



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: January 27, 2016

TO: **Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the Historic Preservation Commission**

FROM: Paul Chasan, Urban Designer, (415) 575-9065

REVIEWED BY: Tim Frye, Preservation Coordinator, (415) 575-6822

RE: Review and Comment for UN Plaza Living Innovation Zone Case No. 2014.0462CWP

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The Planning Department (Department) and the Project Sponsor (Sponsor) are requesting review and comment before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) regarding the proposal to develop and install a Living Innovation Zone (LIZ) titled 'Sonic Engagement' within the Civic Center Landmark District. The LIZ is a temporary installation that activates public space and enhances the public realm.

BACKGROUND

The subject site is a vacated portion of the public-right-of-way, known as United Nations Plaza, which runs between two buildings in Assessor's Block 0351 and was once part of Fulton Street. It is located within the Civic Center Landmark District and a P (Public) Zoning District.

United Nations Plaza was designed by master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. The Plaza established Fulton Street/Fulton Mall as a pedestrian-only space between Market and Hyde Streets. UN Plaza's distinct palette of landscape features links to and complements Market Street on one side, while its other side is linked to the Civic Center. Fulton Mall provides a significant view shed of City Hall. Landscape elements that date to the period of significance include granite curbs of varying width, and Market Street pedestrian lighting. The character-defining features identified in the Cultural Landscape inventory are included in this packet for reference. Character-defining features associated with the Halprin design are currently under study as part of the larger Civic Center Public Realm Plan and have not been identified.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves the installation of a temporary LIZ, which will be designed as a self-supporting structure that will not require footings and mounting hardware that might damage the existing Plaza infrastructure. According to the Project Sponsor 'Sonic Engagement', is informed by the Exploratorium's approach to informal and hands-on learning, the Studio for Public Spaces will create a path through the trees along UN Plaza punctuated by acoustic experiences.

Inspired by the UN Charter, the project will design and install acoustic phenomena to create a series of circumstances that encourage self-agency through curiosity, exploration and social engagement. These experiences will afford hands-on sound exhibits where visitors can create, mold and share their own sonic landscape. Like the first LIZ on Market Street, the architecture - including intimate, social and

performative spaces - will encourage social interactions while simultaneously facilitating more intimate explorations into the often unnoticed world of sound.

The acoustic mirrors illustrated in the conceptual drawings are similar to light mirrors, yet they reflect sound. The listening dishes on Market Street are a special kind of mirror shaped in a parabola to focus the sound into a point. For UN Plaza, the Sponsor will use mirrors that focus sound into a line that will facilitate a more social sound experience.

Also, the Sponsor hasn't settled on a single approach regarding color. In concept, the Sponsor prefers to leave most of the materials unpainted, and then punctuate the path with color to reinforce the rhythm of the space. The Sponsor believes that using mostly raw-finished materials will fit in well with the context so as not to be visually "too loud" in the space. Also, The Sponsor intends to use quality wood to warm up and humanize the space.

OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

The proposed project is being brought to the ARC for comment prior to review by the HPC of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for work located within the Civic Center Landmark District designated pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

STAFF ANALYSIS

At this early phase of the project, the Department has no specific recommendations for the proposed design, and along with the Project Sponsor, the advice of the ARC regarding compatibility of the proposed design with the District, Appendix J of Article 10 of the Planning Code, as well as its compatibility with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Secretary's Standards).

REQUESTED ACTION

Specifically, the Department seeks comments on:

- The compatibility of the project with Appendix J of Article 10 of the Planning Code and the Secretary's Standards.

ATTACHMENTS

Plans, elevations, and photographs

SONIC ENGAGEMENTS



UN CHARTER

"Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

EXPLORATORIUM MISSION

Our vision is a world where people think for themselves and can confidently ask questions, question answers, and understand the world around them.

The Exploratorium is a deeply humanistic place, rooted in the belief that all people, given the chance, are natural and joyful explorers, learners, and social creatures.

To that end, our public space installations combine to do more than show the sights or demonstrate known principals. They alter the way one looks at oneself, one's community, and the rest of the world.

WHEREAS RECOGNITION OF THE INHERENT DIGNITY AND OF THE EQUAL AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY IS THE FOUNDATION OF FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE IN THE WORLD,

WHEREAS DISREGARD AND CONTEMPT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE RESULTED IN BARBAROUS ACTS WHICH HAVE OUTRAGED THE CONSCIENCE OF MANKIND, AND THE ADVENT OF A WORLD IN WHICH HUMAN BEINGS SHALL ENJOY FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND BELIEF AND FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND WANT HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED AS THE HIGHEST ASPIRATION OF THE COMMON PEOPLE,

WHEREAS IT IS ESSENTIAL, IF MAN IS NOT TO BE COMPELLED TO HAVE RECOURSE, AS A LAST RESORT, TO REBELLION AGAINST TYRANNY AND OPPRESSION, THAT HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY THE RULE OF LAW,

WHEREAS IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN NATIONS,

WHEREAS THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS HAVE IN THE CHARTER REAFFIRMED THEIR FAITH IN FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, IN THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE HUMAN PERSON AND IN THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF MEN AND WOMEN AND HAVE DETERMINED TO PROMOTE SOCIAL PROGRESS AND BETTER STANDARDS OF LIFE IN LARGER FREEDOM,

WHEREAS MEMBER STATES HAVE PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO ACHIEVE, IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS, THE PROMOTION OF UNIVERSAL RESPECT FOR AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS,

WHEREAS A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THESE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE FOR THE FULL REALIZATION OF THIS PLEDGE,

NOW, THEREFORE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCLAIMS THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

