

A pedestrian mall no more: Fulton facelift underway

The Fresno
Bee

As bulldozers and other big equipment slowly make their way down Fulton Mall, tearing out concrete paths and taking down trees to make way for asphalt streets and vehicle traffic, Fresno Bee photographer John Walker took a final stroll to record the last days of the once-historic walkway.

He captured people enjoying the mall on benches, on bikes or just walking along under shady trees that no longer exist.

The landmark 60-foot-tall modernistic clock tower, dating to 1964, was created by Jan De Swart. It stands at what was the center of Fresno in the old days, Mariposa and Fulton. The clock will be relocated. JOHN WALKER jwalker@fresnobee.com

Already much of the pedestrian mall – hailed as a groundbreaking revitalization experiment when it was opened in March 1964 – shows signs of change, such as works of art that are chained off or wrapped up, awaiting transportation to a cleaning facility or a storage yard.

Nearly two dozen sculptures on the mall were removed, many of which will be incorporated into the design of the restored Fulton Street between Inyo and Stanislaus streets.

Also gone are the iconic path that paid tribute to the rippled soil of the San Joaquin Valley and the playful water feature by landscape architect Garrett Eckbo.

The \$20 million construction project, which stretches from Inyo Street at the south to Tuolumne Street at the north, is expected to take about 14 months from the ceremonial groundbreaking held March 3.

The project is being done in segments. First to be torn out was the Tulare-Inyo section; next will be the Fresno-Tuolumne section; and last will be the Fresno-Tulare section.

While pedestrians still will be able to use the sidewalks along the reopened street, meandering along the mall no longer will be an option.

