



# Hearing: Public Trash Cans

Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee

March 13, 2025

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Government Affairs Manager



SAN FRANCISCO

**PUBLIC  
WORKS**

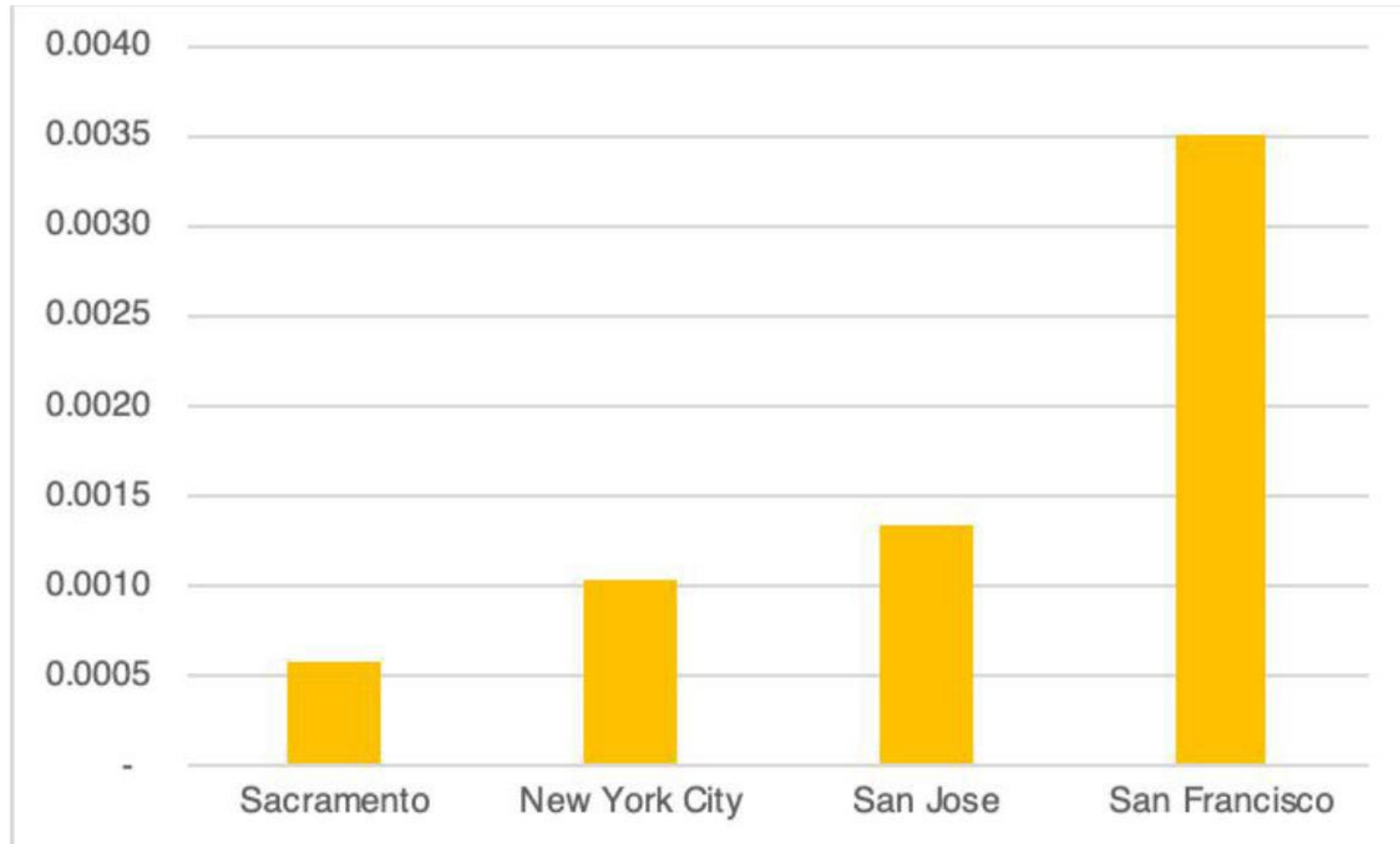
# Public Trash Cans



- Public Works manages most trash cans in the right of way, including overseeing placements and removals
- Some Community Benefit Districts manage additional receptacles and other City agencies maintain cans in their jurisdictions (Rec Park, Port, etc.)
- Recology services all the cans as part of its rate agreement with the City
- Trash cans are meant for small pieces of litter, not household or commercial waste

