

An aerial photograph of a densely populated urban area, likely San Francisco, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings. The text "THE OCTAVIA PROJECT" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font. The background shows a hilly cityscape with various building heights and colors, including some prominent taller structures in the distance.

THE OCTAVIA PROJECT

AGENDA

MOCAC MEETING November 14

THE OCTAVIA PROJECT

Design Goals

Engagement Summary

Key Themes and Design Strategy

Commemoration Experience

Next Steps



THE OCTAVIA PROJECT

The Octavia Project is a community-led initiative intended to honor and commemorate the community activism that led to the removal of the Central Freeway. It also aims to inspire and empower future San Franciscans to realize that, through civic engagement, anyone can change the city for the better.

“Ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary things”

– Patricia Walkup

An aerial photograph of a city, likely San Francisco, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings and a prominent freeway running through the center. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

THE OCTAVIA PROJECT

DESIGN GOALS

- 1 To commemorate the story of a community coming together to fight for the removal of the freeway
- 2 To champion the acts of everyday people working to make the city and the neighborhood a more livable and equitable place.
- 3 To extend the vision of those who fought to take down the freeway and further the goals of the Market-Octavia Plan by creating a more pedestrian centric boulevard.
- 4 To create a cohesive and inspirational set of public plazas across Octavia Boulevard.
- 5 To design a joyful, open, community centered environment that is as lovely as it is durable.

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ENGAGEMENT SYNOPSIS

4

months of engagement

10

community events

5 neighborhood meetings

3 community conversations

1 design workshop

1 walking tour

305

community member interactions

5

community partner organizations

159

survey respondents



A group of people are gathered under a large grey patio umbrella on a city sidewalk. In the foreground, a man with a beard and a white face mask, wearing a patterned shirt, looks down at a large map or document on a table. Next to him, a man in a straw hat and sunglasses also looks at the map. To the right, a woman in a black top with a large floral headpiece points at a specific area on the map. The background shows a busy city street with modern buildings, trees, and other people walking. The text "WHAT WE HEARD" is overlaid in white capital letters across the center of the image.

WHAT WE HEARD

WHAT WE HEARD

KEY LEARNINGS

- 1 The stories behind the freeway removal are inspiring and empowering for many
- 2 This corridor is incredibly important to everyone in the area despite its challenges
- 3 This is an opportunity to elevate what is working and correct some things that are not working
- 4 There is deep desire for a cleaner, greener, more pedestrian friendly corridor

QUESTION #1

What inspires you about The Octavia Project and what is possible for the neighborhood?

Better & safer
use of street
space along Octavia.
There are a lot of
cars but not enough
for pedestrians

TO REMEMBER
THE STORY
&
TELL OTHERS
WHY IT'S
IMPORTANT

MAKING A Pedestrian
SPACE From Hayes
to Market

Improving the
pedestrian realm.

The ability to tell
a cohesive narrative
about the battle to
demolish the freeway.

WHAT WE HEARD

KEY LEARNINGS

- 5 Patricia's Green is already a vibrant community hub but it could serve its diverse community better
- 6 Any work that we undertake should consider impact and livability during construction
- 7 The design should consider how this project could act as connective tissue to other nearby spaces
- 8 The neighborhood is filled with dedicated champions for more livable pedestrian friendly neighborhood



KEY THEMES + DESIGN STRATEGYS

Community Space

The community is deeply invested in the future of the neighborhood, and has a desire to be actively engaged with the design and urban process. While people love their community, more could be done to better represent the diversity of needs and uses.

- Focus on immediate neighborhood needs
- Encourage citizen action
- Build connections between neighborhoods
- Encourage lingering
- Multi-modal seating and gathering
- Skate-friendly zones

Vegetation + Parkspace

Climate change, lack of greenspace, and overuse of existing parkspace by a variety of divergent users signify a desire for increased greening and multiplicity of safe parkspaces in the neighborhood.

- Street greening in pedestrian zones
- Forward thinking for climate change
- Greenery as a visual + auditory control
- Prioritizing play
- Dog + human coexistence

Transportation + Safety

Octavia Boulevard is a multi-modal transit corridor, however many stated it is still viewed as a space for vehicles. Safety concerns from intense traffic and lack of reasons to linger prevent the corridor from being actively used by the community.

