



# FULTON STREET

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# M A L L

## *DESIGN GUIDELINES*

An Implementation Plan and Guidelines for Objective One,  
Policy Three of the Civic Center Area Plan

SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

*Adopted July 25, 1996*

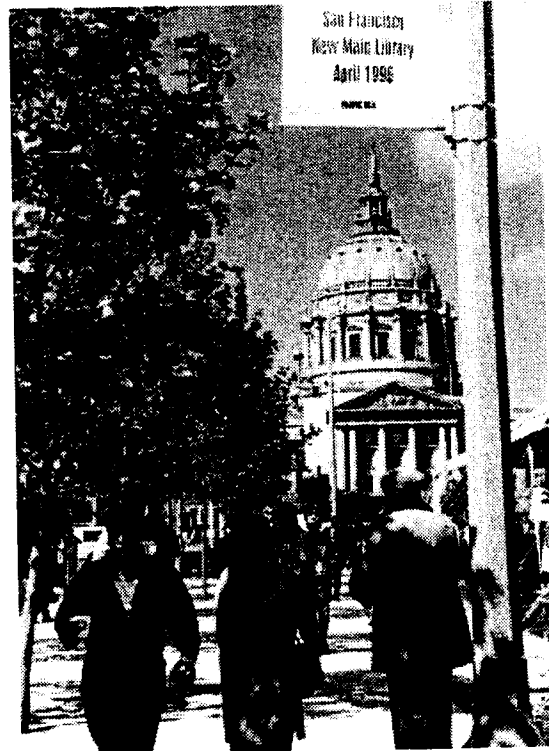
*City Planning Commission Resolution No. 14165*

Funding provided by the  
San Francisco County Transportation Authority

## INTRODUCTION

The proposed Fulton Street Mall Design Guidelines are an integral component in the revitalization of the Civic Center area. They have been developed by the Planning Department in response to, and in conjunction with, the numerous community and civic groups that have expressed interest in improving Fulton Street, as well as the entire Civic Center area. Complementing the opening of the new Library and the future Asian Art Museum, the design guidelines recognize the importance of Fulton Street in the Civic Center context and are an initial exploration of a more appropriate design for what is now a little-used vehicular street.

The new Library is the first of a number of new and renovated public buildings in the Civic Center area, the symbolic public center of San Francisco. Buildings under construction, renovation, or in planning include City Hall, the Civic Auditorium, the State Supreme Court and Office Building, the Asian Art Museum, the Tenderloin School, Brooks Hall, and the City Courts Building.



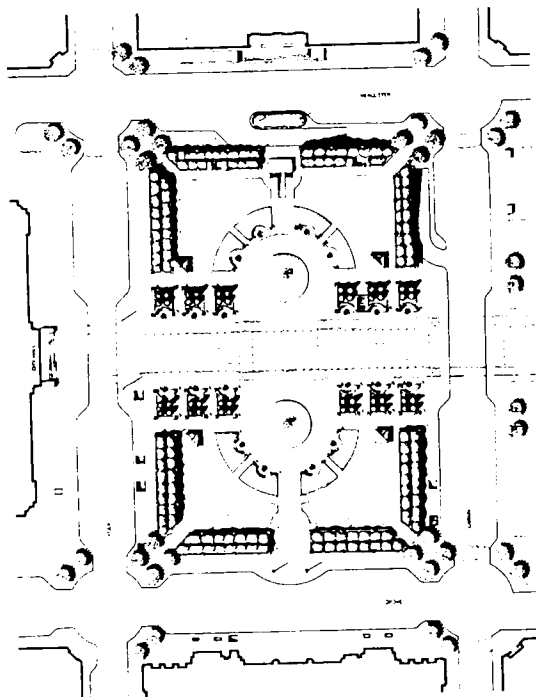
*Fulton Street Mall*

Additionally, the United Nations Plaza was refurbished for the UN50 celebration, a playground was recently added to the Civic Center Plaza, another playground is in the works, and the Recreation and Park Department has adopted restoration guidelines for the entire Plaza.

