

Hillside Public Library Brand Refresh

Hillside Public Library serves the 8,320 residents of Hillside Village, Illinois. At the time of this project, the library was in the middle of a rebrand and website launch, including the development of a new logo, website, and brand standards with a graphic designer.

While the new brand had been successfully implemented, the library identified a need to strengthen its overall marketing and communications approach. Multiple staff members were involved in marketing, which led to materials that were not always consistent in look, feel, and messaging. The library also wanted to move beyond promoting individual programs and services and instead tell a clearer story about how the library meets the needs of the Hillside community.



Hillside Public Library engaged with CAC to do the following:

- 1. Conduct a comprehensive communications audit** across Paid, Earned, Shared, and Owned channels, including recommendations related to tools and workflows (e.g., Canva, Library Aware, Constant Contact) and in-house merchandising of flyers and displays.
- 2. Develop a marketing and communications strategy** that emphasizes storytelling, brand alignment, and engagement-focused content for social media and newsletters.
- 3. Provide social media and newsletter strategy** consultation, including review and/or creation of social media policies and guidelines, content recommendations, and a content calendar.
- 4. Develop marketing standards and guidelines around the existing logo** to support consistent messaging and branding when multiple staff contribute to marketing.
- 5. Create customizable templates and training** resources to support staff implementation and long-term consistency.

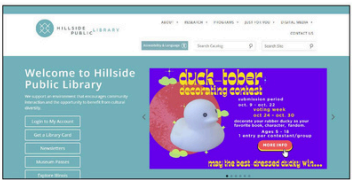


After the audit, we developed a marketing and communications strategy designed to shift the library's focus from promoting individual programs to telling a clearer, more cohesive story about the library's value and impact. The strategy emphasized storytelling, brand alignment, and engagement-focused content — particularly across social media and newsletters — while providing practical guidance staff could apply immediately.

The result was a set of integrated deliverables that combined strategic direction with day-to-day implementation tools.

Pages from the Consultation Report

Website



Your website is clean and user-friendly. The navigation is clean and side-by-side search features are easy to use. The website is very monochromatic. Consider using the Hillside Orange color for areas of emphasis and user actions such as submit buttons.

Home Page
On the home page, the scrolling banners are Canva-style graphics. It would be nice to use this prime space on your website to focus on 2-3 key messages about your library with striking visuals (as recommended in your brand manual, right). Then you can move the programs to the featured event space on your calendar.

It seems out of proportion to have so much prime real estate on the home page dedicated to individual program promotion. If your website is the first impression someone has of your library, it should be focused more on big picture messaging about how the library can help people, not on programs, which are more ephemeral in nature. Especially since there is a whole space dedicated to events directly below.

The banner images themselves (next page) have a few challenges. First, they are text-heavy, and not as eye-catching as an image like the one at right from your brand manual. Second, they are not in alignment with your brand style guide. The brand style guide states that "slider layouts should be consistently centered with headlines in all caps." The fonts are not easy to read, and the colors are not consistent with your palette. There is use of clipart. The sliders should feature content that is in alignment with your brand look, feel, and voice.

At the time of this writing, there are six sliders. It is best to have 3-5 sliding banners, as more can

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Instagram has a much larger follower count. Instagram is a younger demographic than Facebook.

Your grid has a good mix of compelling photographs and Canva-style graphics, but we'd always like to see more photographs (we recommend an 80:20 ratio of photographs to Canva images). Use high-quality photos of the building, events, people. Create graphic overlays that highlight key messages ("Free Membership", "Summer Reading Kickoff", "Tech Workshop").

Good use of reels!

Posts that tag people or partners are getting more engagement than ones that don't.

We recommend setting a goal to increase your reach each year, and to post more photo content.

Here are some tips, some of which you are already doing:
<https://www.researchfeed.com/qr-bank-qr-bank-to-increase-book-practices-for-ropopkfr/>

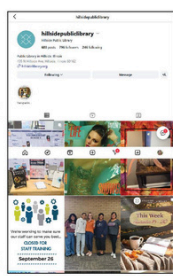

Social Media Policy

Click on the thumbnail to view the document.

Hillside Library's current policy is a strong foundation, focused on:

- Risk mitigation
- Legal compliance
- Employee restrictions
- Monitoring and discipline


Our social media recommendations, later in this report, will focus on integrating strategic direction, marketing goals, and audience engagement guidance.

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Click the thumbnail to view the video.

Self-Checkout Screen (Vertical)
This video is primarily promoting programs. This is focused primarily on promoting individual programs. Branding is absent. Some programs have QR codes for registration. Ideally, these should be reformatted to the screen proportion.



