

COLFAX AVE  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

ORIGINAL BY NATURE.  
INDEPENDENT BY CHOICE.



303.832.2086



[www.colfaxave.com](http://www.colfaxave.com)



PO Box 18853  
Denver, CO 80218

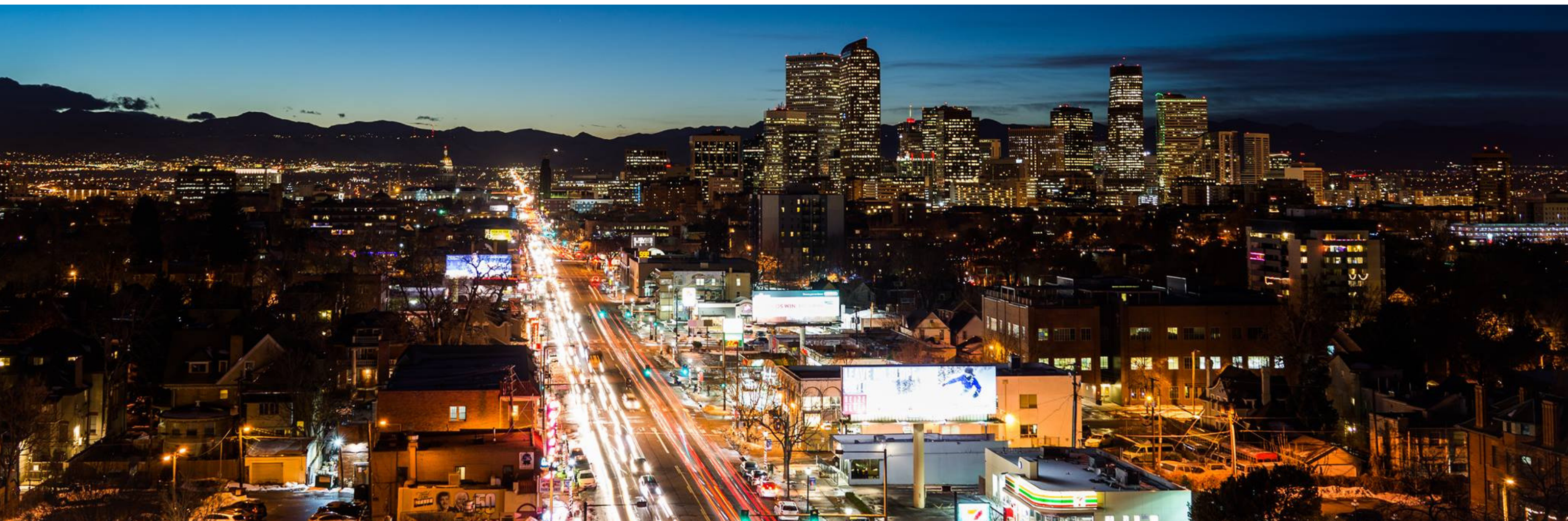


@ColfaxAve



@ColfaxAveDen









## WHO WE ARE

The Colfax Ave Business Improvement District (BID) promotes economic vitality, implements a clean and safe street program, and advocates on behalf of area businesses among public and private partners. We are funded by a tax on commercial property located within the BID's boundaries (approximately Grant to Josephine, between 14th and 16th). Founded in 1989, the organization is governed by a volunteer board of directors representing a diverse mix of area businesses and property owners and who are appointed by the Mayor.

## WHAT WE DO

The Colfax Ave BID is dedicated to cultivating a clean, safe and friendly environment on Colfax. We provide enhanced services to the business corridor such as trash removal, street cleaning, security, streetscape improvements, marketing and promotional services as well as liaising with surrounding community groups. The BID also works closely with Denver Police, the Office of Economic Development, the Department of Public Works, Community Planning & Development, and other organizations to represent the needs of area business and property owners.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sean O'Connell, President  
*Live Nation / The Fillmore Auditorium*

Jimmy Callahan, Vice President  
*Prohibition Pub*

Vicky Hales, Treasurer  
*UMB Bank*

Ron Vaughn, Secretary  
*Argonaut Wine & Liquor*

Andy Baldyga  
*The Mulhern Group*

Kathy Bettis  
*Kentro Group*

Yvette Freeman  
*Progressive Urban Management Associates*

## STAFF

Frank Locantore  
*Executive Director*

Michelle Valeri  
*Communications & Programs Director*

# Friends of Colfax,

As another great year wraps up, the Colfax Ave BID thanks you for helping make the Colfax area a safer and cleaner place while it retains its unique and vibrant character and remains the “Main Street” of the Denver community. We also look forward with excitement to the challenges and opportunities that 2019 will bring.