### The San Francisco General Plan

The General Plan for the City and County of San Francisco contains a number of objectives and policies that serve as the basis for this study:

- Objective 1, Policy 3: *Design Civic Center buildings and open spaces to serve as public gathering places for ceremonial, cultural, recreational, and other community activities.*
- Objective 1, Policy 4: *Provide a sense of identity and cohesiveness through unifying street and Plaza design treatments.*



*Proposed Restoration of Civic Center Plaza*

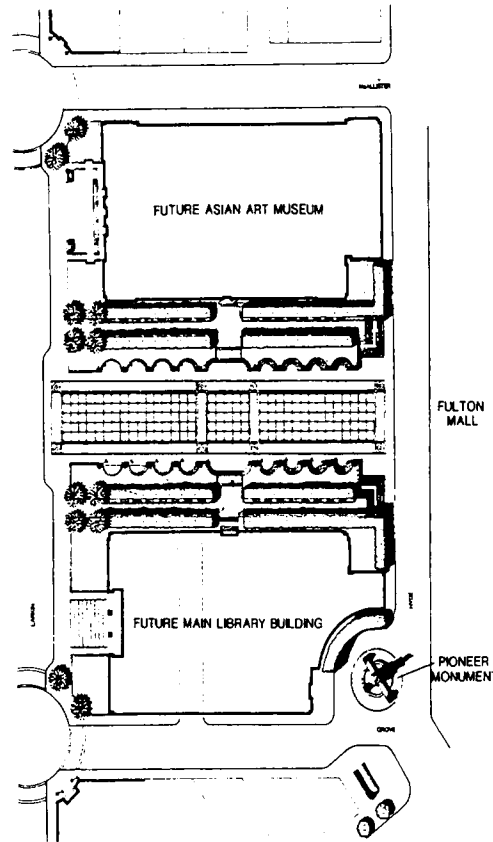
In addition to the objectives and policies in the General Plan, the new Civic Center Area Plan as it is currently proposed contains the following objectives and policies:

- Objective 2, Policy 1: *Protect and enhance view corridors to the Civic Center, especially to City Hall along Fulton Street both west and east of City Hall.*
- Objective 4, Policy 1: *Design Civic Center open spaces to serve as public gathering places for ceremonial, cultural, and other community activities.*
- Objective 4, Policy 7: *Extend the pedestrian Mall on the Fulton Street right-of-way between Larkin and Hyde Streets.*
- Objective 4, Policy 10: *Maximize sun exposure to public plazas and open spaces and protect these spaces from unpleasant winds.*
- Objective 5: *Locate public art, monuments, statues, fountains and sculpture in a way which contributes to the significance of the Civic Center complex, honors the composition of the Beaux Arts Plan, and enhances the definition of the space.*

**Related Planning Efforts**

Over the past ten years, numerous plans have been proposed for the Fulton Street Mall. These plans include the 1987 AIA report on the Civic Center, a 1991 plan prepared by the Planning Department for the CAO's office in conjunction with a 1991 bond measure, and the 1994 Civic Center Study published by the Planning Department.

Each of these Plans proposed alternatives centered on closing the street to vehicular traffic, reinforcing the Civic Center axial relationships, and promoting interaction between the Library and the Asian Art Museum. The Civic Center Study, in particular, emphasized the importance of creating a safe, dynamic and pleasant 24-hour "campus" in the Civic Center area and its environs.



*Civic Center Study Proposal for Fulton Street*

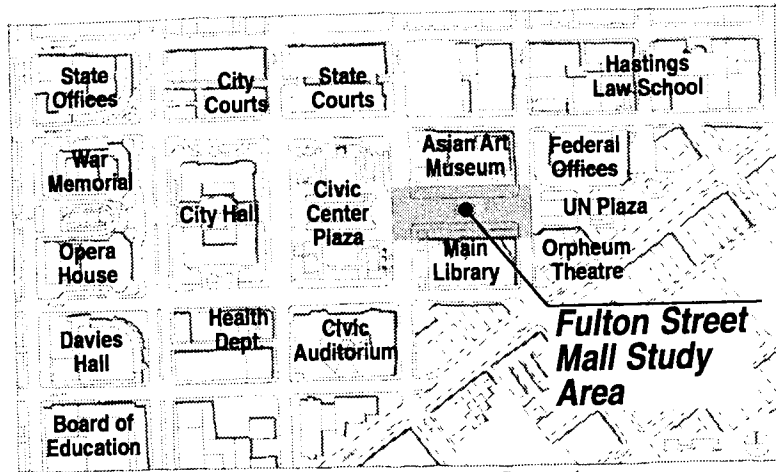
**Fulton Street Mall Design Guidelines**

The Fulton Street Mall Design Guidelines are the implementation framework for Objective 1, Policy 3 of the Civic Center Area Plan and Objective 4, Policy 7 of the proposed revision to the Civic Center Area Plan. The guidelines represent the fundamental urban design principles and ideas that respond to both the constraints of the site and the objectives and policies of the San Francisco General Plan.

