



KEEPING DOWNTOWN CLEAN & FRIENDLY

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San Jose, CA 95113

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### 2010 PBID members give Groundwerx high marks

SAN JOSE – Residents, merchants and commercial property owners gave overwhelming second-year approval ratings to the Property-Based Improvement District (PBID) responsible for “clean and greet” services – called Groundwerx – in downtown San Jose. Results of a survey conducted Feb. 12-March 26 showed:

- 89 percent of the 159 respondents said that downtown cleanliness has significantly improved in the past year. In 2007, before Groundwerx crews took over the task of cleaning the downtown core area, 46 percent believed downtown cleanliness was improving;
- 91 percent indicated that the overall condition of downtown improved, compared to 79 percent in 2007.

In addition, an overwhelming majority of downtown property owners monitoring their investment in the PBID generally favored Groundwerx enhanced services – friendly ambassadors, clean teams and street beautification projects.

“The survey results are stunning,” said Chuck Hammers, president of the downtown Property Owners’ Association. “It is hard to get 90 percent of anyone to agree on anything, much less property owners who have likely taken a hit on value in the last year.”

The clean crews use state-of-the-art and environmentally friendly equipment to scrub, remove stains and pressure-wash sidewalks and pedestrian areas; pick up litter; maintain dumpsters and receptacles; report and remove graffiti; paint and maintain public spaces; and install beautification improvements like planters and lights on public sidewalks. In 2009, clean teams removed 38.5 tons of debris, collected 60 tons of trash and cleaned 16,392 graffiti tags.

Survey results show an 85 percent approval rating for the second PBID-funded streetscape project, this one along South First Street between San Fernando and San Carlos streets that funded four hanging baskets, a mural, 106-foot-long vine bed, LED lights in 54 trees, a combined 196 feet of wall-mounted planters along both ends of the block, and 47 new planters. Nineteen of the new planters were custom-made for this project, and nine have a unique “orb” shape.

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In addition, nearly two out of three respondents still prefer that leaf-blowers stay banned in cleanup efforts. The PBID board of directors consciously made the decision not to use leaf-blowers when Groundwerx began services in January 2008.

Ambassadors provide public information and concierge-type services; report and document maintenance issues; provide social service referrals to the homeless; monitor panhandling; and serve as “eyes and ears” on the street for the San Jose Police Department. In 2009, ambassadors offered pedestrian assistance more than 350 times, made 1,541 social service referrals for people and filed 243 incident reports.

“The survey results are especially satisfying since our clean and safe teams have now been in place a couple of years,” Hammers added. “A new standard has been set downtown, but our property owners have not forgotten what the streets looked like before Groundwerx was formed.”

More than 750 property owners pay an annual assessment to the PBID. The goal of a cleaner and friendlier downtown is to attract and retain visitors, customers, residents and investors. PBID borders are approximately Interstate 280 on the south, Highway 87 and HP Pavilion on the west, Devine Street on the north and Fourth Street and City Hall on the east side of downtown.

Complete results of the 2010 PBID member survey are at: <http://www.sjdowntown.com/PBID-Groundwerx>.

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**The San Jose Downtown Property Owners Association is a non-profit group that funds Groundwerx efforts to make downtown San Jose a cleaner and friendlier place.**

**More photos available on request**

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