Digital Display Screen (October)
This video has a cute, nicely branded intro slide. However, the pumpkin clipart here is not "flat design" in style which matches your brand.



There are some nicely made video clips here, in between the animated graphics. Looks like you are downloading these clips from the digital vendors like Kenney and Hoola. It's great to be promoting resources and not just programs.

Does the music play on the screens? One slide has 4 QR codes, that is too many for someone to scan all at once. Better to have 1 QR code that takes you to a page with all of those options.

The challenge is that there is so much information, and they are all different styles. There is some brand integration, but overall, the experience of watching is a bit jarring.


Digital Display Screen (November)
Like above, this has a branded intro slide. However, the pumpkin clipart here is not "flat design" and looks out of place.

There is a lot of animation, a lot of different styles, and a lot of clipart. There is also music.





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Adult Book Discussion Book List
The book discussion list brochure (right) has potential, with a few tweaks to color and font, this could be brought into brand alignment. The blue of the book graphic and the purple are not brand colors.




Welcome Brochure
The same goes for the Welcome to Hillside brochure. With a few tweaks to color and font, this could be brought into brand alignment. The blue of the book graphic and the purple are not brand colors.



Library Card Brochure
The library card brochure (right) also has inconsistencies in fonts, colors, graphics QR codes, etc. It feels a little more off-brand than the other two.

This piece, along with the Welcome pieces above, feels like a very important piece that is a first impression for a library card holder. It should be in alignment with your brand.




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Additional Research

Content Calendar

We did some research on seasonal happenings to help you create a content calendar. We conducted a survey of staff, reviewed your program calendar for 2025, and reviewed the Village of Hillside's newsletters for 2025.

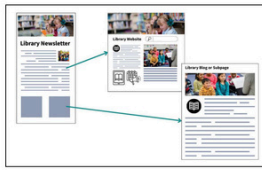


[Content Calendar Questionnaire Responses](#) [Village of Hillside Newsletters](#) [List of Village Happenings](#)



[Link to Content Calendar](#)

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Most library content is primarily focused on programs, and on the "what, when, where" but not the "why" and "how." What I like to see more of is messaging. Messaging is the standard, consistent language you use to describe your library to your audiences.

In libraries, there are four main types of messaging:

- Foundational Messages: Your library's story, history, mission, vision, who you serve, how you are funded and governed, etc. These rarely change.
- Service Messages: What services you offer, how many locations you have, how many staff you have, how you operate, etc. These are pretty evergreen, but may change episodically.
- Seasonal Messages: What programs you offer, what is coming up, new service offerings, etc. These are very ephemeral and change often.
- Impact Messages: How you make a difference for individuals and the community you serve. These are ongoing and can include human-centered stories as well as statistics and research.

When you use messaging to communicate with audiences through different communication channels, then it becomes content. Content refers to the words and visuals you use to communicate your message(s) to your audience(s).

Elements of Good Long-Form Content (Ex: Blog Post, Landing Page)

Typical Example of Long-Form Content

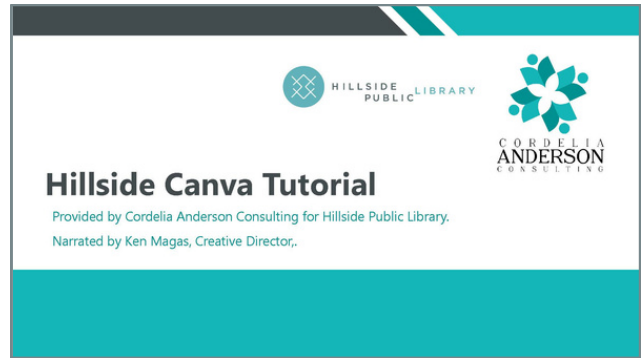
The library is hosting a Books & Arts Festival, featuring local authors and artists who bring stories to life. Drop in from 10am-4pm on Saturday, October 15 in the atrium at the Central Library.

The event will feature author and artist booths where you can learn more about these local creators. Books and artwork will be available for purchase and signing. At the Main Stage, we will have author and artist talks hosted by local radio personality Beatrice Small.

This festival is made possible by local donors and the Community Foundation. Thanks to these

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To support long-term consistency, we developed marketing standards and guidelines, recommendations for in-house merchandising of flyers and displays, and five customizable templates created in Canva and Library Aware. The work concluded with brand training and a video tutorial designed to help staff confidently adopt the new approach and sustain it over time.