This is the last of my six years on the board for the Colfax Ave BID and it's been a productive time. From adding pedestrian street lights, to starting an innovative workforce program called, Colfax Works, to creating a Master Streetscape Plan that guides our improvements over the next five years, to the events we've produced such as Art-i-fax that shine a light on the great things happening in the community, we are making Colfax an even better place to be.

Our advocacy to the City of Denver has succeeded in bringing city funding to make our intersections and street safer. Additionally, we've secured millions of dollars through the Elevate Denver bond for streetscape, safety, and transportation improvements.

We are building out the Streetscape Plan in coordination with the City's intersection and transportation improvements in order to minimize the construction disturbances and make our budget stretch further. In 2018 we have designed and planned the installation of eight branded kiosks to direct visitors towards our businesses and iconic treasures. They will be installed in early 2019.

This summer, our pilot of Colfax Works -- a program employing people experiencing or emerging from homelessness and incarceration -- was a wild success and will be continued year-round in 2019. Thank you to all the businesses and residents who have supported the crew with compliments and lunches. We couldn't have done it without your kindness.

There is just too much to tell you in this short letter, so to see all of our accomplishments please make sure that you are on our email newsletter distribution list and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We have lots to share throughout the year and we want to make sure that you are getting the most timely and detailed information.

While I will no longer be on the board in 2019, I will remain active in the BID's committees. I encourage you to join me on one of our committees focused on safety, streetscape improvements, or events. It is easy to contact us through the website ([colfaxave.com](http://colfaxave.com)).

Thank you for all your support through the years. Colfax is a great place and with your help we'll keep it that way.

Sincerely,



Sean O'Connell  
Colfax Ave BID Board President





# COLFAX WORKS

Colfax Works is our newest and most exciting program that provides enhanced clean team and maintenance services to the community by employing people experiencing or emerging from homelessness. Colfax Works is modeled after the Ready, Willing, & Working program initiated by the Capitol Hill BID in Washington DC where our Colfax Ave BID's Communications & Programs Director, Michelle Valeri, once worked. In the first three months of the trial program this summer, one of the Colfax Works team members was able to save enough to afford the security deposit and rent for his own apartment and got a promotion to supervisor.



Team members are paid a living wage and receive regular supportive services to assist them in finding housing and full-time employment, and to address any other support they may need. Our website, [colfaxworks.com](http://colfaxworks.com), is filled with supportive comments about the crew and their work. The testimonials range from comments that Colfax has never been as clean as it is now to offers from businesses and residents to buy the crew lunch.

One crew member told the supervisor that working with this team showed him that he had been hanging around the wrong people and this Colfax Works program has demonstrated how people can lift each other up.

**"It's heartwarming to see Colfax Works up and running, making a difference in the community and the lives of the workers. There's no greater gift you can give someone than the opportunity to turn their lives around."**

**- Patty Brosmer**

**Founder & President of Ready, Willing & Working**

In 2019, we plan for the program to run year-round, at least five days per week, instead of four days as it has been in 2018. Over the next four years we intend to expand it to seven days per week, 365-days per year. The crew will always be paid at least a living wage and we'll gradually include more health, wellness, and financial benefits in addition to weekly and as-needed wraparound supportive services.

The City of Denver has recognized the value and potential of this program to scale and provide needed services to other parts of the city. That's why they helped us extend the initial summer trial by providing additional funding through the end of December 2018. And, they have included another \$40,000 for Colfax Works in 2019.

