

Civic Center Plazas

United Nations Plaza

Designed by master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, United Nations Plaza commemorates the signing of the United Nations Charter at the War Memorial Complex in 1945. The plaza opened in 1975 in conjunction with the new Civic Center BART Station. The original design consisted of:

- 117,000 square feet of brick paving
- over 20,000 square feet of lawn area
- 16 light standards and 24 wood slate benches
- low granite walls bordering the promenade
- 192 London plane and Lombardy poplar trees

The “walk of great ideas” was added to the plaza in 1995 at the 50th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter. The walk includes the UN Charter Preamble, a list of member nations, and the preamble for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. New lighting was also added to UN Plaza at the 50th anniversary. Sixteen hooded luminaires mounted on granite columns now line the pedestrian approach to City Hall, linking UN Plaza to the rest of Civic Center.

UN Plaza will be studied in detail as part of the Better Market Street Plan environmental review.



Jeffrey Tilman,
Arthur Brown, Jr.:
Progressive Classicist

Crowded with parking as early as the 1930s, Fulton between Hyde and Market became a pedestrian pathway in the late 1950s and eventually UN Plaza in 1975. Fulton between Hyde and Larkin still has passenger vehicle and tour bus parking. This photograph shows Fulton Street in 1936.



MIG, Inc.

United Nations Plaza, a 1-acre pedestrian plaza between Civic Center Plaza and Market St, commemorates the founding of the United Nations in Civic Center in 1945. UN Plaza dates to 1975.



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United Nations Fountain, with associated lighting and paving treatments, anchors the eastern portion of UN Plaza. UN Fountain dates to 1975.



SF Planning Dept

1918 image of Fulton Street looking across Civic Center Plaza towards Market Street.