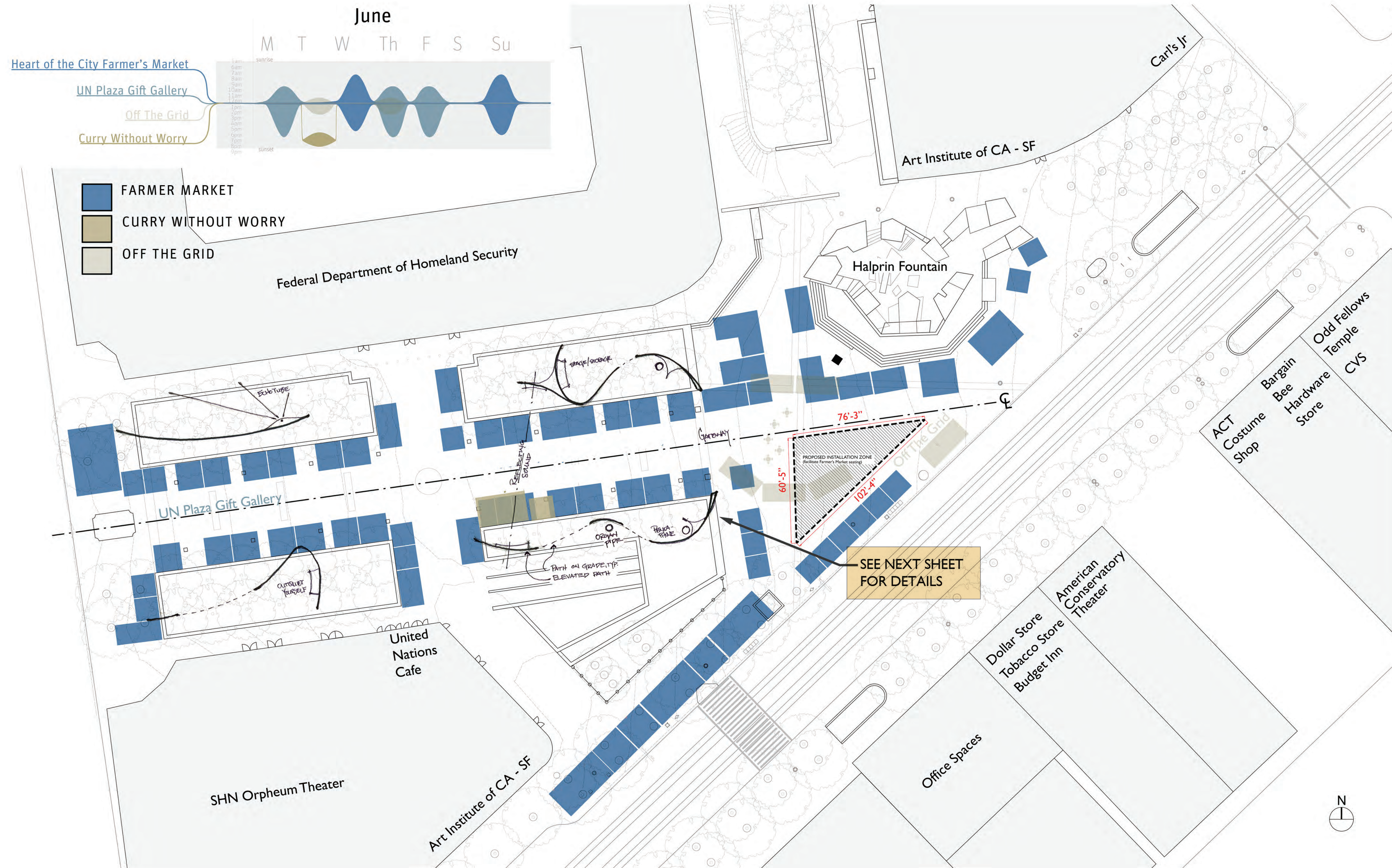
AS A COMMON STANDARD OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL PEOPLES AND ALL NATIONS, TO THE END THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL AND EVERY ORGAN OF SOCIETY, KEEPING THIS DECLARATION CONSTANTLY IN MIND, SHALL STRIVE BY TEACHING AND EDUCATION TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR THESE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AND BY PROGRESSIVE MEASURES, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL, TO SECURE THEIR UNIVERSAL AND EFFECTIVE RECOGNITION AND OBSERVANCE, BOTH AMONG THE PEOPLES OF MEMBER STATES THEMSELVES AND AMONG THE PEOPLES OF TERRITORIES UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION.



INSPIRATIONS

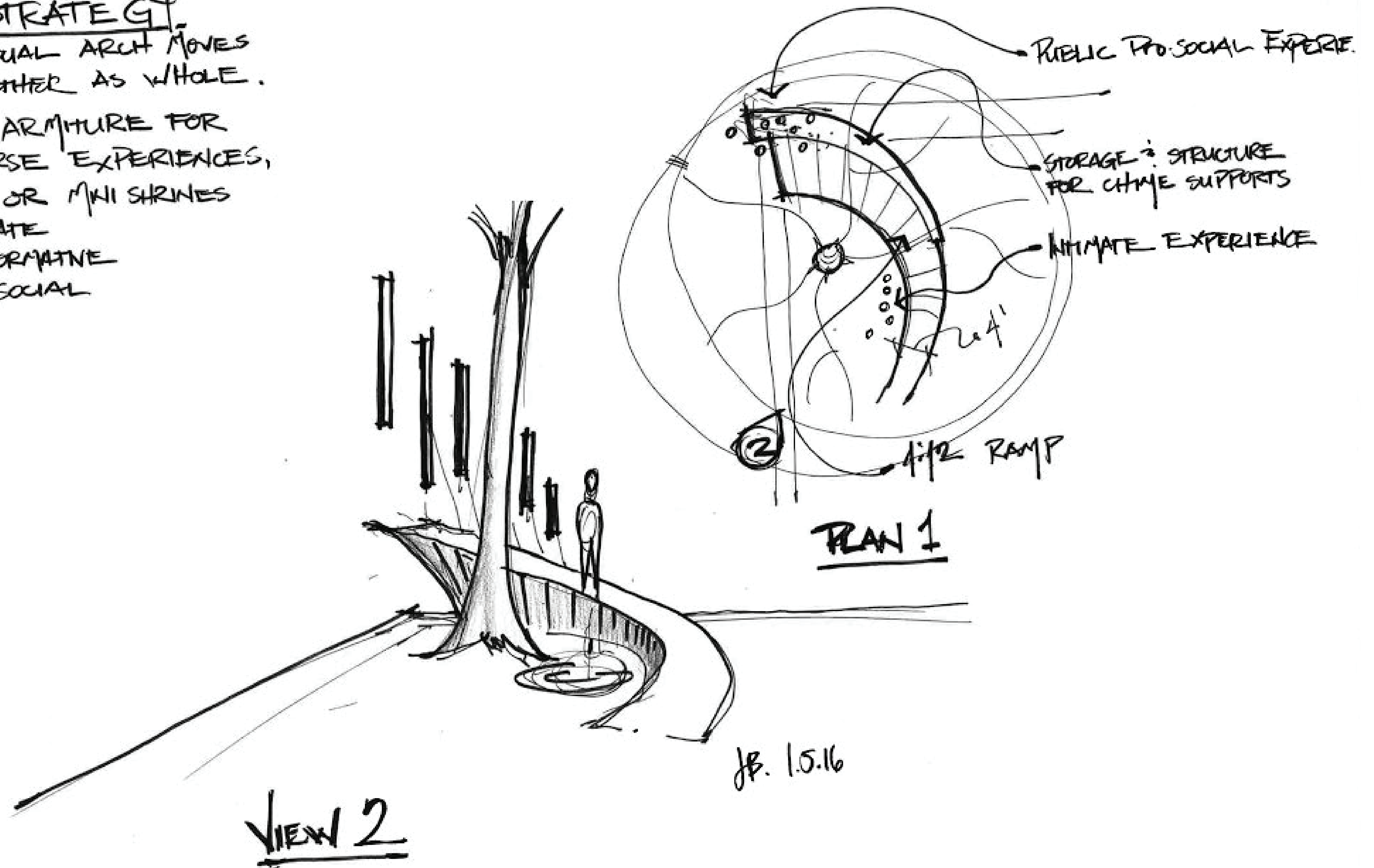
Providing a pathway through newly activated terrain, *Sonic Engagements* creates opportunities for visitors to creatively explore sound in a unique urban setting. Curving paths invite people into previously less inhabited, formal spaces framed by trees and granite curbs. Converting these spaces into places of learning and exploration, these installations are drawn from some of the Exploratorium's most successful sound exhibits.