We have talked with other Denver BIDs to see how we can scale this up to provide more clean team services around the city and more opportunities for people experiencing or emerging from homelessness to get to a place of greater stability and independence.

**LEARN MORE AT COLFAXWORKS.COM**

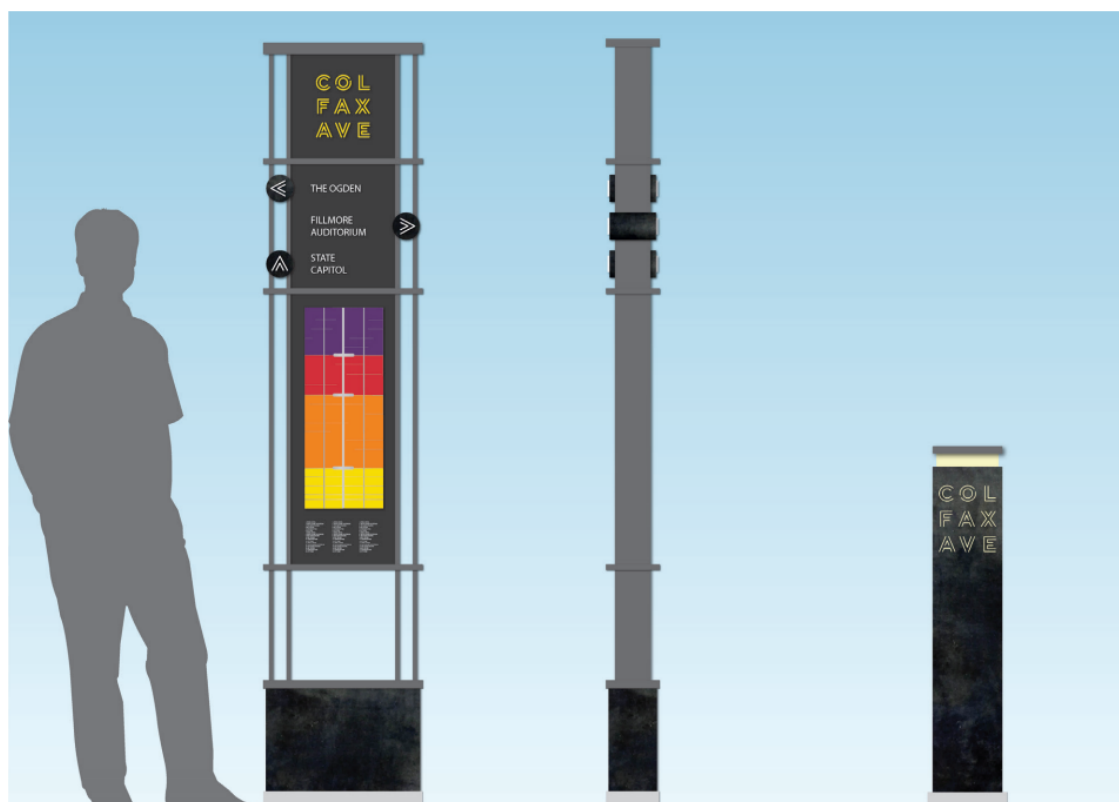


# STREETSCAPE

In 2016, the board decided to craft a Conceptual Master Streetscape Plan to bring Colfax Ave BID into the 21st Century and hold true to the character, or “DNA,” that makes Colfax identifiable and unique. The process was formally completed in January of 2017, and since then we have developed and secured a path to finance the \$12 million project.

The process involved the broader Colfax community of business and property owners, developers, non profit and service providers, commercial brokers, and residents who participated in multiple focus groups. We also collected input and data by attending community meetings, hosting public events, and circulating an online survey. Details of data are available on our website, [colfaxave.com/streetscape](http://colfaxave.com/streetscape).

In 2018, the Colfax Ave BID began implementing the vision of the streetscape plan by adding placemaking and wayfinding signage to the district. The signs will be installed in early 2019.

