



September 22, 2021

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I write concerning the ongoing Plan Hillcrest effort undertaken by the San Diego Planning Department. On behalf of the Hillcrest Business community and our 1,300 members, we submit this letter to contribute to the discussion concern LGBT Historical Element of the plan.

We applaud your ongoing efforts concerning Plan Hillcrest. For the most part, this effort has been thoughtful and diligent; however the inclusion of the unpopular and poorly thought through Proposed Hillcrest Historic District is an error for several reasons. First, this district is unpopular amongst the community. It was originally proposed as part of the 2016 Uptown Plan process and at the time was seen to be an unpopular proposal amongst property owners, business people, and government officials. This is why it was not included as a full historic district in the final Uptown Plan. Little has changed in the proposed district since the Uptown Plan was developed and, as such, this proposal should not be included in Plan Hillcrest.

Secondly, this is not an LGBT Historic district. Despite some properties within the proposed district contributing to LGBT history (or San Diego history), there is little correlation between the boundaries of the proposed district and LGBT history. The LGBT Historic Context Statement indicates that LGBT History is drawn from across the city stating "...these resources... are largely concentrated in neighborhoods like Hillcrest, Ocean Beach, North Park, Downtown, Golden Hill, and Pacific Beach." Creating a very specific district within Hillcrest seems to do little to recognise the contribution of LGBT history throughout the city. Including a historic district in the heart of Hillcrest that has little direct correlation to LGBT history is a poor way to celebrate and remember the history of the LGBT community from across the city.

There are other ways to celebrate LGBT history that should be considered. One way to recognise this history is the creation of a Hillcrest Entertainment District. This district would designate parts of the neighborhood as an entertainment zone and encourage the continued growth of the restaurant and nightlife businesses within that zone. Nightlife businesses have always been safe spaces for the LGBT community and the continued support of these business types would be an appropriate way to recognise the contribution of LGBT businesses history in the community.



Permissive sidewalk cafe rules, relaxed entertainment licencing rules, and disclosures for local residential property transfers are some of the ways in which an entertainment district would support these business types.

I hope you will include this input in your planning documents. Please contact me if you have questions concerning this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Nicholls", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Benjamin Nicholls (he/him/his)
Executive Director

Copy:

Mayor Todd Gloria

Councilmember Stephen Whitburn

Tom Mullaney, Chair Uptown Planners

Roy Dahl