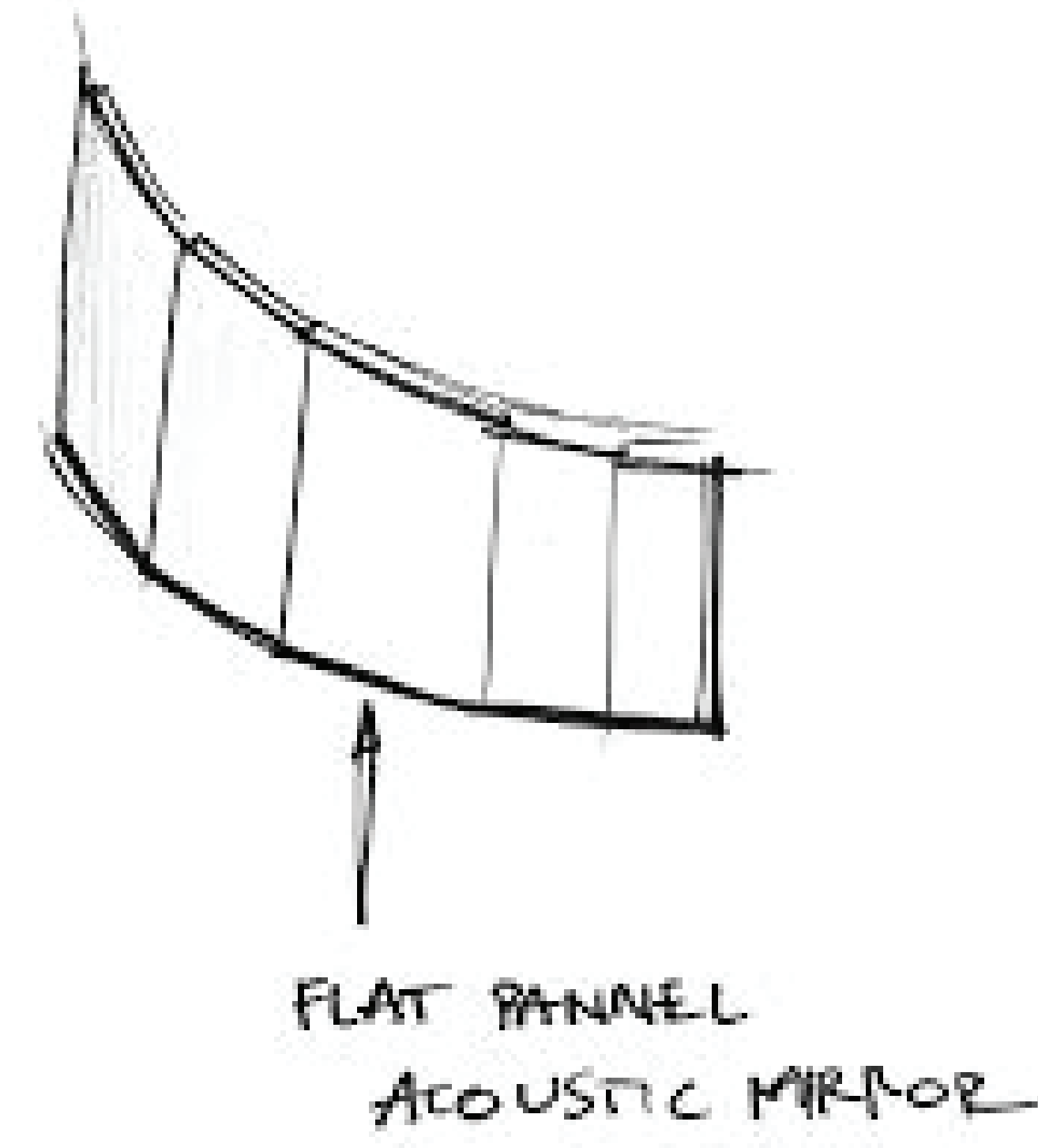
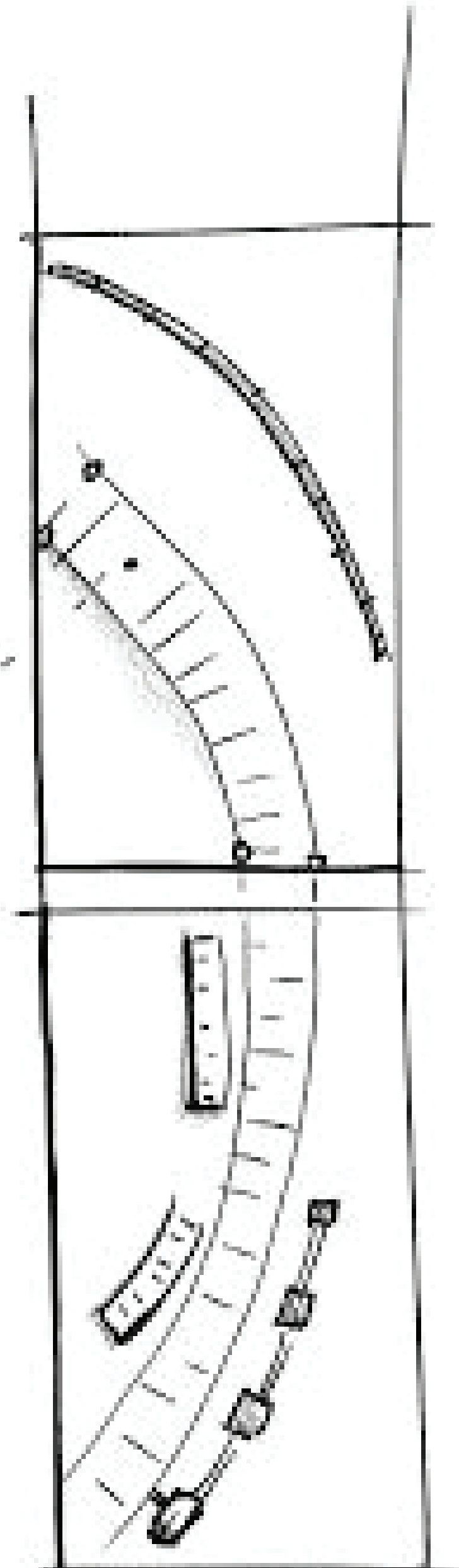
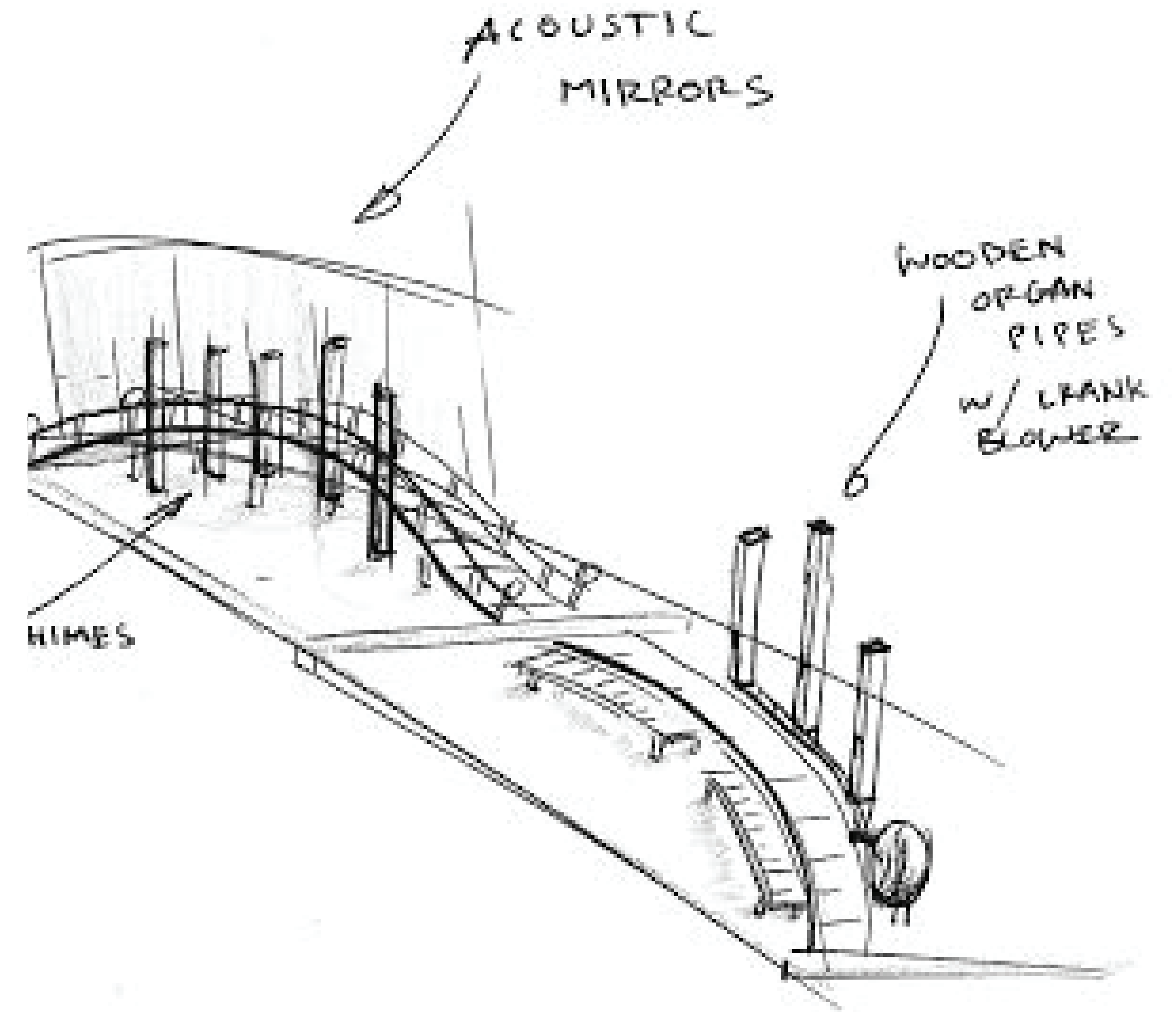
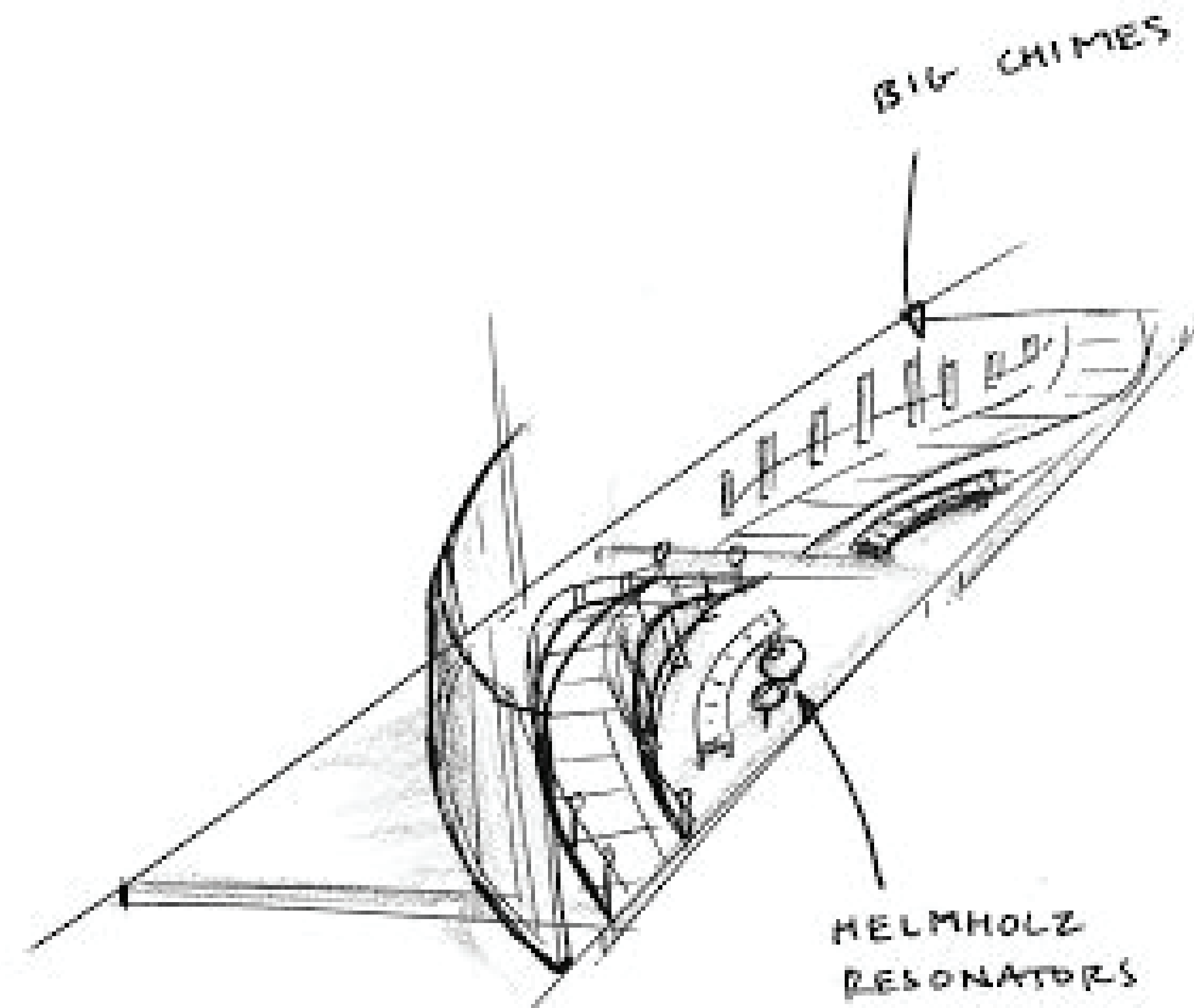
Utilizing these sonic engagements as a means of bridging social divides, our goal is to connect people through a combination of creative placemaking and place-based learning. Sound connects us and grounds us in our sense of place as we struggle to find human-scale experiences. *Sonic Engagements* seeks to humanize UN Plaza, making it a place of connection, communication, and exploration.