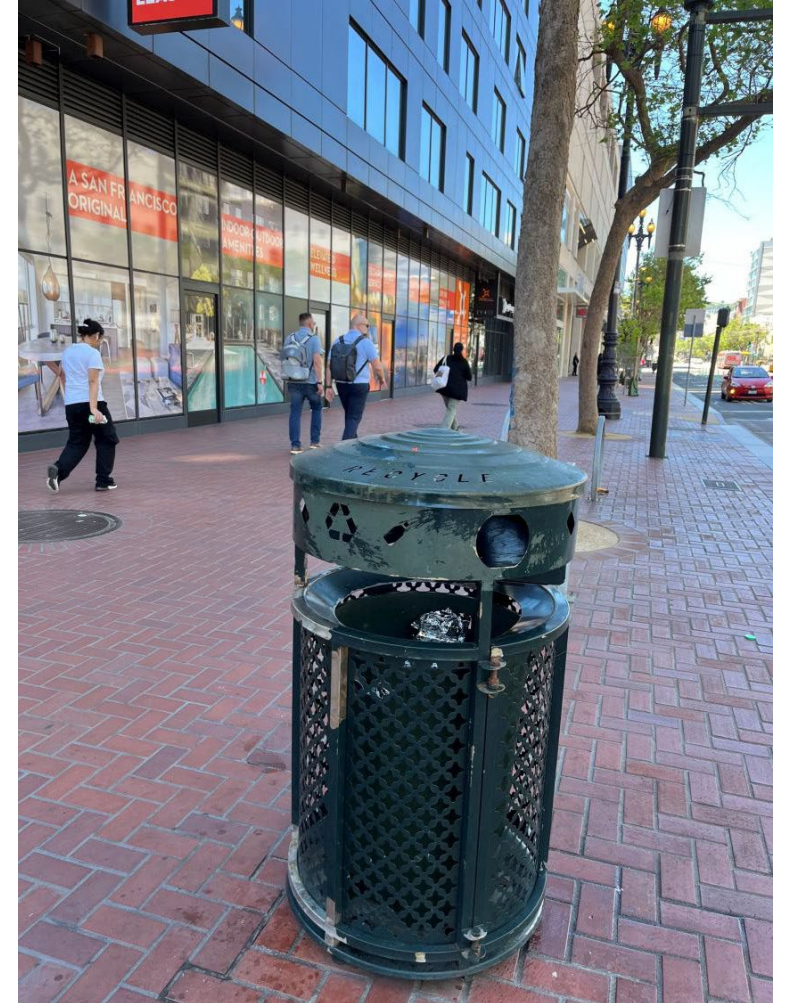
# Trash Cans Per Capita

San Francisco, with a population of ~810,000, has ~3,000 public trash cans.



# Trash Can Placement: Preferred Locations

- Muni bus stops and other public transit hubs
- Schools
- Hospitals
- City buildings
- High-volume pedestrian/business corridors
- Significant amount of material and/or litter in vicinity
- Public requests and/or observation from Public Works and/or Recology staff
- Libraries
- No other can nearby