Interviews with a wide range of stakeholders including user groups, institutional and city representatives, and design professionals, and a charrette held in November 1995 were integral components in the design development. These guidelines are a first step in the design process and should serve as the basis for all future detailed design efforts.

## SITE ISSUES

The Fulton Street Mall is located between Hyde and Larkin Streets in the Civic Center area, the ceremonial government center of the city. Within a few blocks of the site are numerous city, county, state and federal offices, judicial and educational facilities, and cultural institutions. The site is also adjacent to the Tenderloin, a dense, highly diverse, lower-income neighborhood.



*Fulton Street Mall in the Civic Center Area*

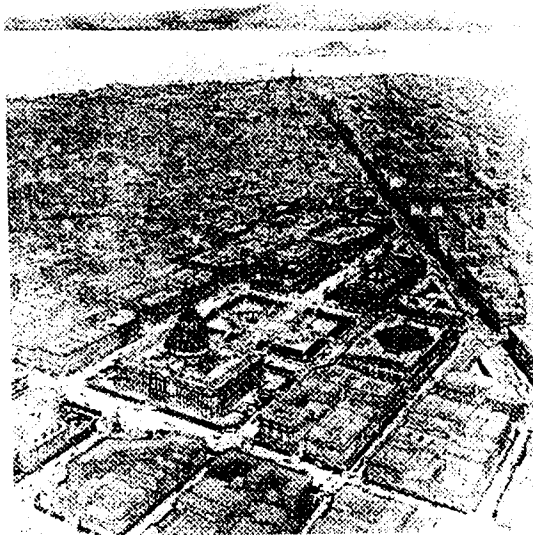
The Civic Center is a designated Historic District inspired by the "City Beautiful" movement of the late 19th century. It has been designated as both a National Historic Landmark District and a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Districts, as well as a recognized Historic District in Article Ten of the City Planning Code.

An exemplary City Beautiful Complex in the best of the American Academic Beaux Arts tradition, the Civic Center was designed at a time when San Francisco was the center of western America. The

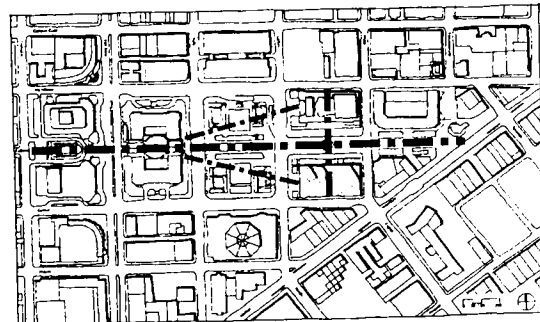
entire Civic Center complex expresses a belief that such inspiring surroundings should be democratically available to all.

The San Francisco Civic Center Historic District consists of a principal aggregation of monumental buildings around a central open space, with additional buildings extending the principal axis at either end. The historic Civic Center buildings are unified in the Beaux Arts classical design, and contain standard features such as overall form, facades, scale and proportion, architectural detailing, decorative and sculptural features, street furniture, granite curbing, and grille work. Additions and changes to this historic fabric (including the design for the Fulton Street Mall) must receive approval from the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.

Fulton Street is the formal axis within the Civic Center, centered on City Hall, a citywide focal point. The eastern approach from Market Street



*Historical Vision for the Civic Center Area*



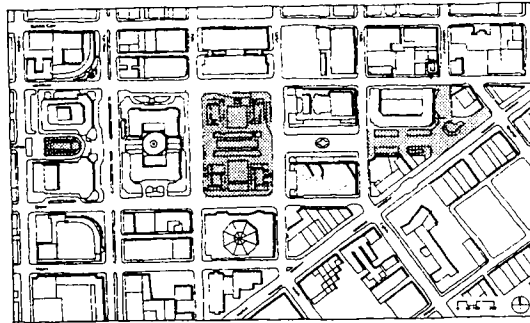
*Primary Civic Center Axes*

proceeds through the United Nations Plaza (used for the Farmer's Market), between the Library and the Asian Art Museum (the proposed mall), to Civic Center Plaza, and culminates in the City Hall rotunda. From the west, Fulton Street descends from Alamo Square with the War Memorial Court serving as a garden approach to City Hall.

