



# SHOW NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

---

## EPISODE SHOW NOTES

**Episode Title:** Hillsdale Mall Update

**Episode # & Date:** Episode #35 – June 25, 2020

**About this Episode:** Judy checks in with the Hillsdale Mall now that it is reopening to let San Mateans know what to expect now and into the future.

**Episode Web Page:** <https://sanmateofocus.com/hillsdale-mall-update/>

## EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

I'm Judy Gordon, and *this* is San Mateo Focus. As long-term residents who have raised six kids here, we thought it was high time someone shined a light on the good things in San Mateo to enrich the lives of those living here and the businesses that serve them. If you want to know the best places to eat and play, the events not to miss, *and* want to know how San Mateo became the crown jewel of the peninsula, tune in every Thursday and please be sure to click the 'subscribe' button on your favorite podcast app. Now, onto this week's episode.

When Hillsdale Shopping Center opened up the shiny new North Block development last December just in time for holiday shopping and the entertainment that happens at that time of the year, San Mateo and the surrounding area got a glimpse of what a progressive mall space looks like. Tree lighting ceremonies and live music brought energy to the new block. The dining pavilion, which was designed with Wi-Fi and power outlets, is more than just a spot to stop and eat while you shop. The fancy new movie theater serves food, and also has its own bar where you can hang out even if you aren't going to a movie. People planned bowling parties at Pinstripes. Even formerly mall-averse people could be enticed to head over and get a burger at Shake Shack. Just like when the original mall opened in 1954, Hillsdale Shopping Center was being praised for changing with the times and providing more than just a shopping experience for residents of the Peninsula.

One of our first episodes was about the mall. At that time, we were anticipating the opening of the North Block and talking about the new parking and the eventual access from 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> avenues for Bay Meadows' residents. I'll be honest, in the years I've lived in San Mateo I've taken the mall for granted. It was a place where I could head over at the last minute for a gift, or usually the first place I went when I needed to purchase something special for me or my family. Being a San Mateo resident, I got used to bumping into friends and neighbors there and quickly catching up. But I never really thought of it more than a place to shop. Yes, I was aware that more and more people were buying online, and retail was suffering. I was also heading in that direction, purchasing stuff online because it was easy—even with a shopping center right in my town. I hadn't considered that the mall was changing or needed to change. It just was always there, and I liked some stores and didn't go into others. So, for the few months that it was open before March I saw that a lot of thought and planning had happened to transform a former sort of nondescript indoor shopping Mall into a space where other things could happen, like community gathering, culture, and education. And, after reading a few articles on the future of shopping centers and retail, it sounds as if the work done so far to plan for the future of a successful shopping mall was probably just the beginning of the continual evolution of this property.



# SHOW NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

---

In fact, for a few months after the North Block opened, there was a storefront in the Mall that was called, “*Re:Imagine Hillsdale*.” An idea store, Re:Imagine was set up to begin a long-term conversation with customers and the community about the future of Hillsdale. With 20 to 25% of U.S. malls now threatened with closing, the road map for Re:Imagine Hillsdale was to build understanding of context and conditions, engage as many people as possible, and to explore the potential and the priorities. According to the website, about 3,400 people completed surveys and over 1,500 people visited the idea store. I spoke to Christine Kupczak, the Marketing Director at Bohannon the Hillsdale management company. She said that they will have complete results of the survey in a few weeks. But according to the website, it shows that people understand that retail is changing fast, and that they are open to making even more changes to the shopping center while keeping it a place to shop, gather, socialize, and celebrate. According to Christine there is a new philosophy that you have to offer for retail: touch and feel is still very important but so is entertainment, and education. There’s a need to create an all-encompassing experience to allow the community to get more involved, to have a place to go, to have a gathering space. People are looking for outdoor plazas surrounded with stores that they are interested in and have a desire to shop at. By adding home good stores like West Elm and Ethan Allen, along with local small businesses like Lolita Artisanal Bakery, which is known for empanadas and other baked goods, Hillsdale is adapting to that change.

In the meantime, Hillsdale is now opening up again to the mask-wearing public. There are Customer Service representatives at every lower entrance. Because it takes time to get employees back, trained, and adhere to the new County health orders, every day more stores and eating places will be open. The customer service representatives will have a list of stores open, can provide you with a mask if you need one, and will answer questions. They also monitor how many people are coming and going into the mall. The stores have removed racks and reconfigured their spaces to make sure that it’s easy for shoppers to keep a safe distance from each other. Some stores are still offering curbside pickup, and you can find out that information by calling the store, looking at their website, or asking a customer service representative. There are six zones for curbside pickup and you will be directed by the store to your pickup zone.

If you’d like to stay informed about Hillsdale and future plans, the Re:Imagine Hillsdale website has a contact form where you can sign up for news and developments, and other Re:Imagine events.

Okay, that’s all the time we have for this episode. Have a great week. Don’t forget to subscribe to San Mateo Focus on your favorite Podcast app. As always, if you’d like more information about the topics in today’s episode or any of our sponsors, visit [sanmateofocus.com](http://sanmateofocus.com).

## HELPFUL LINKS:

[Website: Hillsdale Mall](#)

[Webpage: Hillsdale Curbside Pickup](#)

[Webpage: Hillsdale Health Policies](#)

[Webpage: Reimagine Hillsdale](#)

[Sign-Up: Reimagine Hillsdale](#)



# SHOW NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

---

[Video: 1957 Film “Shopping Can Be Fun”](#)

[Article: On Hillsdale Expansion](#)

## TAGS:

@lolitaartisanalbakery @hillsdaleshoppingcenter @reimaginehillsdale @westelm @ethanallendesign

#sanmateofocus #shoplocal #hillsdalemall #reimaginehillsdale

— end of episode information > podcast show notes below —

# SHOW NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

---



## PODCAST SHOW NOTES

Podcast Name: San Mateo Focus

Logo:



Description:

Whether you're new to San Mateo, California, or a long time resident, the San Mateo Focus Podcast is the place to learn about local history, good eats, and things to do.

Website:

<http://www.sanmateofocus.com>

Email:

[info@sanmateofocus.com](mailto:info@sanmateofocus.com)

Host & Founder: Judy Gordon

Producer/Co-host: Peter Radsliff

Where to listen:

[Apple Podcasts](#) | [Google Podcasts](#) | [Spotify Podcasts](#) | [Stitcher Podcasts](#) | [TuneIn Podcasts](#) | [iHeartRadio](#) | [Facebook](#) | [San Mateo Focus Website](#)

How to listen:

- 1) On the San Mateo Focus **website**: <http://www.sanmateofocus.com>
- 2) On your favorite **iPhone** or **Android** smartphone podcast app:  
i.e. Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, TuneIn Podcasts, Spotify Podcasts, iHeartRadio Podcasts
- 3) On your favorite smart speaker:
  - For **Amazon Echo**, say: *"Alexa, play the podcast, San Mateo Focus."*
  - For **Google Home**, say: *"OK Google, play the podcast, San Mateo Focus."*
  - For **Apple HomePod**, say: *"Hey Siri, play the podcast, San Mateo Focus."*
- 4) On an **iPhone**, say: *"Hey Siri, play the podcast, San Mateo Focus."*
- 5) On an **Android** phone, say: *"OK Google, play the podcast, San Mateo Focus."*