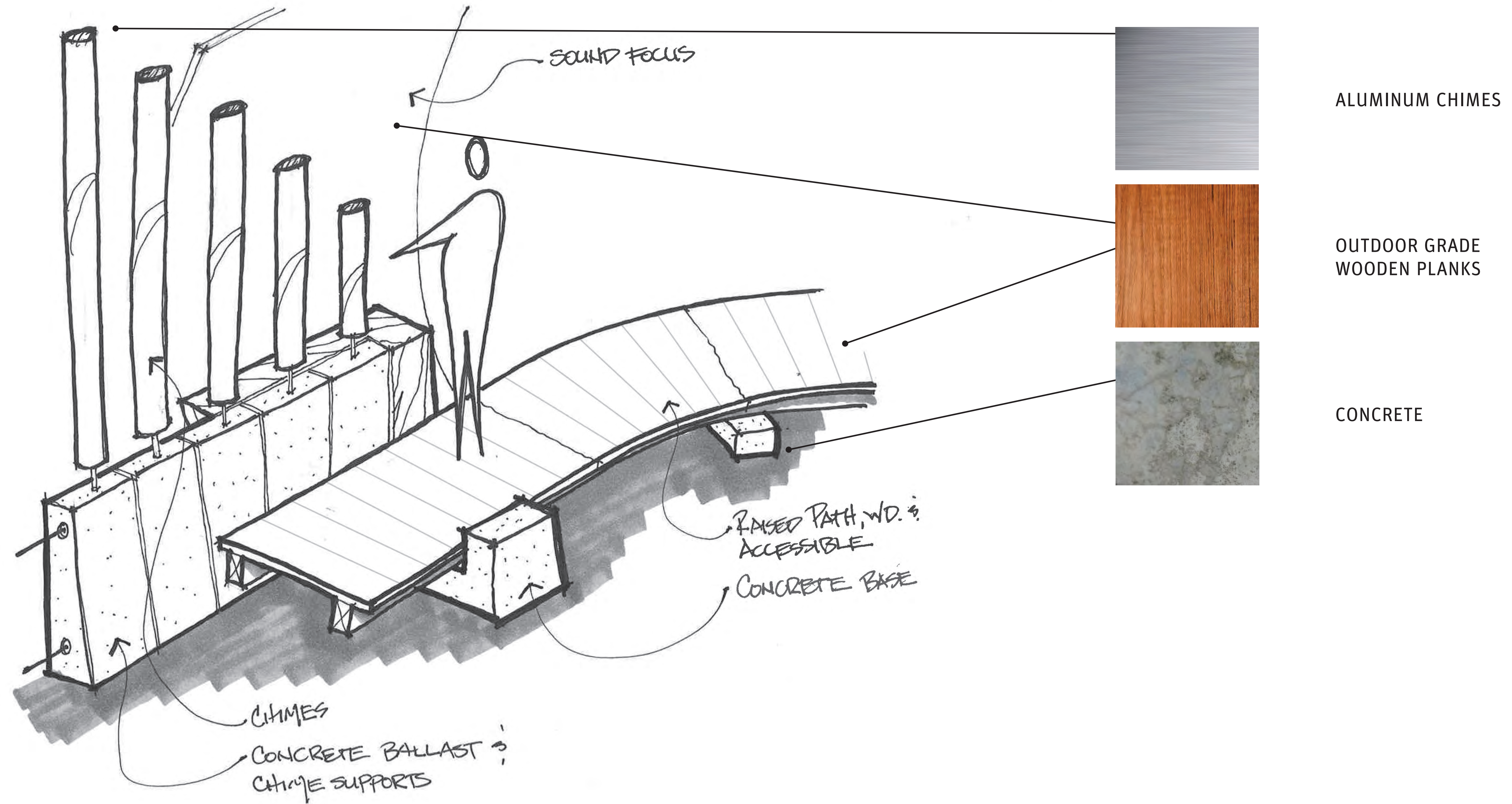


CONCEPTUAL STRATEGY

- SMALLER INDIVIDUAL ARCH MOVES THAT WORK TOGETHER AS WHOLE.
- CREATE ARCH. ARMATURE FOR MULTIPLE DIVERSE EXPERIENCES, I.E. "VIGNETTES" OR MINI SHRINES
 - SOME INTIMATE
 - SOME PERFORMATIVE
 - SOME PRO-SOCIAL

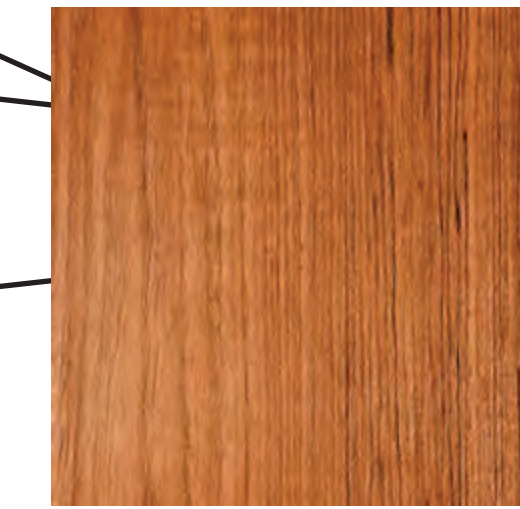




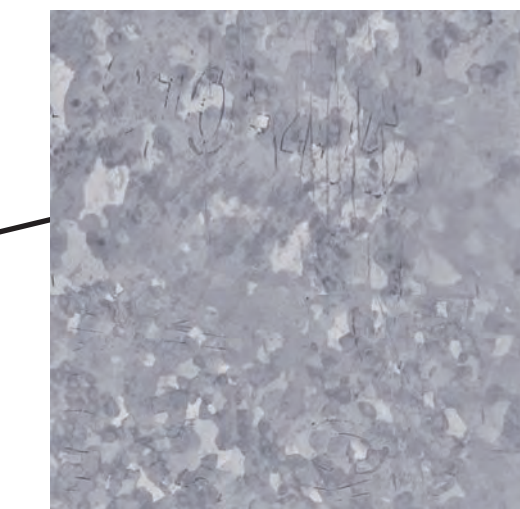




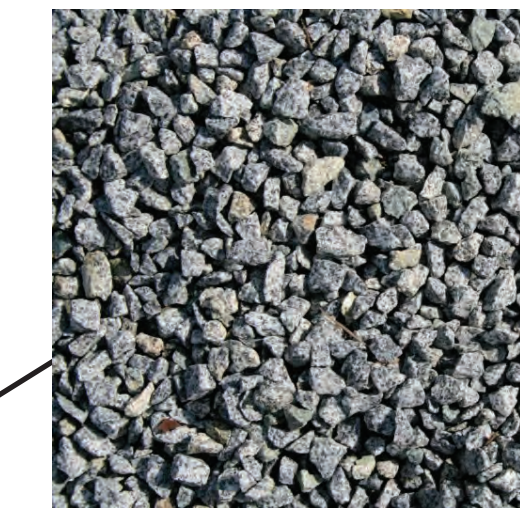
ALUMINUM CHIMES



MARINE GRADE PLYWOOD



GALVANIZED STEEL



GRAVEL



ECHO TUBE

The echo tube transforms normal speech and clapping into surprising multi-layered sound experiences. Offering an ideal excuse to talk to one another, Echo Tube is a long-time Exploratorium favorite.



Mammoth Chimes

Deeply resonant and soothing, these large aluminum chimes were designed to bathe visitors in sound as they play these unusually large musical devices.



Out Quiet Yourself

Visitors are challenged to cross a gravel path while making as little sound as possible. Piezoelectric microphones pick up the slightest sound as people carefully test their ability to pass over terrain quietly. A single or multi-use experience, Out Quiet Yourself creates a bit of social theater, an opportunity to play, and an excuse to test your very best sneaking abilities in a very public setting.



Organ Pipes

In a respectful nod to the massive organ stored just below people's feet in UN Plaza, this exhibit recreates the rich, resonant tones of the organ pipes of yore.