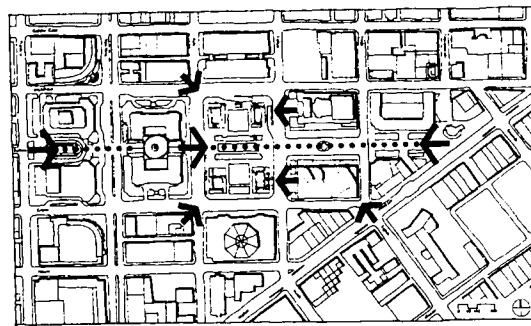
Open spaces in the area are formal as befitting their ceremonial and civic functions. These spaces are used by a wide variety of people including Civic Center workers, tourists, political demonstrators, and Tenderloin area residents for whom available open space is limited.

The area is well served by transit with Muni Metro/BART, the F-Line, SamTrans, Golden Gate Transit, Market Street buses, and a number of cross-town lines all within one block. It is expected that many patrons for both the Library and the Museum will arrive by bus, Muni Metro, or BART.

Both institutions will maintain entrances on Fulton Street. For the Library, this entrance serves children's groups and the Library for the Visually

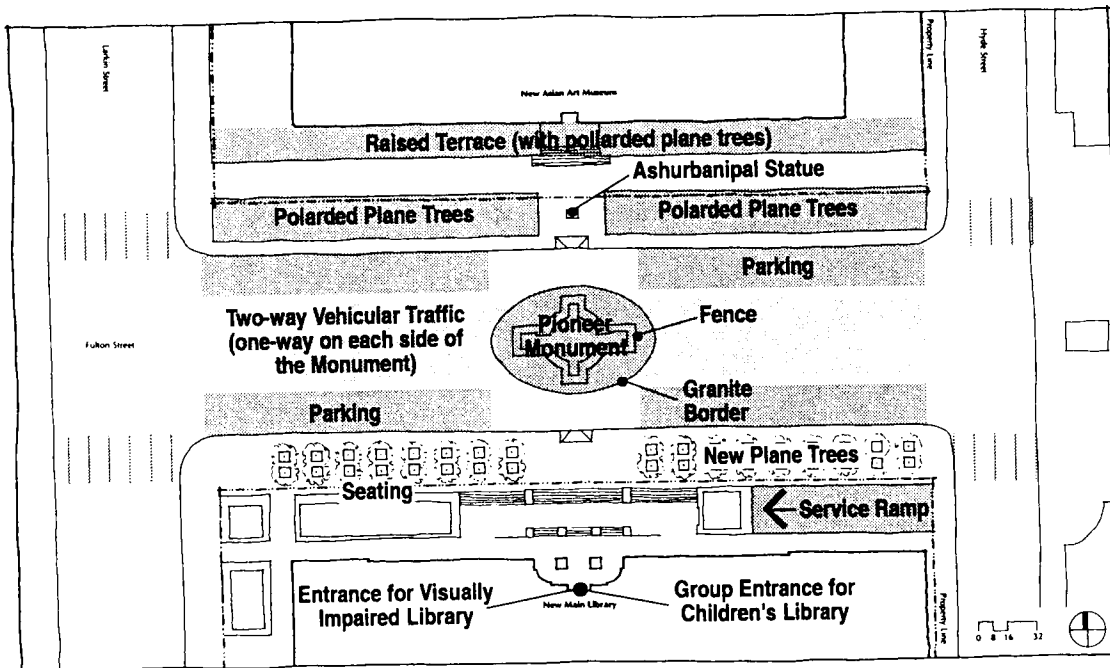


*Civic Center Area Open Spaces*



*Primary View Corridors*

Impaired. The Museum anticipates that its Fulton Street entrance will be especially important for evening activities which are expected occur up to six nights a week. To facilitate these functions, a limited auto drop-off area is desirable.



*Existing Conditions on Fulton Street*



*Pioneer Monument and Ashurbanipal Statue*

As part of the new Library construction, the southern edge of the block has been improved with new Sycamore trees and granite planting boxes with edge seating. Existing elements on the north side include pollarded plane trees, the Ashurbanipal statue, and an elevated terrace at the building wall.

