



April 2011

May 2010: Official plans are released for the massive LEED gold-certified **SFJazz Center** (to include a theater and practice space, as well as a cafe) to be built on Franklin Street. Its \$60 million price tag is offset by an anonymous \$20 million donation.



Community gardens, design pop-ups,
and second-generation eateries:

hayes valley

It started after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake rendered the Central Freeway, which hovered over Hayes Valley, impassable. A few of the neighborhood's merchants, like Zonal Home Interior's Russell Pritchard, spent the next couple of years working with the city to tear down the crumbling highway ramps on Franklin, Gough, Oak, and, finally, in 2003, Fell streets. "There wasn't much foot traffic, and there wasn't any kind of town square," says neighborhood association member Pritchard. "There wasn't a reason for people to spend a lot of time here."

The concrete facelift was slow going, but it provided enough of a promise to attract new boutiques that sold Italian boots, French lingerie, unique locally made jewelry, and Eames chairs. The nearby theater set, who came for Hayes Street Grill and Zani Cafe, also helped bring in a trendier breed of restaurants including Absinthe brasserie, Elizabeth Falkner's

Citizen Cake (now home to Absinthe's spinoff Boiling Room), Jardiniere, Suppenküche, Bar Jules, and in 2005, Blue Bottle Coffee's first operation—a kiosk out of a garage on Linden Street. That same year, Octavia Boulevard reopened as a tree-lined street with a grassy park and wide sidewalks, and the weekend shopping and brunch crowds followed.

But it wasn't until January of 2010 that anything was done with the huge city block bordered by Laguna, Oak, Fell, and Octavia streets, smack in the middle of the neighborhood and left empty after the Central Freeway demolition. (Pritchard blames the delay on the economic downturn and exorbitant cost of building from scratch.) At the start of 2010, though,

then-Mayor Gavin Newsom gave urban farmers \$50,000 to work the overgrown lot into a full-fledged, food-producing farm for two to five years. During that time, the farm will slowly contract as the land is broken

up into parcels for new housing, shops, and a temporary project called Proxy that will include open space, an outdoor theater, a food truck court, stores, and rotating art installations.

"It shows what a vital, young neighborhood can do," says Pritchard. "By the fall, part of Hayes is turning back into a two-way street so that it's more pedestrian-friendly. The Grove, Lena Ross Thai, and an izakaya are opening in the same building. With Proxy at the corner of Octavia and Linden, we're getting Smitten Ice Cream, Ritual Coffee, Delfina Pizzeria, and an outdoor Biergarten from Suppenküche. The whole flow of the neighborhood is adjusting."

And someday when someone does come up with the cash to develop the center of Hayes into something more permanent, the pop-up structure can be dismantled, recycled, and its parts reused to make way for whatever's next. >

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