Video tutorial thumbnail

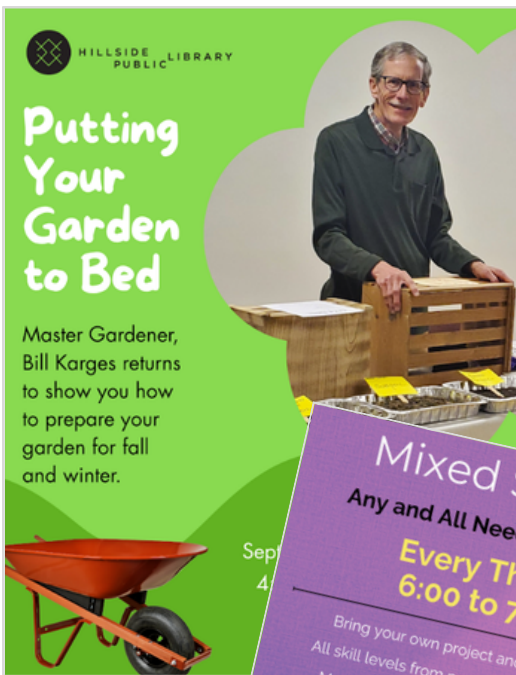
From Brand Audit to Brand Refresh: Before and After

The “before” column in the following examples demonstrates the lack of consistent branding across a variety of materials. Using the branding guide and templates result in the consistent branding of the “after” column.

Hillside event flyers before:



Hillside event flyers after:

