesses in that area.

- With the conversion to head-in parking, more new spaces were added to side streets in City Heights and North Park this year. In the last two years 175 new spaces have been added.
- Twentyone new parking meters were installed along El Cajon Boulevard.
- A parking duration study was conducted for 30th and surrounding streets. The study was done in anticipation of a bike lane being installed on 30th St.
- Additional parking was created throughout the district by removing or shortening red curbs.
- Several curb designations were changed in response to community requests.
- Wayfinding signs have been designed and will be installed at 30th Street and the SR15.

- Continued oversight of the Mid-City Community Parking District budget and activities for The Boulevard, Adams Avenue, North Park and College.
- A speed indicator trailer was purchased by the Mid-City Community Parking District and was donated to the San Diego Police Department's

## Promotions

- Promote local businesses through the use of written spotlights, and become familiar with each business, one by one, to expand The Boulevard network and document the history, diversity and evolution of the business district.



- Supported a First Friday Vegan Market in partnership with Anthem Vegan and Vegan in San Diego to get a new monthly foodie market on the West-end.
- Continue to nurture and support a collaborative effort lead by the 30ECB hub to host a quarterly Stroll the Blvd event.
- With funding District 9's CPPS grant, High Tech High students implemented a Take Bake the Alley project including a mural and green wall adjacent to Su Pan Bakery and hired local photographer to engage with the Vietnamese community and install photography exhibit at Sin Lee Market.

- With funding District 3's CPPS grant, we hosted our second annual Mardi Gras 'Second Line' Crawl in partnership with member business around 30ECB and the West-Event and Gator by the Bay, installed a Little Saigon Stories installation at the corner of 30th Street and El Cajon Boulevard in the former Thrift Trader building and supported a placemaking project in front of the Evelyn, and new development on The Boulevard's West-end.

- Worked with granted NEA partners to launch Little Saigon Stories exhibit at Fair@44 in January 2019 and further exhibit the project in a vacant storefront in Little Saigon in April 2019.

- Culminated the NEA Little Saigon Stories project with a public art installation by artist Shinpie on the parking lot of Sin Lee Market.

- Launched self guided 'foodie' tours of Little Saigon and Taco tours of The Boulevard.

- Participated in SD County Fair to promote activities and businesses on The Boulevard.

- Worked with community partners to host a CiclosDias hub at Fair@44 and support outreach for City of San Diego Park and Recreation Master Plan update.



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## Promotions

- Hosted second annual Dia de Los Muertos event Titled Fiesta De Alma at Fair@44 in partnership with El Borrego. 1st annual procession Camino De Alma from El Borrego to Fair@44
- Contracted with local property owner to activate a vacant lot on the West-end branded as the Blvd Court. Hired artist to paint the building and parking lot, worked with local architects to create a seating and landscaping concept, developed a website blvdcourt.com and launched a First Friday event on the lot in December 2019
- Partnered with San Diego County Bicycle Coalition to celebrate the new bus/bike lane with a return of Bike the Boulevard in December 2019
- Secured \$9K from councilmember Chris Ward's office for further placemaking in FY 2020

## Outreach Strategy

- Theboulevard.org- The organization's website has been fully redesigned
- The Boulevard Guide - The Boulevard Guide is a handy map highlighting a small sample of the unique businesses that can only be found on the Boulevard. The sixth edition of the guide was produced in 2017.
- Facebook & Instagram- El Cajon Boulevard has a strong social media presence.
- Member Outreach- Door to door campaign to update membership data, understand needs and provide access to resources.



## Board of Directors

John O'Connor, President- Property Owner  
Jacquelyn R. O'Connor, President Emeritus  
Polly Gillette, Vice President- Property Owner  
Cuong Nguyen, Treasurer- Soda Bar  
Edward Haidar- Mama's Bakery  
Danny Fitzgerald- Endeavor  
Julian Villegas- Copley-Price YMCA  
Sher Cox- Twisted Taps  
Julie Tran- Goodbody Mortuary  
Bob Leif- Property Owner  
Lili Klu- LK Fashions  
Domingo Garcia- Su Pan Bakery

## Connect

**Website:** [theboulevard.org](http://theboulevard.org)  
**Facebook:** [elcajonboulevard](https://www.facebook.com/elcajonboulevard)  
**Instagram:** [elcajonboulevard](https://www.instagram.com/elcajonboulevard)

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