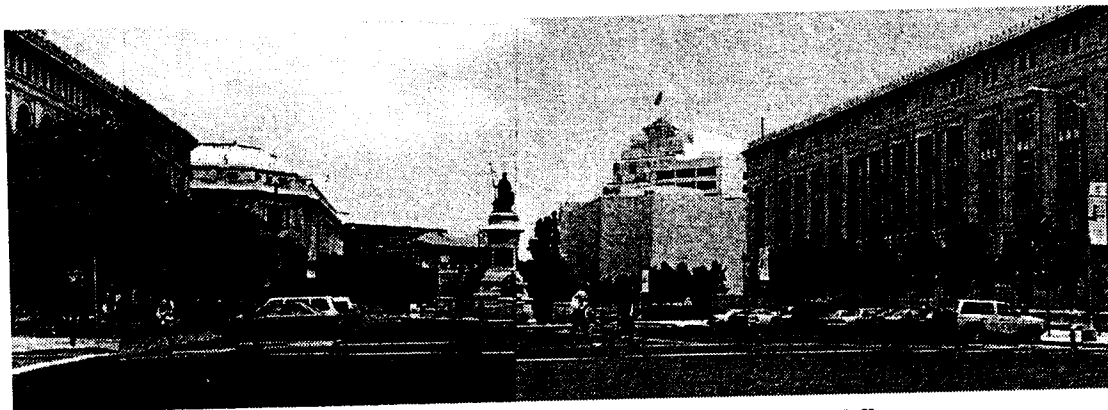
To accommodate the new Library, the Pioneer Monument was moved to the center of Fulton Street and installed with granite and iron fencing at its base. The street currently has two-way vehicular traffic (one way on either side of the monument) and perpendicular parking spaces.

Prior to the construction of the new Main Library, the parking on Fulton Street was utilized by the

merchants and customers of the Farmer's Market. The Environmental Impact Report for the new Main Library assumed that the street would be closed and there would very little through traffic need for it, particularly since to the east and west, Fulton Street is open space and closed to traffic. Parking for the Farmer's Market can be facilitated in the Civic Center garage and on adjacent streets, particularly if special parking restrictions are maintained to accommodate the loading and unloading of the commercial vehicles.

Adjacent to the new Library is a vehicle ramp that serves both the Library and Brooks Hall. Since loading for the Asian Art Museum would be difficult on Hyde Street, potential design alternatives should explore expanding this ramp to include the museum's service functions. Brooks Hall is presently closed since it needs substantial ADA improvements, and is undergoing consultant review for potential uses.

The micro-climate on the block is generally good with minimal wind problems and favorable sun conditions. The area adjacent to the Library is often shaded, but the Mall itself is only partially shaded during Winter months.



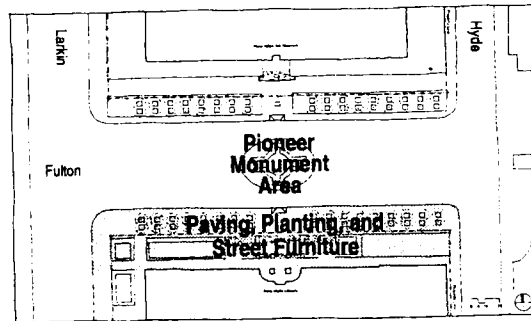
*Looking East Towards Market Street from Fulton Street Mall*

## DESIGN CONCEPTS

The design guidelines for the Fulton Street Mall are directed at reinforcing the Civic Center axis, while creating a pedestrian-oriented, arts-themed "courtyard" between two of the City's important cultural facilities.

The design guidelines are intentionally simple. The objective is to suggest a space that addresses use issues, but that does not overwhelm the symbolic, public assembly, and ceremonial functions of the Civic Center area. It should be a contemporary space that reflects the existing historic character of the area, but does not imitate it. Street furniture, lighting, and other elements should be coordinated within this context.