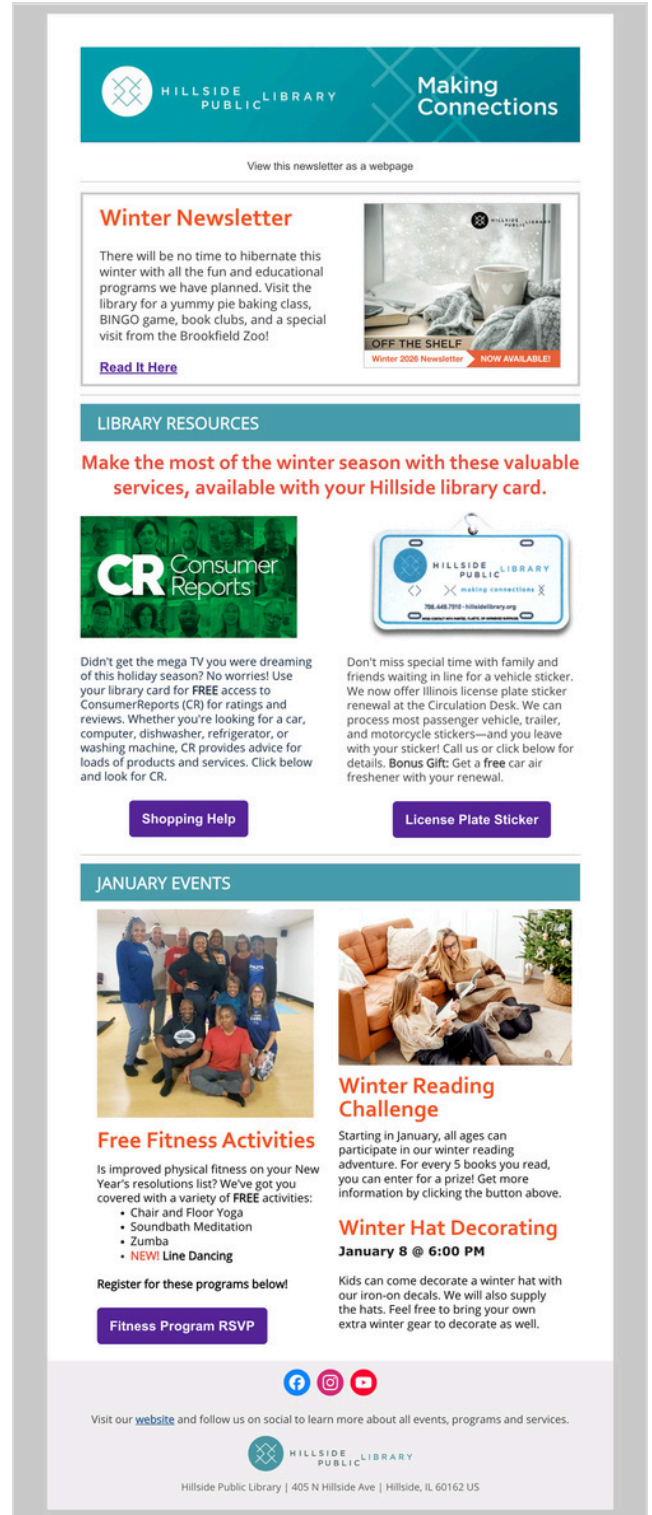
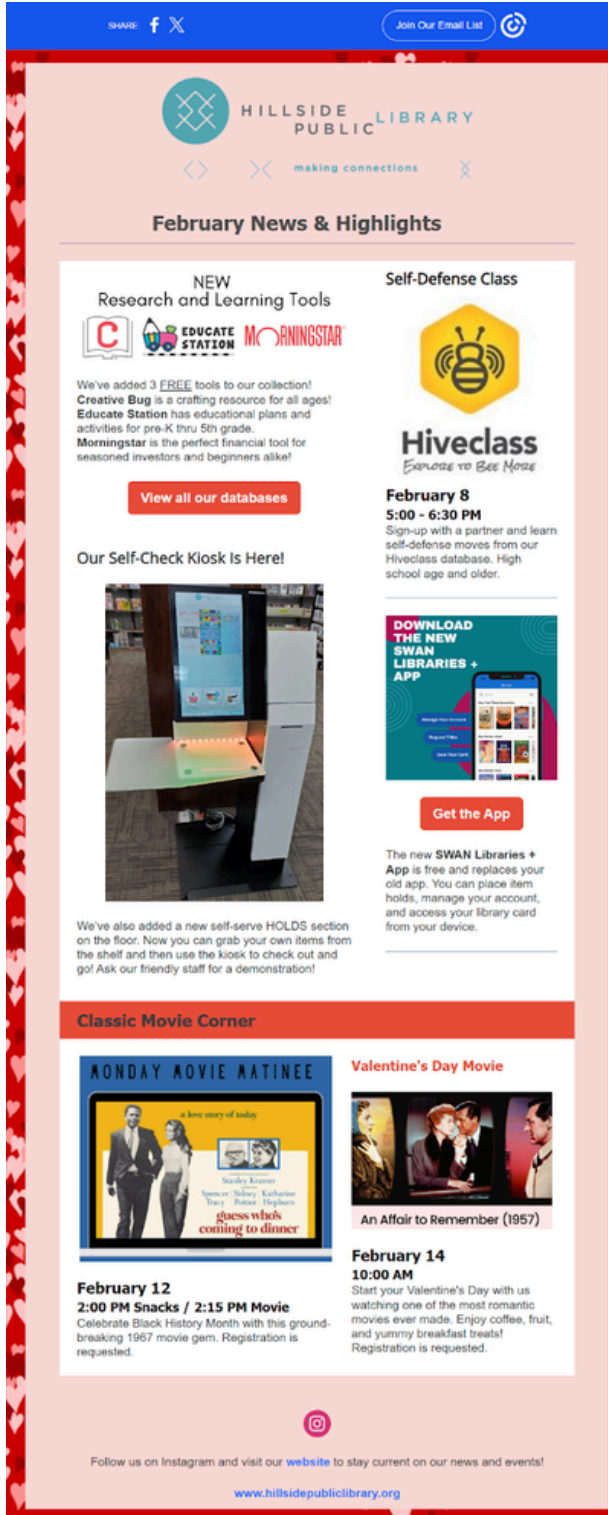


From Brand Audit to Brand Refresh: Before and After

Hillside e-newsletter before:



Hillside e-newsletter after:



Hillside Public Library | 405 N Hillside Ave, Hillside, IL 60162

Unsubscribe: af franco@hillsidepubliclibrary.org
Update Profile | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)
Sent by sroon@hillsidepubliclibrary.org powered by



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

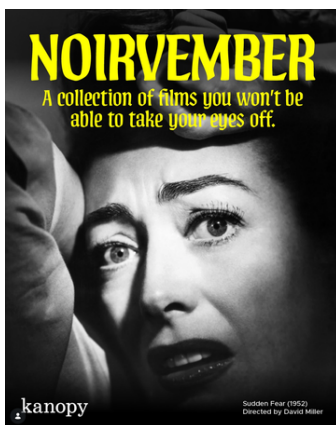


From Brand Audit to Brand Refresh: Before and After

Hillside social media graphics before:



Hillside social media graphics after:

