



*Cosmetic work has begun on the AT&T building in central Hillcrest (By Frank Sabatini Jr.)*

*Hillcrest, Real Estate*

# CAUSE FOR REJOICE IN HILLCREST

*By Frank Sabatini Jr.*

Significant actions are taking place to raise the aesthetics in Hillcrest. After a series of neighborhood tree-plantings by volunteers of the Hillcrest Business Association (<https://www.hillcrestbia.org/>) was recently completed, along comes a long-overdue project that might quell some of the garish visuals of the imposing AT&T building that looms over Sixth and University avenues.

“I never thought I’d live to see the day: AT&T building trying to get pretty,” wrote Crest Cafe (<https://crestcafe.com/>) owner Cecilia Moreno on her Facebook page, referring to the face lift the structure is undergoing. “Peeling paint will be history,” she added.

Moreno and other community activists have been pressuring reps at AT&T to revitalize the building for nearly a decade. And in 2020, local resident Mick Frasca launched a petition (<https://www.change.org/p/at-t-att-please-maintain-and-improve-your-property-at-650-robinson-avenue-san-diego>) on change.org urging AT&T to make improvements to

the property.



The building is located at 650 Robinson Ave. It occupies a city block and serves as a trunk station for cell, internet, and landline transmissions, hence the monstrous antenna dishes on top. Critics over the years have described the structure as “dystopian,” “Soviet-era creepy” and “hideous.”

Others conversely find odd appeal in its architecture, as seen in comments on Instagram under HillcrestSanDiego.

“I like the nerd deco,” wrote @yaduede. Another admirer stated, “I love the brutalist design even though it replaced the Piggly Wiggly market and Danish Bakery,” according to @irwinnicholas.

The makeover will reportedly occur in several stages, starting with the removal of peeling paint. Whether the redo will usher in a more vibrant color is yet to be seen. In addition, rumor has it that the rooftop antennae will ultimately be removed.

For now, all eyes (including ours) are staying firmly on it.

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