- Reclaiming streets for people
- Pedestrian safety measures
- Enhancing bicycle safety
- Articulation of bike lanes
- Prioritizing bike parking

KEY THEMES

Public Art

Use of public art as a driver of the historic storytelling as well as a tool for civic participation through active prototyping.

- Art as a medium for storytelling
- Art as a prototyping tool
- Engaging local artists in the design process
- Conceptualizing art in 3 dimensional space

Cleanliness

Focus on addressing existing systemic and proximate issues, as well as ensuring any added design elements can be maintained at a high level.

- Stewardship as civic action
- Design strategies considering both daytime and nighttime activities
- Strong recommendations for publicly accessible toilets

WHAT WE HEARD

COMMEMORATION EXPERIENCE

- 1 Looking to Patricia's Green as the center of the storytelling experience - a place celebrating the everyday people who fought for the freeway removal and inspiring citizen action
- 2 Use of the wider boulevard as a way of telling the larger, more layered history of the neighborhood
- 3 Story elements should be both ubiquitous parts of the urban fabric as well as moments of intentional reflection
- 4 Telling stories in ways that are accessible to all and using different sensory means

March 31, 1992

San Francisco Independent

Light Transforms Hayes Valley

By Diane Keaton

Where the light streams down on the vacant lot, Phyllis Curley envisions a playground for her three-year-old son.

Next to sun-drenched eucalyptus trees, Willie Sharp wants to see a church building topped by senior citizens' housing.

But freeway on-ramps have not been counted out as options in Hayes Valley, either.

Along the six city blocks previously overshadowed by the snaking Central Freeway, there is now a vacant corridor closed off with a formidable-looking fence. The area's future is still undetermined, but one thing seems certain: The neighborhood that helped bring down a freeway is not planning to OK another new roadway.

The neighbors are feeling pretty good about themselves these days. The formerly defunct Hayes Valley neighborhood and merchants associations are buzzing with plans for parks, shops and affordable housing.

More than anything, though, the neighbors revel in the bright light streaming in through the newly visible sky. They are already changing their lives around the light.

On a Sunday morning in Pendragon, the bakery cafe at Hayes and Gough streets, the *New York Times* crowd lingers over the paper, sips cappuccino and savors blueberry cream scones. Outside on a bench flanked by bushes, two men take in the sun, drinking something hidden in a paper bag. Watching a parade of Sunday

Take Note

Hayes Valley merchants will host another block party April 10, from 7 to 10 p.m. The theme: "Paris Comes to Hayes Valley." It features six blocks of sidewalk cafes, strolling musicians, "food, fun, and art." In mid- to late April, the city and Caltrans will hold a public meeting on future transportation plans in Hayes Valley. Details will be announced.

strollers reflecting the diverse makeup of the area, they seem quite benign.

Pendragon worker Phyllis Curley says it's a friendlier place without the freeway, and less dangerous, despite familiar rough elements not many blocks away. Curley moved to a Hayes Valley flat six months ago, she says, because of reasonable prices and "the change in the air."

In the 400 block of Hayes, the owner of the former Overpass bar doesn't expect the freeway to return. He has changed the name to Marlena's (he says it's his drag queen name) and is painting its interior a peach color, to give it that "clean, fresh feeling."

"Everyone's trying to improve," he says.

A few doors up in the 500 block of Hayes, Gwen Allan and her partner just opened a stylish flower shop, City Green. "When the freeway came down, all the light came in," says Allan.

The 500 block was dotted with boarded-up storefronts before the



Hayes Valley neighbors have many dreams about how best to use the land formerly in the path of the Central Freeway.

earthquake. There are no vacancies now. And in contrast to the 300 block, with its upscale antique shops, Hayes Street Grill and Ivy's Restaurant, the 500 block is a burgeoning mix of eclectic shops anchored by established soul food and service businesses. National

magazines have already discovered the expanding stretch, now connected by purple "Hayes Valley" banners.

Across the street from City Green, old clothing irons, adding

See Hayes Valley, page 11

THE OCTAVIA PROJECT

NEXT STEPS

- Share data and outcomes with city partners, neighborhood groups, area residents and the public at large
- Continue meetings with city agencies having jurisdiction
- Develop the design options based on the neighborhood input / community engagement to date
- Sharing design options with the neighborhood for continued feedback, refinement and consensus building
- Fundraising + grant writing led by the Octavia Project Alliance

THANK YOU!

THE OCTAVIA PROJECT DESIGN TEAM
+ OCTAVIA PROJECT ALLIANCE