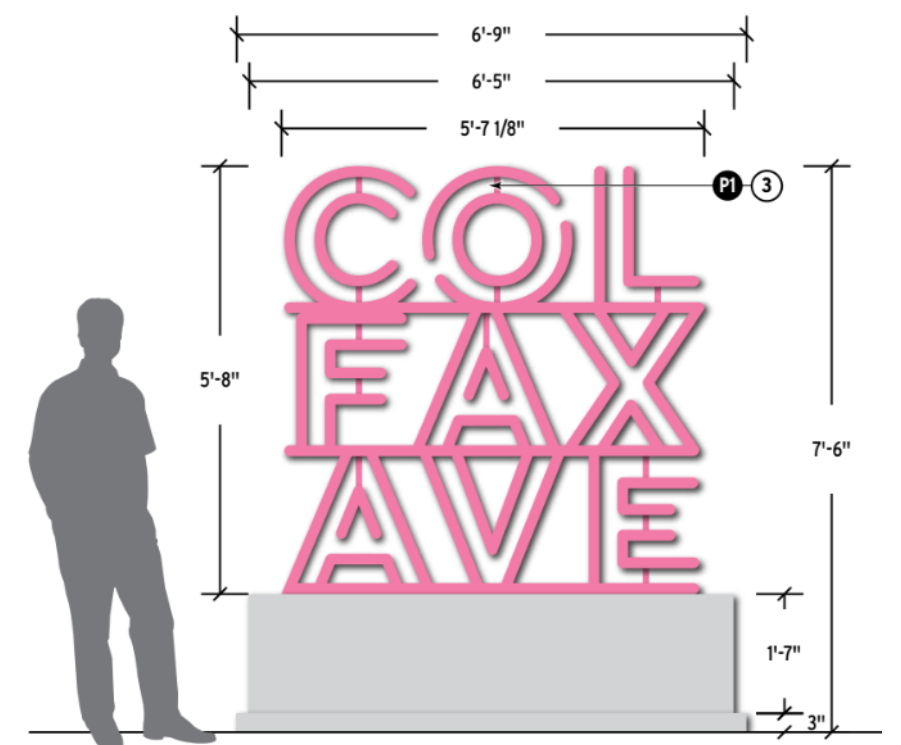


Our committee is very thoughtful about the timing and location of the signs in order to best take advantage of the City-funded improvements to Colfax intersections and public transportation. By timing some of our larger and more expensive improvements with the City’s construction schedule, we’ll be able to do more with our budget and fund more improvements.



*BRT rendering at Downing and Colfax. Courtesy of Denver Public Works*

The objective of the full buildout of the streetscape plan is to create a place that is true to the Colfax DNA, makes our streets and public areas safe and comfortable for all, and establishes Colfax as a place to come live, do business, and enjoy.



**LEARN MORE AT [COLFAXAVE.COM/STREETSCAPE](http://COLFAXAVE.COM/STREETSCAPE)**



# SAFETY

We work to address safety along Colfax in three ways: at a “macro” level; with focus on “hot spots”; and, through design.

Working with the Department of Safety, we are understanding what the “markers” of crime are -- the factors that contribute to and are common in areas where crime occurs. Similarly, we look at the “markers” in areas where crime occurs less frequently. By removing the factors contributing to crime and replicating the characteristics of the environments where crime is less frequent, we start changing the structures that have made crime seem inevitable.

The second piece of our safety program focuses on the “hot spots” of criminal activity and deploying more police attention to those areas. District 6 Police have been very helpful by expanding their Bike Team presence on Colfax whose officers are quick and stealthy in their patrols.



*Colfax Bike Patrols. Photo courtesy of Life on Capitol Hill*

The last of the three safety areas is design. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, or CPTED, is the process of making the place hospitable and safe. Storefronts with windows uncluttered by advertisement posters -- so that the proprietor can see what is going on outside and passersby can see what is going on inside -- expand the “eyes on the street” principle. Making sure that all sides of the building are well-lit, and in some cases playing classical music will deter criminals from hanging out.

Another important design feature for property owners of an entire block is to have businesses with varying open hours. For example, if the space on the street is only offices that are open from 9-to-5 then there are no “eyes on the street” for that block for 16 hours. A better mix is to find tenants that have a range of open hours. By leasing to a baker that starts their day at 4:00 AM combined with retail, restaurants, and bars that are open during the day and then close and clean up until 3:00 AM means that there are business owners and customers coming to and from the block nearly 24 hours per day keeping a close watch on activities and deterring criminals with the watchful eyes of the community.

