

#USQNEXT

USP'S PLAN FOR DISTRICT RECOVERY

UNION SQUARE PARTNERSHIP

As the City's recovery moves forward, the Union Square Partnership is launching #USQNext, our 5-point recovery plan, which expands upon our work since the crisis began. It outlines the key actions we are taking to create the greatest positive impact and accelerate Union Square-14th Street's recovery. Learn more at UnionSquareNYC.org/USQNext.



OCTOBER 2020

THE FOUNDATION OF THE DISTRICT IS STRONG. THE UNION SQUARE-14TH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IS WELL-POSITIONED TO REBOUND FROM THE IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC BASED ON SEVERAL KEY ADVANTAGES:

- Union Square is one of NYC’s true 24/7 mixed-use neighborhoods, where business and office patrons complement a significant residential population to provide a baseline of bustling activity. Our neighbors are at the core of all that we do.
- Our district is home to several anchor institutions and employers surrounding the Square, including Con Edison, Mount Sinai, New York University, Paragon Sports, The New School, and The Strand, to name just a few.
- Supported by a robust network of transportation options, there is a concentration of unique shopping, dining, and community and cultural offerings including the world-famous Greenmarket and Holiday Market.
- Our district’s crown jewel, Union Square Park, continues to drive foot traffic to the area and provide both respite and engaging activities for those who live, work, and visit here.

WHAT CAN THE UNION SQUARE PARTNERSHIP DO TO ACCELERATE UNION SQUARE-14TH STREET’S RECOVERY?

We can do what we do best — addressing quality-of-life issues including sanitation and public safety — while beautifying and maintaining the public realm. USP has been serving the neighborhood since 1976 and our work is just as crucial now as when we were first founded. Our organization was born out of a time when our City faced significant financial struggles similar to those confronting us today. To address today’s challenges, USP remains committed to our core service delivery and we will concentrate our work in the following key areas.



USP is committed to accelerating Union Square-14th Street’s recovery.

USP TOP 5 PRIORITIES FOR DISTRICT RECOVERY

- **Emphasizing Core Services**
Clean, safe, and healthy are at the center of all our activities
- **Commercial Market Support**
Boosting local business and encouraging leasing activity
- **Intensified Marketing**
Expanding our hospitality and tourism marketing efforts to include a wider audience than ever before
- **Expanding Partnerships**
Strengthening our work with existing partners and developing new connections to support our neighbors
- **Planning for the Future**
Advancing an exciting vision plan for the future of Union Square-14th Street

WE’RE IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO PARTNERING WITH YOU TO ENSURE OUR GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD RECOVERS SWIFTLY.

USP’s commitment to this work is unwavering, and we are charting a path forward to continued prosperity. We have no doubt that the neighborhood will rebound, and we are looking forward to engaging our community as a key partner in that progress. We are proud to serve as the organization that advocates for, beautifies, and catalyzes change in the Union Square-14th Street area, making it, by any measure, one of the most successful neighborhoods in New York City.

1. CORE SERVICES

CURRENT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS WILL HAVE LONG-TERM IMPACTS ON THE WAY PEOPLE INTERACT AND SPEND TIME IN PUBLIC SPACE.

We have maintained and will continue to maintain a strong commitment to our core services, which have roots in the BID's early efforts to revitalize the neighborhood during times of fiscal crisis. Reinforcement of public safety, sanitation, and a healthy community will be essential to ensure that people feel comfortable living in, working in, and visiting Union Square-14th Street.

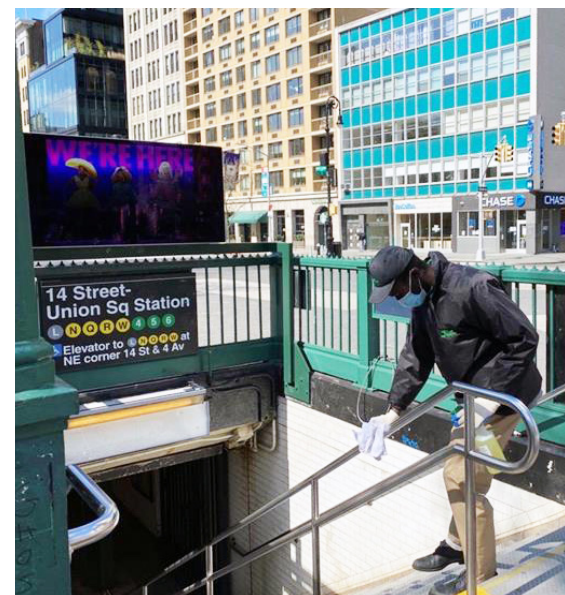
USP allocates an extensive amount of time, energy, and resources to core service delivery. This includes, for example, maintaining 125 trash receptacles, clearing catch basins, continuously removing graffiti throughout the district, maintaining playground equipment year-round, and salting and clearing snow from crosswalks and bus stops during the winter months. As part of our COVID-19 response, our team has increased the level of disinfecting and sanitizing to keep our community safe.