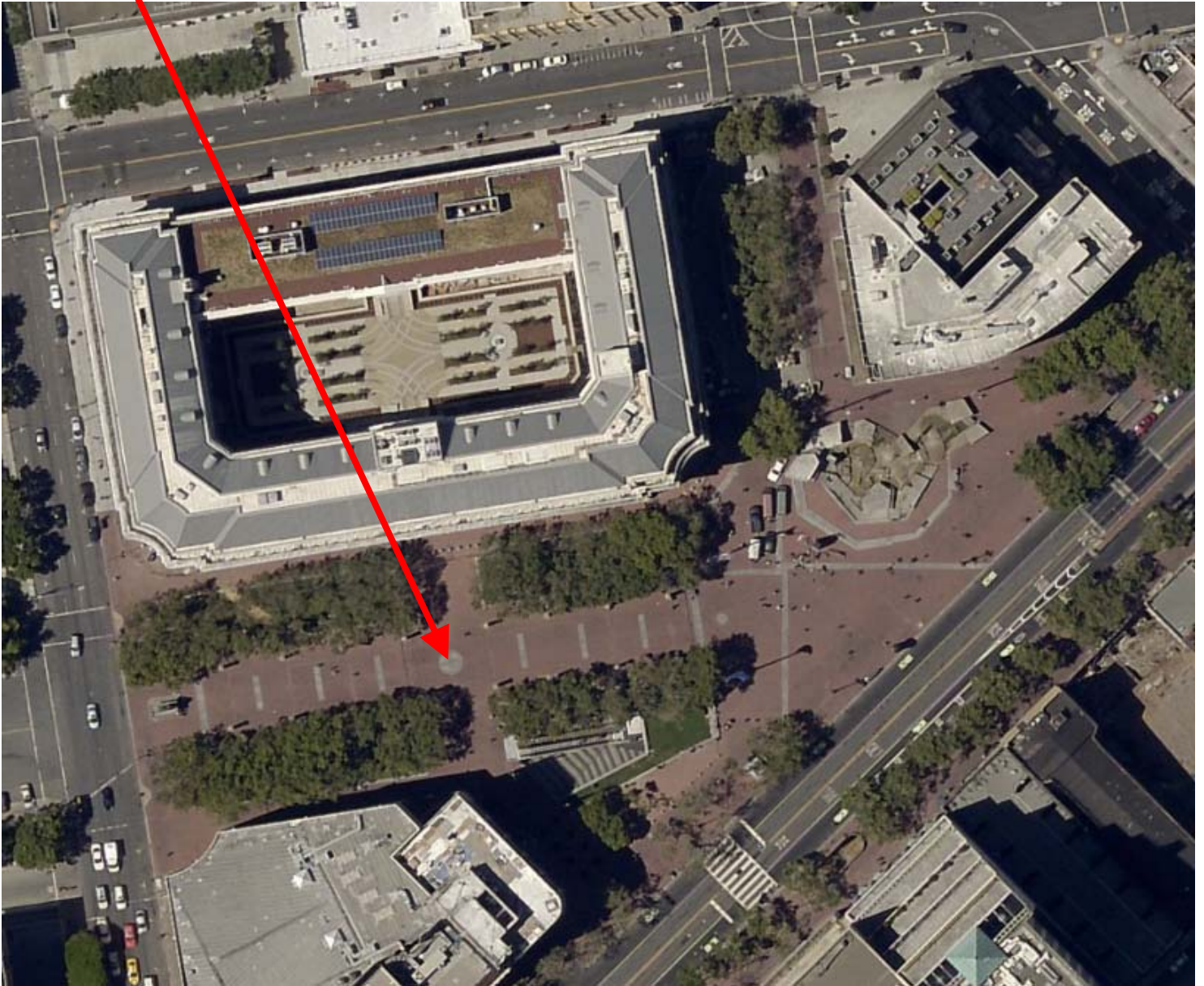


Pentaphone

The beautiful thing about the pentaphone is that it's impossible to play an off note. Tuned to the pentatonic scale, visitors collaboratively create multi-layered percussive improvisations.

Aerial Photo

SUBJECT PROPERTY

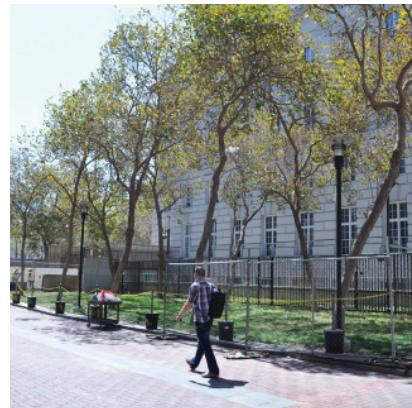


Site Photos



UN Plaza looking west.

Architectural Review Committee
Historic Preservation Commission
Informational Hearing
UN Plaza Living Innovation Zone



Plantanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees in turf planting area along Leavenworth St



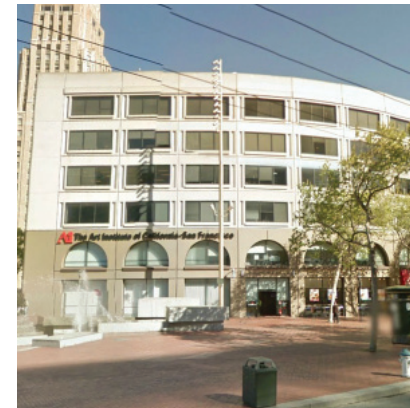
Granite bollards with chain along McAllister St east of Federal Building



Market St three arm street light with globe pendants



Square granite column lights with frosted globes along Fulton Mall



Commercial building at 10 United Nations Plaza*



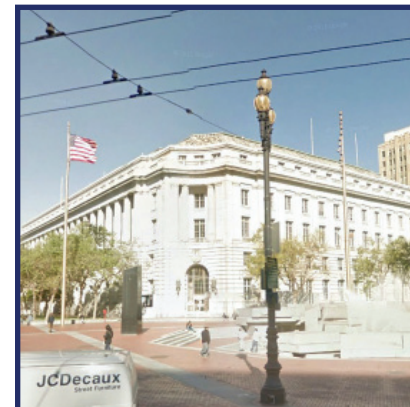
Double row of Platanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees in elevated planting area along Fulton Mall



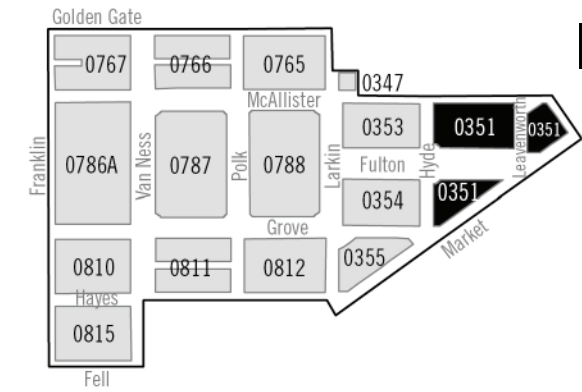
Decorative metal covers over tree wells near BART entrance at UN Plaza



Simon Bolivar bronze statue along Fulton Mall at Hyde St



Federal Building*



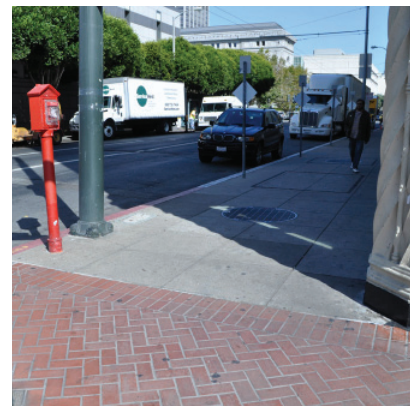
The three city blocks that comprise block #0351 form an open space known as the UN Plaza, designed by master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. The Plaza established Fulton Street/Fulton Mall as a pedestrian-only space between Market and Hyde Streets. UN Plaza's distinct palette of landscape features links to and complements Market Street on one side, while its other side is linked to the Civic Center. Fulton Mall provides a significant view shed of City Hall.

Landscape elements that date to the period of significance include granite curbs of varying width, and Market Street pedestrian lighting.