Our initial start to the Block Captain and Neighborhood Watch programs are helping the community in specific blocks communicate with each other and the police regarding suspicious activity. In 2019, we plan to coordinate the Block Captains and Neighborhood Watch programs with our Colfax Works Team more closely. This will also help increase the communication between the businesses and residents and provide resources and tools to create a safer environment.

**[LEARN MORE AT COLFAXAVE.COM/SAFETY](https://colfaxave.com/safety)**



# ART & EVENTS

A lot of creativity and color has been added to Colfax in 2018 through various collaborative community initiatives and events.

## VISION ZERO UTILITY BOXES

On April 14th, WalkDenver, the East High School National Arts Honor Society, local artist Pat Milbery, and the So-Gnar Creative Division teamed up to design and install new artwork on fourteen utility boxes within our district. Each colorful utility box features the story of a person killed in a traffic crash. This project was a Vision Zero Community Art Project and made possible by an Arts in Society grant administered by the RedLine Gallery and a PS You Are Here grant from Denver Arts & Venues.

## ART-I-FAX: GENERATIONS

On Saturday, September 8th, we closed down Park Avenue for the third annual Art-i-fax Street Party. The pop-up plaza, which stretched from Colfax to Humboldt, was filled with live music, local food, fun activities, interactive entertainment, and of course, art!

This year's theme was Generations, which meant Art-i-fax had a little something for everyone. Highlights included aerial acrobatics from Rainbow Militia, Drag Queen Storytime for kids, a group workout from Green Door Fitness, the Colfax Cake Walk (prizes were boxes of Voodoo Doughnuts!) and a fashion show from Studio Colfax.

We presented the second annual "Characters of Colfax" awards to a couple of special community members. The first award went to the National Arts Honor Society of East High School, for their incredible work bringing our utility boxes along Colfax to life with Vision Zero art. The second award went to Marty Amble, who was instrumental in getting trees planted in the blocks on Colfax between Lafayette and Downing 32 years ago – we have him to thank for our ability to enjoy them now.

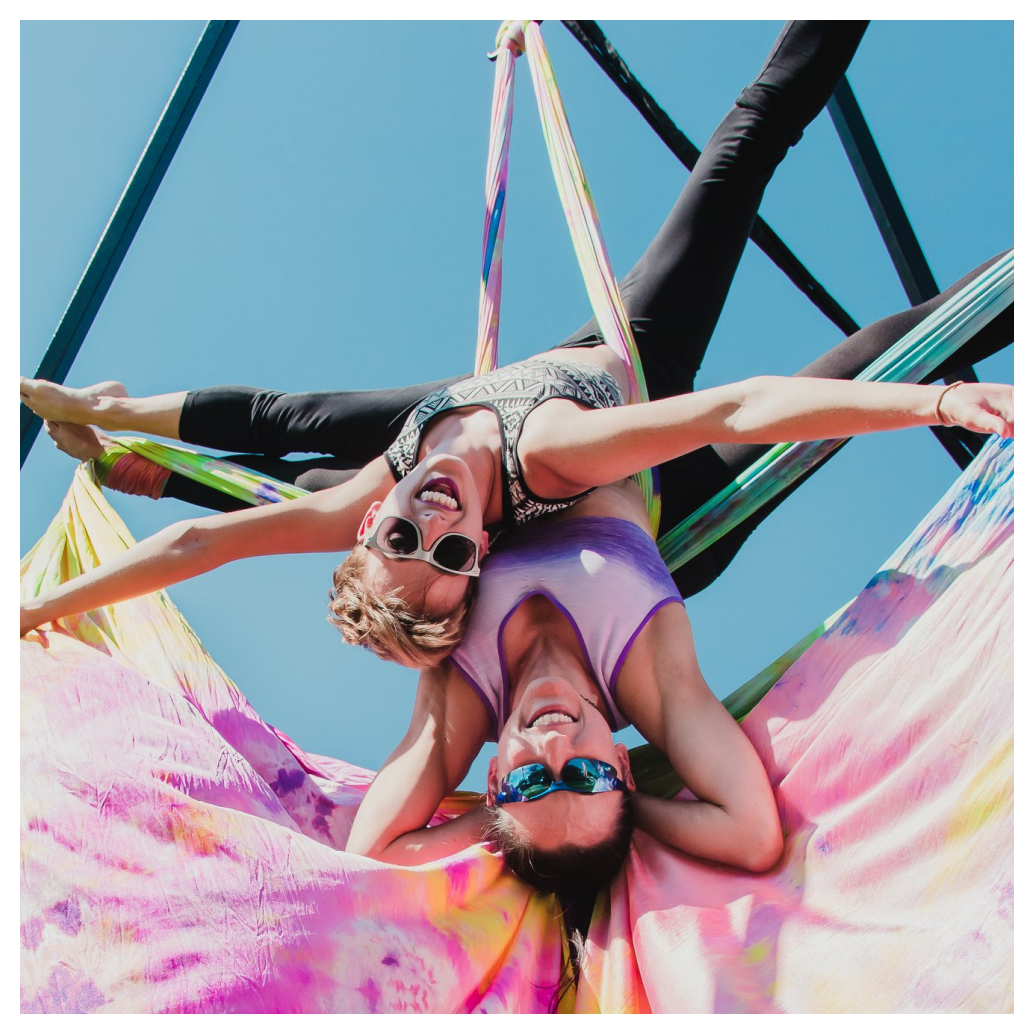
Closing Park Avenue from Colfax to Humboldt provided a great central space for the party, made the intersection of Colfax and Park safer for pedestrians and vehicles, and gave attendees a feel for what the space could be like if it were converted to a public plaza.