Our beautification efforts and public realm enhancements are also part of our critical service delivery. This includes providing and maintaining public seating, cultivating street trees, beautifying planters, and other key landscaping and capital maintenance initiatives in Union Square Park and throughout the district.



ACTION ITEMS

- Keep the entire district clean, sanitary, and in a state of good repair by prioritizing the Clean Team's work to maintain public spaces and streetscape elements.
- Promote enhanced cleaning efforts and sanitary protocols in response to COVID-19.
- Reinforce social distancing and healthy best practices within Union Square Park and other public spaces by deploying signage and other design elements.
- Invest additional resources in sanitation and security programs as needed to respond to evolving conditions.
- Keep the Park and district green and thriving by maintaining beautification and landscape features.
- Actively communicate with relevant City agencies on neighborhood conditions, needs, and action items to be addressed.
- Heighten response efforts to address neighborhood conditions efficiently and effectively through our street teams and outside partners.





2. COMMERCIAL MARKET SUPPORT

THESE ARE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES FOR OUR BUSINESSES AND REAL ESTATE PARTNERS REGARDING THE FUTURE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THEIR STORES, OFFICES, AND PROPERTIES.

Many businesses fear closure due to reduced foot traffic and customer capacity, and storefront vacancy is on the rise throughout the city. External factors are threatening the residential market and the existing local customer base. The future of large commercial floor plates seems uncertain at this time.

Our focus will be to support community-wide efforts to attract and retain owners and tenants of every sector, while pursuing programs aimed at driving foot traffic to the neighborhood. We will comb available data sources to analyze trends and communicate needs, advocate for government responses, and promote programs and opportunities that generate interest and investment.



ACTION ITEMS

- Work with the USP Board of Directors and Key Partners to create an enhanced Commercial Market Report that includes an aggressive action plan for retail and office recovery.
- Produce maps and promotional materials highlighting Union Square-14th Street’s key assets for brokers, retailers, and investors.
- Develop capacity for real-time data collection, tracking, and district assessment to evaluate local market trends and nodes of activity over time.
- Work with the NYC BID Association and other industry organizations to advocate for business-friendly policies that remove regulations that hamper the commercial sector’s ability to rebound.
- If outdoor programming continues to be restricted, direct additional resources to sanitation, landscaping, marketing, and public art programs to drive foot traffic.





3. MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS

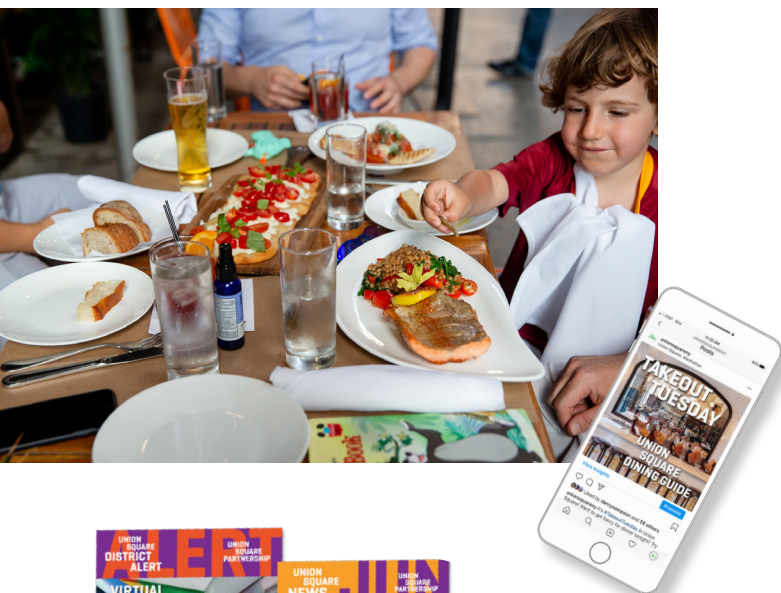
OUR MARKETING RESPONSE TO COVID-19 RECOVERY EMPHASIZES BUSINESS PROMOTION AND A CLEAN AND SAFE PUBLIC REALM,

consistent with the legacy of the Union Square Partnership, which was born out of threats to economic development and growth like those facing our district today. Since the pandemic began, USP has reinforced marketing initiatives that promote and support the Union Square-14th Street business community and cultural partners that have suffered from the impacts of the crisis.

We strive to provide the most up-to-date information on COVID-19-related district updates, relevant financial assistance programs, and resources for PPE supplies and the equipment necessary to reopen. Where and when possible, we will develop strategies to continue to provide and support public programming that maintains the necessary public health and safety precautions.



USP promotes businesses that are #OpenForBusiness and those that demonstrate public health and safety best practices.



Marketing efforts like newsletters, blog stories, and social media are crucial to promoting and supporting the USQ business community.