The UN Plaza will require a future study to fully understand how it contributes to the significance of the larger Civic Center district. More information about UN Plaza is in the Evaluation section.



Plantanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees in circular tree grates along Hyde St



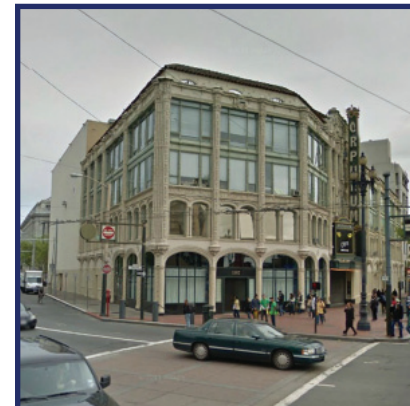
Limit of Market St brick paving at Grove St



Gold spotlights at UN Plaza fountain



Fire box at UN Plaza and base of gold flag pole



Orpheum Theater at Hyde and Grove Streets*



Double row of Plantanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees along Market St



Circular tree well with radial metal tree grate along Market St



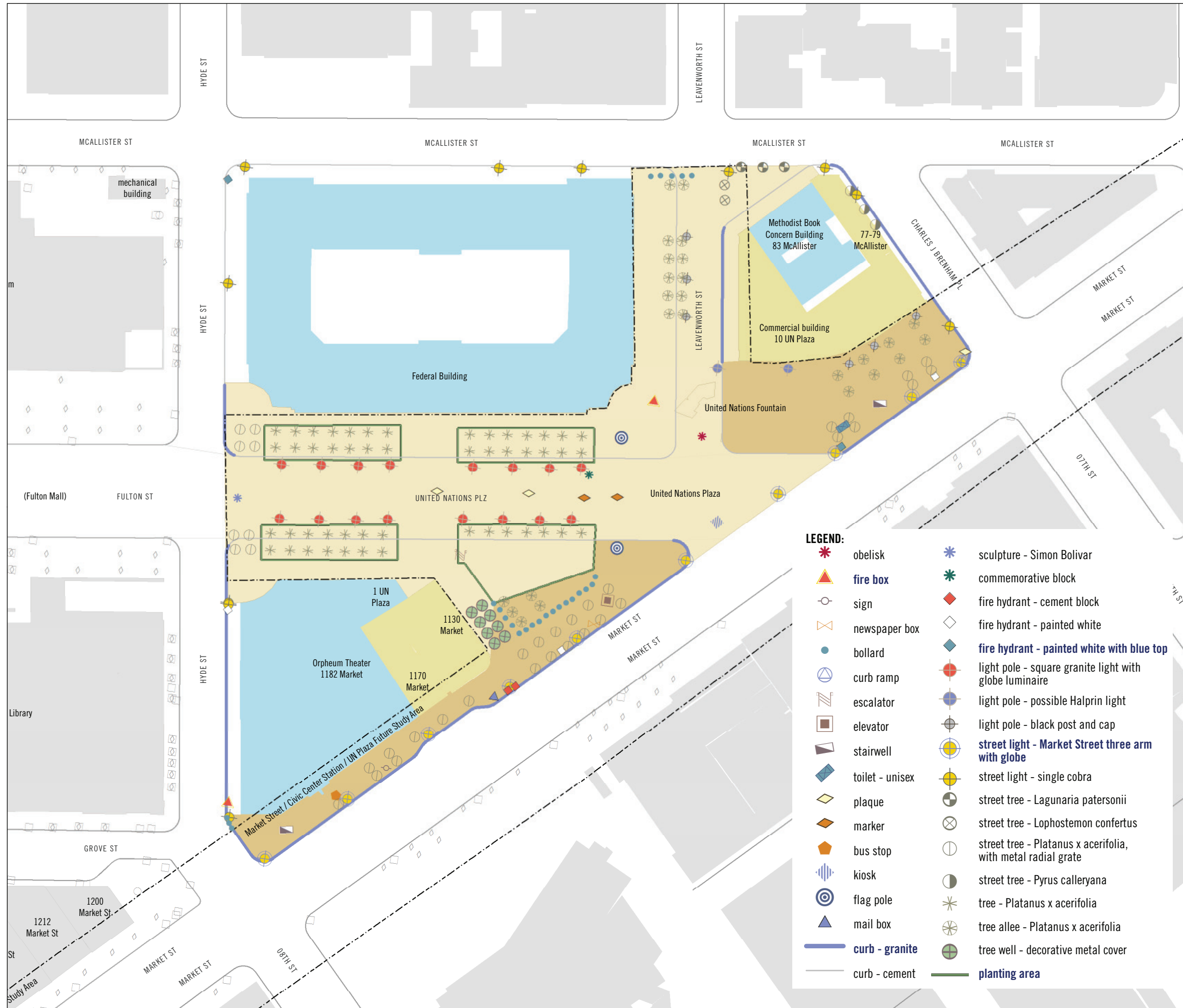
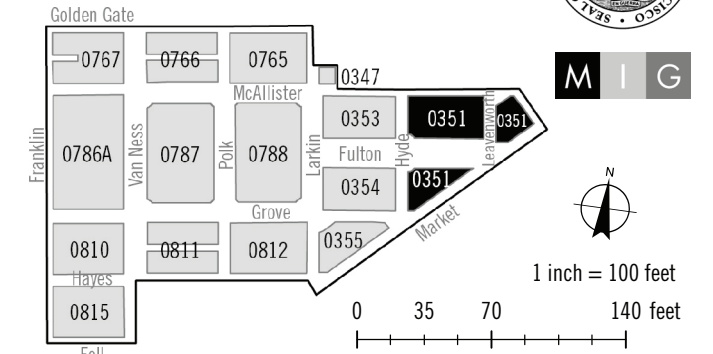
UN Seal embedded in brick at UN Plaza



United Nations Plaza Fountain

Cultural Landscape Report

BLOCK #0351



- LEGEND:**
- obelisk
 - fire box
 - sign
 - newspaper box
 - bollard
 - curb ramp
 - escalator
 - elevator
 - stairwell
 - toilet - unisex
 - plaque
 - marker
 - bus stop
 - kiosk
 - flag pole
 - mail box
 - curb - granite
 - curb - cement
 - sculpture - Simon Bolivar
 - commemorative block
 - fire hydrant - cement block
 - fire hydrant - painted white
 - fire hydrant - painted white with blue top
 - light pole - square granite light with globe luminaire
 - light pole - possible Halprin light
 - light pole - black post and cap
 - street light - Market Street three arm with globe
 - street light - single cobra
 - street tree - Lagunaria patersonii
 - street tree - Lophostemon confertus
 - street tree - Platanus x acerifolia, with metal radial grate
 - street tree - Pyrus calleryana
 - tree - Platanus x acerifolia
 - tree allee - Platanus x acerifolia
 - tree well - decorative metal cover
 - planting area

SOURCES:

1. MIG field work, September 10-14, 2012
2. Hand drawn inventory field maps, September 2012
3. Bing aerial imagery online for ArcGIS, 2012
4. San Francisco Utility Commission light pole data, 2012
5. San Francisco publicly available GIS city lot, block and curb data, 2012

DRAWN BY:

MIG: Rachel Edmonds, Steve Leathers and Heather Buczek using Arc GIS 10.