## VISION ZERO MURAL

On September 28th, Pat Milbery and the So-Gnar Creative Division began transforming the blank wall at 701 E Colfax into a 3-story Vision Zero mural. To celebrate, WalkDenver and Colfax Ave co-hosted a Mural Watch Party across the street on the second floor of SliceWorks so community members could watch as the piece came to life. The mural was completed on October 10. Check it out in person at Colfax and Washington.

**CHECK OUT SOME PHOTOS ON THE NEXT PAGE!**







# MEDIA & PROGRAMS



## CIGARETTE LITTER PREVENTION

We received a \$10,000 grant from Keep America Beautiful's Cigarette Litter Prevention Program. This grant allowed us to install ten lid ashtrays on our existing trash cans and also install three standalone receptacles at cigarette hot-spots throughout the district to cut down on cigarette litter.



## COLFAX IN THE MEDIA

Colfax Ave received increased media attention in 2018, with 15 media stories over the past year; 8 of those were focused on our Colfax Works program. We continued to build relationships with local media outlets and formalized our media release process.

Our presence on social media grew across all outlets (Facebook 25%, Twitter 51%, Instagram 172%) and constituents were kept informed via our e-newsletter. Our Streetscape blog series takes readers deeper into our Streetscape Plan principles and the goals of upcoming streetscape initiatives.

## COLFAX: GRIT & GLORY

In March, we co-hosted a forum with Historic Denver titled "Colfax: Grit and Glory". A panel of local experts discussed the ingredients that make Colfax what it is – from its history, to transit, to the built environment, and how it can retain its unique identity as Denver continues to grow and change.

## WANT THE LATEST COLFAX AVE NEWS?



Sign up for our e-newsletter:  
[colfaxave.com/newsletter](http://colfaxave.com/newsletter)

Follow us on social!