ACTION ITEMS

- Stress the “Union Square Together” messaging, and communicate the pride we take in working together to strengthen our community.
- Focus on the people of Union Square-14th Street and human connections. Share personal stories and experiences in order to build familiarity between patrons and businesses.
- Continue to spotlight local businesses or institutions that have had a notable or inspiring social action response to COVID-19 or racial justice.
- Develop campaigns using the “All in Union Square” message to align with NYC & Co. efforts.
- Place heavier emphasis than ever before on garnering positive promotional media attention for the district and our partners.
- Implement an improved Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to boost capacity for outreach and communication to our partners.



4. EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS + COMMUNITY SUPPORT

AT THE CORE OF OUR WORK ARE THE PARTNERSHIPS WE CREATE AND FOSTER TO ENSURE THE VITALITY OF THE UNION SQUARE-14TH STREET DISTRICT.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the value of these relationships was clearer than ever as members of our community have grown to rely on each other even more for support and guidance. Moving ahead, preserving our existing partnerships will be vital, and we will need to be nimble and creative in order to strengthen and develop new partnerships within the community and across the City. We will leverage the expertise and connections of BID leadership as resources for networking, community building, and advocacy. Of utmost importance will be our work strengthening partnerships that reflect the diversity of our community and City.



ACTION ITEMS

- Diversify partnerships and affiliations through outreach and conversations with Black and minority business owners, artists, educators, and design leaders, as part of a larger organizational Equity Action Plan.
- Utilize the regional draw of the Greenmarket and Holiday Market as well as other destinations to encourage shopping local and in-person.
- Strengthen relationships with the tech sector, which continues to grow in our neighborhood, and celebrate the arrival of the Zero Irving Tech Training Center as a leader of local job creation.
- Leverage partnerships with academic institutions such as New York University and The New School to develop relationships with student populations. Consider welcome packages for returning students or programs to connect campus spending with local businesses.
- Help theaters, performing arts organizations, and fitness businesses reimagine their offerings as they begin to welcome people back. Engage with them to provide support services that they will need as the nature of their industry evolves.
- Increase connections with trade groups and subgroups such as REBNY, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, NY Hospitality Alliance, NYC BID Association, and numerous others that advocate for a healthy business environment.
- Strengthen engagement with intergovernmental groups and agencies, communicating programs and resources to eligible constituents.



5. PLANNING + DESIGN

BEGINNING IN FALL 2018, USP EMBARKED ON A VISIONING AND PLANNING INITIATIVE TO REIMAGINE THE FUTURE OF THE DISTRICT.

Working with design consultants Marvel Architects, we will unveil a vision that is bold and ambitious, reflecting opportunities to expand upon the district's best assets, prioritize pedestrians, and increase the footprint of Union Square's public realm. Since COVID-19 has created new requirements for public space use and design, specifically regarding the need for social distancing within large open-air spaces, there is an even greater need for these improvements.

In developing a vision for Union Square-14th Street, we must take action to ensure that our district remains inclusive and equitable for the diverse communities we represent and all those invested in its history, legacy, and culture.



ACTION ITEMS

- Roll out the District Vision Plan through a coordinated communication and outreach strategy in the year ahead, including a public forum for community engagement and feedback.
- Broadcast the message that the Union Square neighborhood is committed to stewarding and investing in a positive vision that will attract business and capital.
- Advance public realm design projects, programs, and policies that respond to the visioning goals and objectives.
- Explore opportunities for enhanced public spaces such as parklets and open streets to support business activity, especially restaurants and cultural/event venues, which rely on social gathering.
- Develop a creative plan to program and activate vacant storefronts.



Later this year USP is launching an ambitious neighborhood vision that leverages the district's best assets while promoting a highly-accessible public realm.

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED IN UNION SQUARE-14TH STREET'S RECOVERY?

Here are five ways that you can partner with us to aid in our district's recovery. Together, we are confident Union Square-14th Street will emerge stronger and more vibrant than ever before.



CONNECT WITH US

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BE A PART OF UNION SQUARE'S RECOVERY:

1 REPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

Help us identify and address the neighborhood's most pressing needs as we tackle recovery by reporting conditions to 311, speaking with your local elected officials' offices, and participating in Community Board discussions. More eyes and ears on our community efforts can only make us stronger.

2 SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

It has never been a better time to love your local restaurants, retailers, and service businesses. These establishments need everyone in the community to support their ongoing recovery. Dine locally, order take-out, shop, and frequent our neighborhood treasures to help bolster the local economy.

3 PARTNER WITH US

Our district's commercial, residential, and cultural partnerships are our lifeline. Help us engage and identify new creative partnerships, participate in our many community efforts, and support us as we serve the district on its road to recovery.

4 LEARN ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY VISION

Developed in collaboration with the community, the District Visioning Plan will serve as a guide as we steward a vision for the district for decades to come.

5 SHARE DISTRICT MESSAGES

Tag us on social media, forward our newsletters, reports, and updates, share our posts, and help amplify our message that Union Square-14th Street is back better than ever. Post your own positive messaging and good news about the neighborhood and its businesses and attractions through your own channels.

The Union Square Partnership works to ensure the community's continued growth and success by providing sanitation, public safety, economic development, and marketing services, and by investing in the beautification of Union Square Park. For more information visit unionsquarenyc.org.

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