DRAWN DATE:

March 2013, updated July 2014

LEGEND FOR SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

- vegetation
- small scale feature
- circulation
- circulation - curb
- building or structure

LEGEND BLOCK N, O, P (cont.):

- Market Street / Civic Center Station / UN Plaza Future Study Area
- contributing building or structure
- United Nations Plaza
- non-contributing building or structure
- sidewalk - brick with herringbone pattern

BLOCK #0351 - UNITED NATIONS PLAZA									
CHARACTERISTIC	QTY.	FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS/LOCATION	DATE BUILT	PRIMARY SOURCE	JURISDICTION	CHARACTER	DEFINING
buildings & structures	1	Commercial building	Commercial building	10 United Nations Plaza	1982	1994 SFLD	private	NC	
buildings & structures	1	Commercial building	Commercial building	1 United Nations Plaza	1927	1994 SFLD	private	C	
buildings & structures	2	Commercial buildings	Commercial buildings	1130-1170 Market	1983	1994 SFLD	private	NC	
buildings & structures	1	Commercial building	Commercial building	79 McAllister	1906	1994 SFLD	private	NC	
buildings & structures	1	Residential building	Methodist Book Concern Building	83 McAllister	1907	1994 SFLD	private	C	
buildings & structures	1	Federal Building	Federal Building	50 United Nations Plaza	1936	1978 NR, 1987 NHL, 1994 SFLD	US Govt	C	
buildings & structures	1	Orpheum Theater	Orpheum Theater	1182 Market Street	1925	1978 NR, 1994 SFLD	private	C	
circulation	4	curb	12" granite curb	Block #0351 on Charles J. Brenham Place, Hyde, Market	-	site visit	DPW	C	
circulation	8	curb	6" cement curb	Block #0351 on Hyde, Leavenworth, McAllister, UN Plaza	-	site visit	DPW	-	
circulation	4	curb	6" granite curb	Block #0351 on Hyde, Leavenworth	-	site visit	DPW	C	
circulation	1	curb ramp	curb ramp - brick	Block #0351 on Market	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
circulation	1	elevator	elevator into the BART substation	United Nations Plaza	1973-1975	site visit	BART	U**	
circulation	1	escalator	escalator - down into to BART subway station	United Nations Plaza	1973-1975	site visit	BART	U**	
circulation	1	sidewalk	sidewalk - brick sidewalks with a herringbone pattern	Block #0355 on Market	1973c	site visit	DPW	U**	
circulation	2	stairs	stairwell - down into to BART subway station	Block #0351 on Market, United Nations Plaza	1973-1975	site visit	BART	U**	
small scale feature	25	bollard	bollard - cement linked with chain	Block #0351 on Hyde, McAllister, United Nations Plaza	1976c	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	1	bus stop	bus stop - covered with bench	Block #0351 on Market	2010	site visit	MUNI	-	
small scale feature	1	commemorative block	commemorative block - stone with UN emblem and text	United Nations Plaza	1995	site visit	DPW	-	
small scale feature	2	fire box	fire box - red metal on single post	Block #0351 on Hyde, United Nations Plaza	1899c	site visit	SFDT	C*	
small scale feature	2	fire hydrant	fire hydrant - cement block with two spouts	Block #0351 on Market	1970c	site visit	SFFD	U**	
small scale feature	3	fire hydrant	fire hydrant - painted white	Block #0351 on Hyde, Market	-	site visit	SFFD	-	
small scale feature	2	fire hydrant	fire hydrant - painted white with blue top; one embossed 1909	Block #0351 on Hyde, Market	1909	site visit	BEWS	C*	
small scale feature	2	flag pole	flag pole - metal base in radial pattern	United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	1	fountain	fountain - located in plaza, large stones	United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	1	kiosk	kiosk - advertisements	Block #0351 on Market	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	1	mail box	mail box - two army green embossed U.S. Mail	Block #0351 on Market	-	site visit	USPS	-	
small scale feature	1	marker	marker - lettering noting the latitude coordinates	United Nations Plaza	1995	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	marker	marker - stone with text	United Nations Plaza	1995	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	newspaper box	newspaper box	Block #0351 on Market	2006	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	obelisk	obelisk - black stone with the UN emblem	United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	1	plaque	plaque - in walkway "C.J. Brenham Pl."	Block #0351 on Charles J. Brenham Place	-	site visit	DPW	-	
small scale feature	1	plaque	plaque - inlaid in pathway	United Nations Plaza	-	site visit	DPW	-	
small scale feature	1	plaque	plaque - United Nations emblem	United Nations Plaza	1995	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	sculpture	sculpture - bronze Simon Bolivar	United Nations Plaza	1984	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	sign	sign - advertisements	Block #0351 on Market	-	site visit	DPW	-	
small scale feature	1	toilet	toilet - green painted metal with gold detail - unisex	United Nations Plaza	1995	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	36	tree well	tree well - metal grate with radial pattern	Block #0351 on Market	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	8	tree well	tree well - no tree, filled in with decorative metal cover	United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	2	light pole	gold spotlight pole with 12 lamps - possible Halprin light fixture	United Nations Plaza	1975	SF PUC	SF PUC	U**	
small scale feature	6	light pole	light pole - black post and cap	United Nations Plaza	-	SF PUC	SF PUC	-	
small scale feature	16	light pole	UN Plaza square granite light standard with sphere globe luminaire	United Nations Plaza	1975, 1995	site visit	DPW	U**	
small scale feature	10	street light	street light - Market Street three arm; globe luminaires on cast iron post	Block #0351 on Market	pre 1928	Bancroft image	SF PUC	C	
small scale feature	11	street light	street light - single cobra	Block #0351 on Charles J. Brenham Place, Hyde, McAllister	-	SF PUC	SF PUC	-	
spatial organization	1	United Nations Fountain	United Nations Fountain	United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
spatial organization	1	United Nations Plaza	United Nations Plaza; brick plaza with granite borders, rows of trees, bronze flag pole	United Nations Plaza	1975	1994 SFLD	DPW	U**	
spatial organization	1	Fulton Street Mall	Fulton Street Mall - associated with Blocks #0351, #0353, #0354, #0788	Block #0351	c. 1916	c. 1918 SF Planning image	DPW	C	
vegetation	1	planting area	planting area with stairs and escalator	Block #0351 on United Nations Plaza	1936, 1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
vegetation	3	planting area	planting area with tree alley	Block #0351 on United Nations Plaza	1936	site visit	DPW	C	
vegetation	3	tree	street tree - Lagunaria patersonii, Norfolk Island Hibiscus	Block #0351 on McAllister	2010-2012	site visit	DPW	NC	
vegetation	2	tree	street tree - Lophostemon confertus, Brisbane Box	Block #0351 on Leavenworth	-	site visit	DPW	-	
vegetation	36	tree	street tree - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane, with metal radial grate	Block #0351 on Market, Hyde and United Nations Plaza	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
vegetation	3	tree	street tree - Pyrus calleryana, Callery Pear	Block #0351 on Charles J. Brenham Place	-	site visit	DPW	-	
vegetation	8	tree	tree alley east of fountain - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0351 on Market	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
vegetation	49	tree	tree in planting area - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	United Nations Plaza	1936	site visit	DPW	C	
vegetation	12	tree	tree alley north of fountain - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0351 on Leavenworth St	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	
vegetation	5	tree	tree alley protected by bollards with chains - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0351 on Market	1975	site visit	DPW	U**	

*This feature has been determined to be a contributing feature of the Civic Center Historic District. Features similar to this one located outside the district boundaries were not evaluated as part of this project.

**The United Nations Plaza, Halprin Fountain and Market Street will require a future study to fully understand how it contributes to the significance of the larger Civic Center district.