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  @ColfaxAveDen

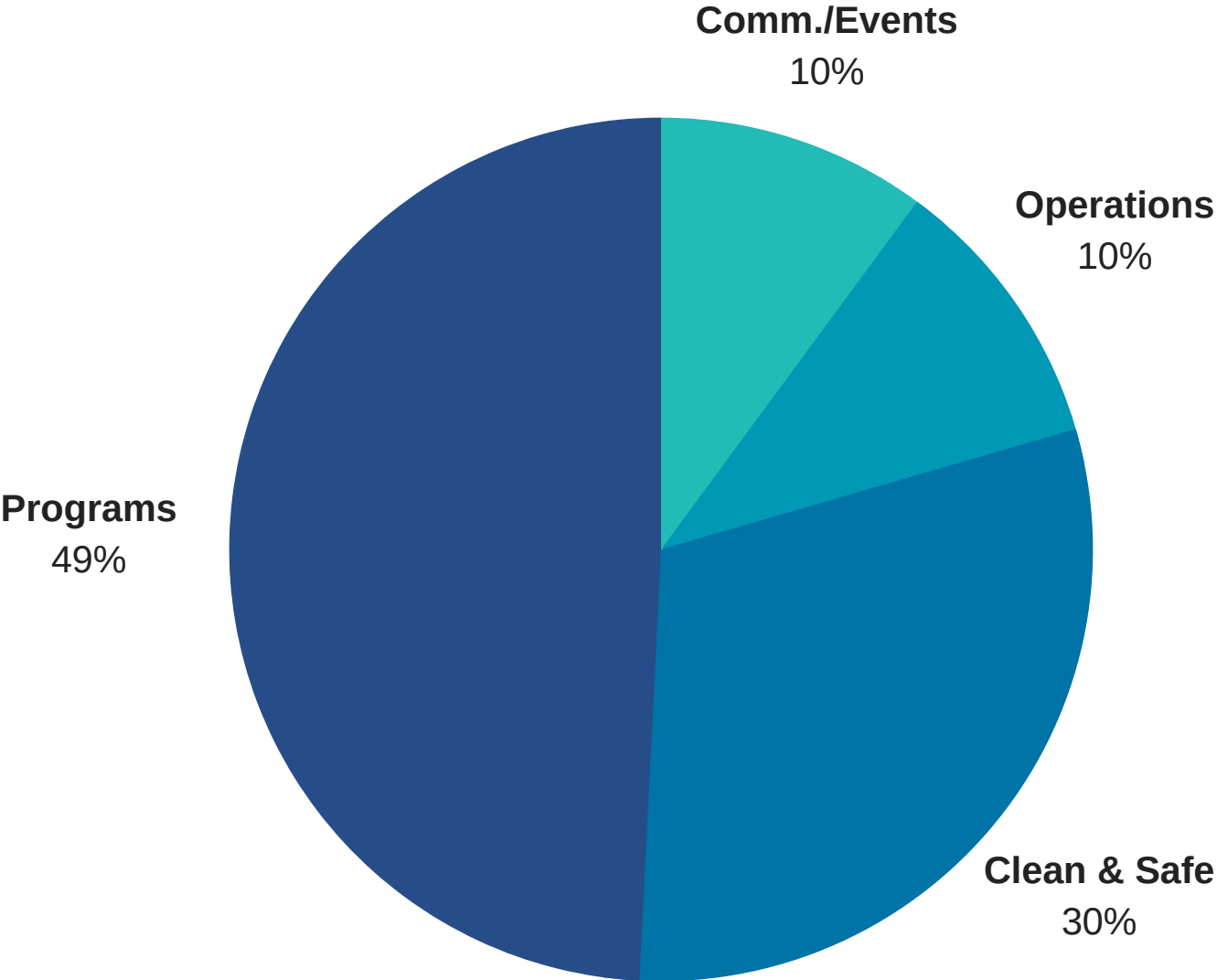


# BUDGET

We have been very conservative with expenditures over the years in order to save enough money to afford the Streetscape Plan, our regular programs, and to position ourselves for either a line of credit, a loan, or to bond so that we can build out the expensive infrastructure and placemaking identified in our Streetscape Plan.

The budget snapshot and graphs below show how the volunteer board of directors for the Colfax Ave BID is allocating financial resources.

