



August 10, 2012

To: Howard Lazar, San Francisco Arts Commission

From: Donna Ficarrota, Union Square Business Improvement District

Re: Street Artists' Exhibition Table – Request for exemption of current size regulations

Background

Hallidie Plaza is widely recognized as the main gateway to San Francisco's Union Square commercial district. Its central, historic location anchored by the world-famous cable car turnaround and home to the San Francisco Travel Association's Visitor Information Center, draws over 400,000 visitors a year, giving it the potential to become one of the most vibrant and exciting public spaces in the City.

Along with shopping, theater and hospitality, Union Square is well known for its wide range of art galleries. Extending outside the walls of those galleries, the San Francisco Art Commission's Street Artists Program brings art to the sidewalks and streets around Hallidie Plaza, where licensed artists sell their work.

As part of the Union Square Business Improvement District, Hallidie Plaza receives additional services to those provided by the City and has recently been the subject of study by the BID's streetscapes committee, a group of architects and designers interested in improving public spaces to allow for a wider range of activities and more inviting places for people to gather.

Proposal

Over the past year, the BID working with service provider MJM Management Group, Architect Stephan Ciulla and several artists and representatives of the Street Artists program have developed an attractive, standardized exhibition table, heightening the profile of the street artists and presenting their work in a colorful, more visible and professional manner. Through subtle branding, the new tables will identify the artists as part of the City's Street Artists program and as licensed vendors.

The Union Square BID is proposing a **voluntary pilot program**, developed with input from the Street Artists Program, in which 3-4 prototype tables will be fabricated for check-out on a daily basis by the artists included in the lottery. The BID will arrange for the necessary permits and own the tables and, through MJM Management Group, will manage a check-out process for daily use on a, first-come, first-served basis to artists participating in the Street Artists Program lottery.

Implementation of the voluntary program requires an exemption of the current size regulations (3x4x5') to allow for the extended size, 3x5x7', of the new tables. The slightly larger dimensions will allow for overhead sun/rain shades to protect the artists and a more generous standing space. In addition to increased protection from the elements, the attractively designed tables will call out the artists to passersby along Market Street and coming up from Hallidie Plaza, create more interest and ultimately increase sales.

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