The design for the Fulton Street Mall should acknowledge that the Mall area is already a semi-developed space within a designated historic district, and should, therefore, recognize the existing materials palette. The Beaux Arts character of the area, the Pioneer Monument and the trees, planters, paving patterns, and street furniture installed with the new Library provide an important departure point for subsequent designs. New elements

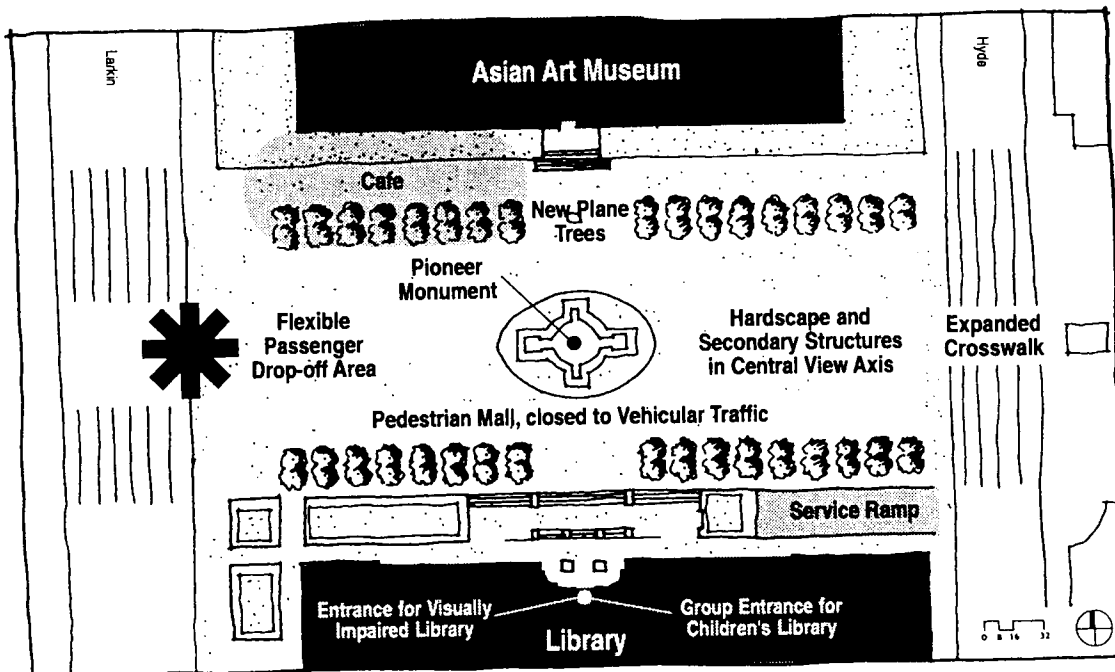


*Existing Design Elements to be Incorporated*

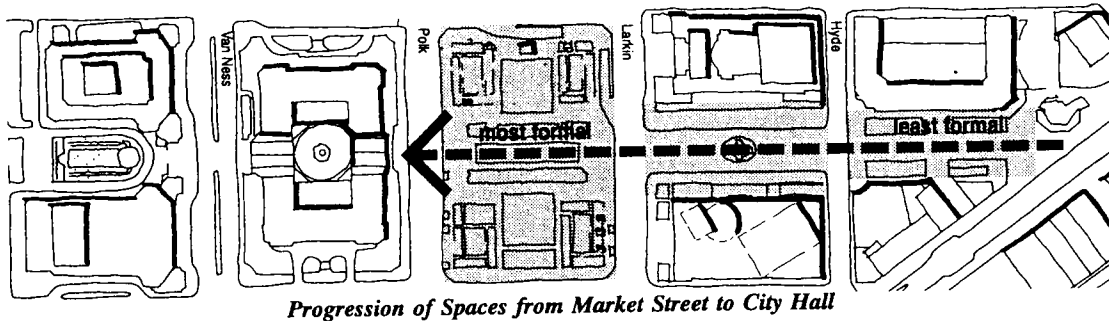
should complement and enhance these design "givens".

Similarly, the aesthetic relationship between the Beaux Arts old Library and the contemporary new Library should be considered in their subsequent forecourts, as is illustrated by the recently installed elements adjacent to the new Library. Considered thusly, the Fulton Street Mall represents both a progression from Market Street to City Hall and a progression from the old Library building to the new one. And, the Pioneer Monument is a focal point for both of these important axes.

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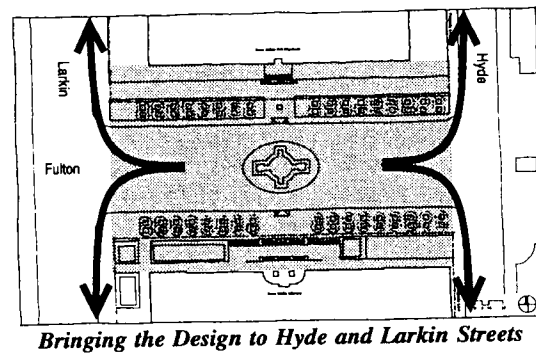
*Fulton Street Mall Design Concept Diagram*



To further enhance the Fulton Street axis and view corridor, new elements in the central area should be minimal and on axis and secondary to the existing Pioneer Monument. The spaces adjacent to the buildings should include a variety of softscape elements and be more intimate with Sycamore trees, plantings, and seating opportunities.