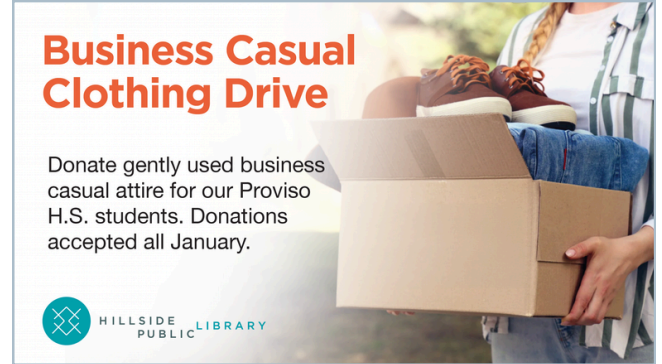


From Brand Audit to Brand Refresh: Before and After

Hillside website sliders before:



Hillside website sliders after:



From Brand Audit to Brand Refresh: Before and After

Hillside print newsletter before:



Hillside print newsletter after:

OFF THE SHELF Newsletter of the Hillside Public Library | Fall 2025

NEW SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

License Plate Sticker Renewal

We are now able to offer **Illinois license plate sticker renewal services!** You can now avoid the lines and travel time to the Department of Motor Vehicles by renewing your Illinois license plate sticker at the Circulation Desk for a \$9.50 convenience fee plus the State of Illinois fee.

We can renew most types of stickers for passenger vehicles, trailers, and motorcycles, including personalized, vanity, and specialty plates. Best of all, you leave with your sticker - no more waiting for it to arrive in the mail. For additional information, please call the library or scan the QR code.

HPL HONORED BY THE ILA

Earlier this summer, the Hillside Public Library was thrilled to be selected by the Illinois Library Association as the Institutional Member Spotlight. We were delighted with this recognition and are continuously grateful and proud to serve YOU and this entire community.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ THE COMPLETE ARTICLE

Exciting Changes at the Library!

We've made some big moves to serve you better. The Youth and Young Adult areas now feature more open space for reading, learning, and gathering. We'll soon be adding more comfortable furniture to these areas.

Whether you're here to explore new books, study with friends, or simply hang out, you'll find a more welcoming and flexible environment. Come check out the refreshed spaces and make the library your home away from home.

405 N. Hillside Avenue | Hillside, Illinois 60162 | 708.449.7510 | hillsidelibrary.org

Off The Shelf HILLSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Winter 2025-26 Newsletter

TECH SERVICES

To serve you better, we have updated our policy so you can now borrow a mobile hotspot for 2 full weeks!

Hotspots provide unlimited wireless internet access wherever there's a cell signal and are FREE for HPL cardholders in good standing—just in time for winter travel needs.

Do you have paperwork you need to fax to finish year-end tasks?

Come use the library's ScanEZ machine. You can email, fax, and scan for FREE. It also restores old photos!

BEYOND BOOKS

The library is much more than just books. We have a wide variety of items that can be checked out including:

- Blood Pressure Monitor
- Car Diagnostic Tester
- DVD/VCR Combo
- Instax Mini Camera
- Launch Pads
- Puzzles

LICENSE PLATE RENEWAL

We now offer Illinois license plate sticker renewal at the Circulation Desk!

Skip the DMV and renew here for a \$9.50 convenience fee plus the state fee. We can process most passenger vehicle, trailer, and motorcycle stickers—and you leave with your sticker!

Call us or scan the QR code for more details.

Bonus Gift: Receive a free car air freshener with your renewal!

405 N. Hillside Avenue | hillsidelibrary.org | 708.449.7510 | contact@hillsidelibrary.org

Client Feedback:

At CAC, we care deeply about implementation. That's why, three months after a project wraps up, we always schedule a check-in to see how things are going in the real world—not just on paper.

When we met with the team at Hillside Public Library, we were thrilled to hear that they had not only met their goals, but in many ways exceeded them. As Executive Director Amy Franco shared:



“Working with Cordelia and Ken gave us exactly what we needed. They helped us transform a brand document we were struggling to use into practical tools, templates, and guidance that staff could apply every day. The quality of the materials our team is now producing is remarkable, and our marketing feels more cohesive, engaging, and professional.

What has been especially meaningful is the impact on staff morale. Instead of feeling limited by brand standards, staff feel more confident and creative because they now have a clear roadmap. This work has improved both the quality and efficiency of our marketing, and we've already seen stronger public response to our updated materials. I would absolutely recommend them to other libraries.”

It was a privilege to work on this this project. From the first meetings to the final design files, we were guided by Hillside's team, their creativity, and a deep respect for the work that libraries do.

**Are you interested in exploring
a brand refresh for your library?
Contact us!**



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