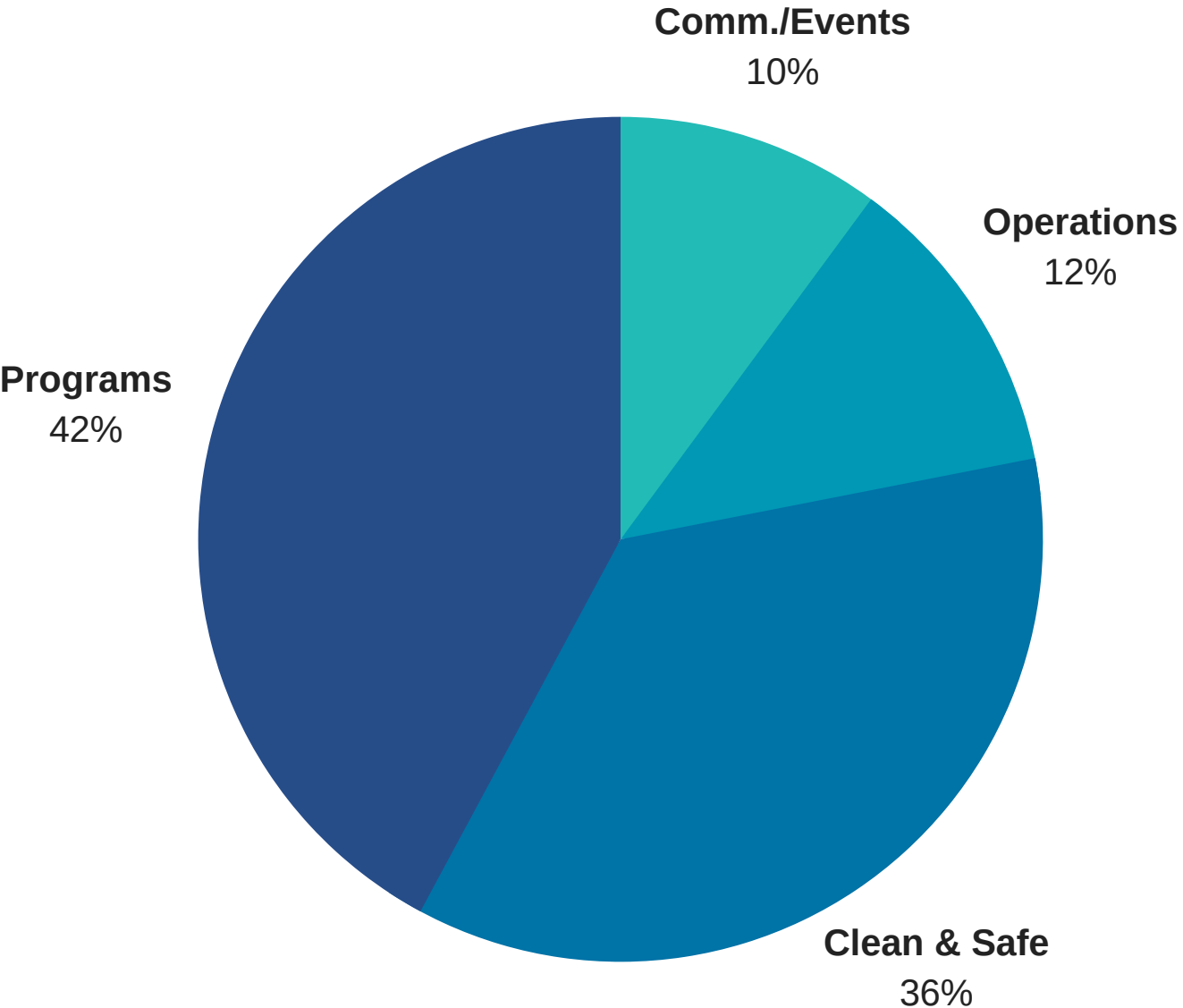
## 2018 COLFAX AVE BID EXPENSES



### 2018 EXPENSES

\$402,122	Programs
\$247,413	Clean & Safe
\$85,029	Operations
\$82,388	Comm./Events
<b>\$816,952</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

## 2019 COLFAX AVE BID EXPENSES



### 2019 EXPENSES

\$399,934	Programs
\$341,045	Clean & Safe
\$112,240	Operations
\$95,769	Comm./Events
<b>\$948,989</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>





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