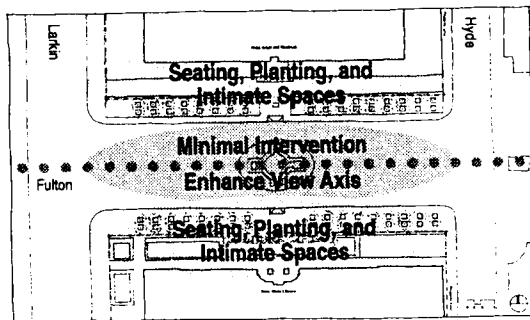
The Fulton Street Mall design concept recognizes important transportation and transit needs and suggests that these be used as design elements. A vehicular area at the west end of the Mall should be limited to automobile drop-off and pick-up, with particular attention to the needs of people with disabilities and evening functions. The design of the turnaround area might incorporate a unique paving pattern and a removable bollard system to distinguish it from the pedestrian areas and to facilitate varying degrees of vehicular access depending on use needs.

A tunnel to the east end of the Mall under Hyde Street from a renovated, Civic Center-themed BART/Muni station might facilitate more conve-



nient transit access to the Library, the Museum and the Civic Center area. Enhancing the Hyde Street crosswalk to UN Plaza and the BART/Muni station and incorporation of art and library exhibits in the station would reinforce this connection too.

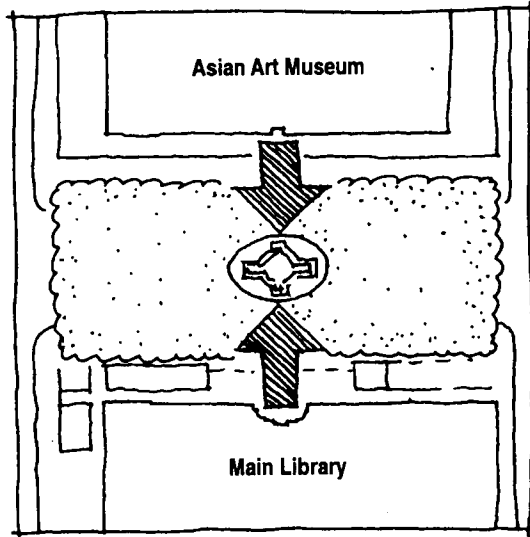
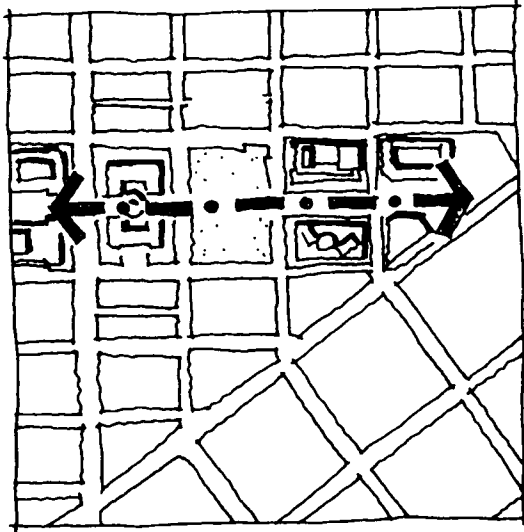
Given the connection between the Fulton Street Mall and the wider Civic Center context, the plan for the Mall should also include attention to the Hyde and Larkin Street approaches. These streets have the main entrances for the Library and the Asian Art Museum and serve as connections to the Tenderloin, Hastings Law School, Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, transit, and other important destinations and should be inviting to pedestrians.



The ultimate goal of these guidelines is to encourage a full-time pedestrian mall that will be a flexible, inviting, and safe space which accommodates a wide range of activities and users and complements the ceremonial and public assembly functions of the entire Civic Center area. This goal is elucidated in the following twenty-four design guidelines that are the framework for future designs.

