

Memo

Aug 22, 2025

Regarding: Powell Street Improvement – SFAC Small Project Review

Powell Street Improvement Project Description

Led by Mayor's office, San Francisco Public Works and Union Square Alliance are partnering to design and construct improvements to the public realm along the three blocks of Powell Street between Market and Geary Street. The project aims to revitalize and activate lower Powell Street, the entryway into Union Square, as downtown San Francisco emerges from the Pandemic. A team of design consultants were assembled and led by landscape architectural firm Field Operations and the design process kicked start at the beginning of 2024. 100% Schematic Design was completed in June 2024.

Inspired by California's golden hills and the allure of gold, the concept of "Golden Lanterns" echo and celebrate the existing gold elements along Powell Street, such as the historic golden triangle light standards, gold trims on the buildings, and bronze inlays and historic markers in the pavement. The proposed design includes removal of the existing parklets, extension of the curb alignments for sidewalk widening, new sidewalk pavement, a monumental light feature -the "Golden Lantern" at the cable car turnaround, catenary light system along the three blocks, new street tree in custom pots, custom benches and site furnishing. The project proposes extending the curb to align with the edge of existing parklets, widening the sidewalks while maintaining the 26' feel clearance for fire access.

The design concept was very well received and celebrated by the stakeholders and the general public, through a series of stakeholders and public engagement efforts.

Please find enclosed schematic design package for your review.