

# CASE STUDY: HYDE JACKSON SQUARE



To expand and better integrate sustainability and resilience planning into an urban commercial district, the Hyde Jackson Square Main Street program was selected to receive a \$4,500 grant from *America Saves* to support local energy efficiency program implementation and outreach. Some grant funding also facilitated Spanish translation of materials, outreach, and in-person meetings in the Latin American immigrant neighborhood.



welcome to Jackson Square

**About Hyde Jackson Square:** Hyde Jackson Square, also referred to as Boston's Latin Quarter, is located in Jamaica Plain, a southwest Boston neighborhood. The residential and small commercial area is clustered along Centre Street, anchored at each end by public squares, Hyde Square and Jackson Square. The small-scale, mixed-use neighborhood is highly diverse and culturally rich, with many immigrants from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Additionally, most business owners are immigrants or primarily Spanish-speaking.

## DISTRICT-BASED ENERGY CHALLENGES + GOALS:

The *America Saves* pilot project in Boston's Hyde Jackson Square began in 2014. One of Boston's 20 designated Main Street programs, Hyde Jackson Square has a history of green infrastructure and sustainability initiatives and enthusiastically partnered with *America Saves* to add to the robustness of their sustainability project portfolio. The district has seen steadily rising rents and some of the highest energy costs in the country. As a result, operating cost reductions through energy savings for small and local business owners is a high priority for Hyde Jackson Square Main Street.

An existing citywide small business energy efficiency program, Renew Boston, was established six years ago, but the annual participation rate in Hyde Jackson Square was relatively low, with plenty of opportunity for improvement. Through the *America Saves* program, the Hyde Jackson Square pilot project increased interest and participation in energy efficiency efforts, by increasing awareness and access to energy audits, retrofit implementation strategies, and opportunities for financial assistance.

The *America Saves* methodology, which leverages trusted local leaders, helped knit together all of the many programs, incentives, and opportunities available to Boston small businesses. Through coordinated communication and outreach, all of this information was presented in one package called "Centre Street Saves." This positioned Hyde Jackson Square Main Street as the primary, neighborhood hub of energy efficiency information for local businesses. This community led effort included contributions of 10 project volunteers and over 150 volunteer hours to support a range of business outreach and energy and building data collection.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- Pilot Kick-Off [August 2014]: A kick-off meeting was organized with Hyde Jackson Square Main Street to develop a strong plan for local engagement with the community, “Centre Street Saves.”
- Business Owner Outreach [April 2016]: *America Saves* returned to the neighborhood to facilitate and lead Earth Day 2016 business outreach and deliver custom energy savings reports to participating local businesses. Renew Boston, Boston Main Streets, Rise Engineering, National Grid, and Eversource accompanied *America Saves* and Hyde Jackson Square Main Street to ensure business owners understood the entire range of programs and incentives available to them, as well as to provide no-cost walk-through energy assessments. In total, more than 40 Hyde Jackson Square businesses were directly engaged, in their place of business, during *America Saves* outreach and business consultations.
- Public Workshop [September 2016]: *America Saves* returned to Hyde Jackson Square to continue business engagement and energy efficiency education. An Energy Star Portfolio Manager workshop was offered to train business owners how to benchmark and track their energy use. The team also continued door-to-door business owner outreach to increase participation in Renew Boston and “Centre Street Saves.”

## OUTCOMES:

- **60** customized *America Saves* reports for Hyde Jackson Square businesses
- **17** FREE energy assessments, offered through Renew Boston
- **25%** average energy savings potential for Hyde Jackson Square businesses
- **\$2,159** average annual potential savings for Hyde Jackson Square businesses



talking with business owner

## LOOKING AHEAD:

- *America Saves* laid the foundation for a stronger relationship between Hyde Jackson Square Main Street and Renew Boston. Moving forward, Hyde Jackson Square will certainly leverage the improved relationship and continue working directly with Renew Boston and local businesses to achieve energy and cost savings.
- Gerald Robbins, the Hyde Jackson Square Main Street manager, participated in Energy Star Portfolio Manager training during our engagement with Hyde Jackson Square. As a result, Gerald will serve as a local expert for his business owners about how to use Portfolio Manager and energy benchmarking as a way to improve energy use and performance.

## COMMUNITY COMMENT:

*“The Preservation Green Lab project lab enticed Hyde Jackson Square Main Street to perform targeted outreach to our small business, storefront, community. Without funding and partnership from the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Preservation Green Lab and National Main Street Center, HJSMS would not have developed an alternative service-delivery model to educate merchants about how energy efficiency could improve their bottom-dollar. HJSMS has been able to grow trusting relationships within the business community through multi-lingual outreach efforts funded through the America Saves grant, and better coordinate with the successful Renew Boston program in a way that works best for the Hyde/Jackson community.”*

Gerald Robbins | Executive Director, Hyde Jackson Square Main Street



[www.SavingPlaces.org/AmericaSaves](http://www.SavingPlaces.org/AmericaSaves)



National Trust for Historic Preservation

**Preservation Green Lab**