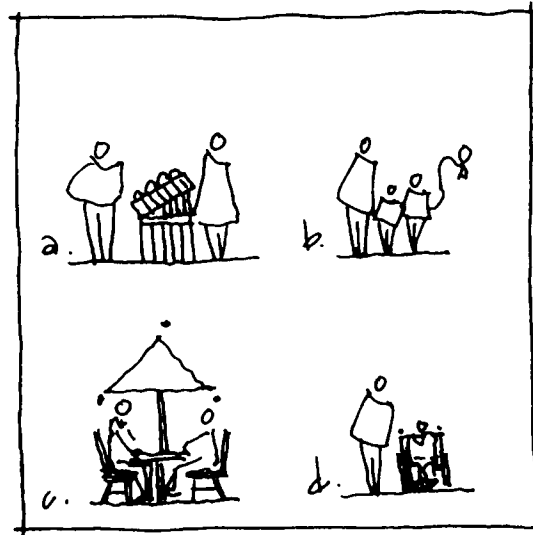


 **DESIGN GUIDELINES**



1. *Fulton Street is the most important axis in the Civic Center area, defining the connection from beyond City Hall to Market Street. The design of the Mall area should reinforce this axis; additional structures should be simple and secondary to the Pioneer Monument.*

2. *Design Fulton Mall as a courtyard between the Library and the Museum, one that recognizes the secondary axial relationship between these two important cultural institutions.*

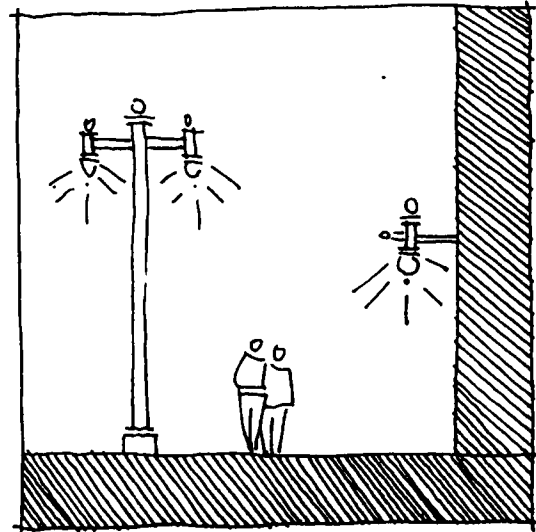


3. *Recognize the historic character of the Civic Center area. Develop the final design for the Fulton Street Mall in conjunction with plans for the Civic Center Plaza and the long-term planning for all of the public spaces in the Civic Center area.*

4. *Treat Fulton Mall as a flexible space to accommodate various activities and public assemblies, including a regular schedule of programmed public events. The design should also facilitate evening events.*



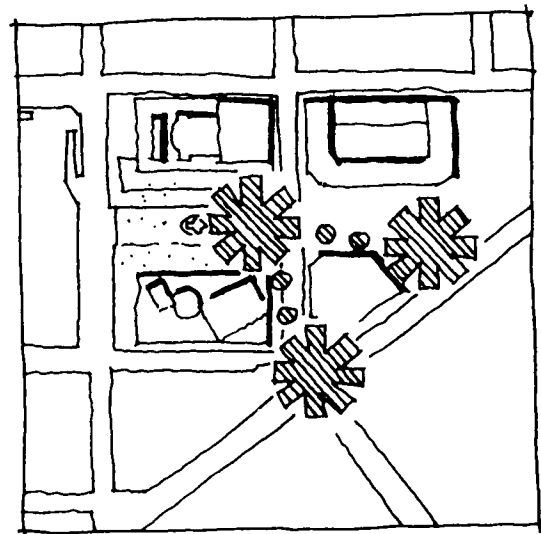
5. Design Fulton Mall to be mostly hardscape on the City Hall axis with softscape and multiple rows of trees elsewhere. New landscaping should be compatible with existing patterns, and should compliment (not dominate) the existing architectural character.



6. The design of the area should be mindful of security needs, especially lighting. Pedestrian-oriented lighting is a priority for the area, particularly in all nooks and less visible areas. Uplighting of trees and buildings is also encouraged.



7. Design spaces closer to the buildings as more intimate with a variety of seating opportunities and potential activities. Seating areas should be designed to maximize sun exposure and wind protection.



8. Design the street with a strong transit connection with access to the Civic Center Station in the Hyde Street area. The BART/Muni station could be activated as an Asian Art/Library station.