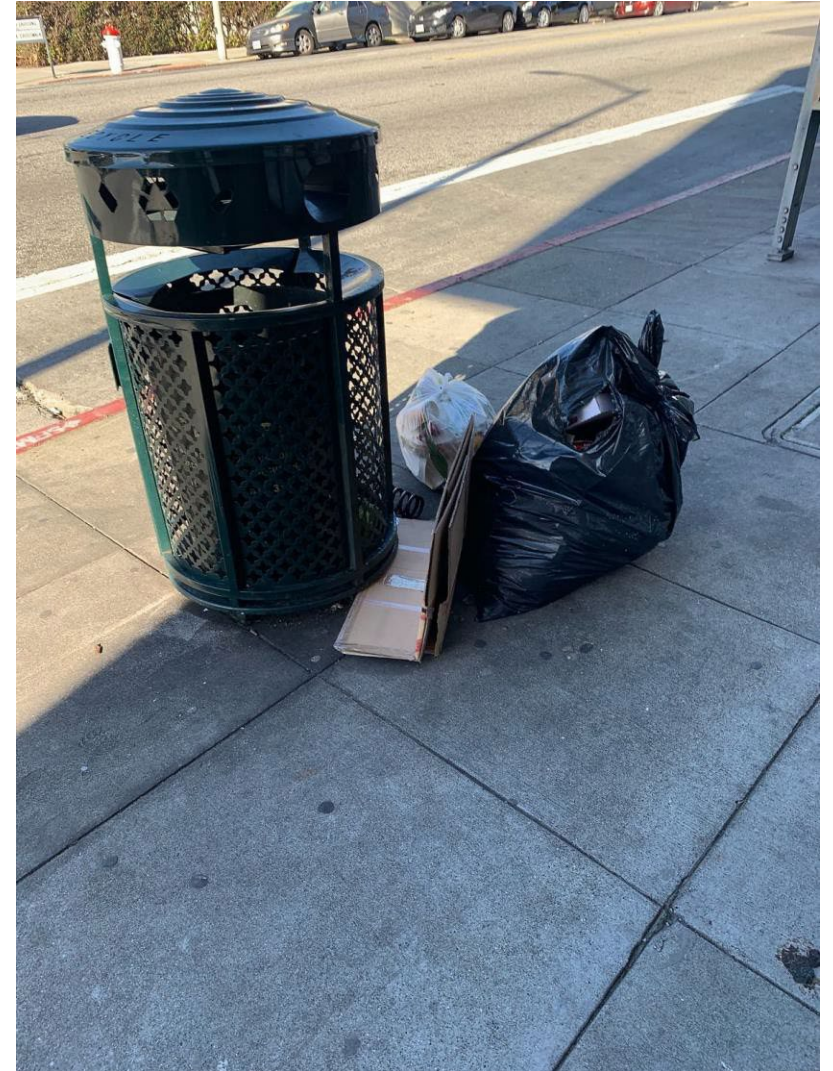
# Requesting the Addition or Removal of a Trash Can

- A member of the public may request the addition of a new trash can, or the relocation or removal of an existing trash can, by contacting the SF311 customer service center
- Constituent requests also are sent to Public Works through the district supervisors' offices
- Recology can request adding, removing or relocating cans based on servicing concerns
- Once received, our Street Environmental Services team reviews the requests for feasibility
- If a can is added, removed or relocated, Public Works alerts Recology for adjusted servicing

address	Cross street	New	Remove	swap	Can Type	Requested by Sup/DW
1398 McAllister	Pierce St	x			concrete	DPW
1401 McAllister	Pierce St			x	concrete	DPW
2104 Market St	Church St			X	Concrete	DPW
800 Van Ness Ave	Eddy St		X		Renaissance	DPW
1001 Larkin St	Post St		X		Renaissance	DPW
2000 Irving St	21st Ave			X	Concrete	DPW
100 Powell St	Ellis St		X		Renaissance	DPW
2241 Chestnut St			X		PEL	DPW
2095 Chestnut St			X		PEL	DPW
2200 Bayshore Blvd	Arieta Ave		X		Renaissance	DPW
5 King St			X		Renaissance	DPW (ZD 282444)
1611 Clay St		X			Concrete	Recology SUP
3287 24th St			X			Recology SUP
3307 24th St			X			Recology SUP
3311 24th St			X			Recology SUP
2806 Mission St			X			Recology SUP
2787 Mission St			X			Recology SUP
2300 Polk St		X			Renaissance	Recology SUP
4201 18th St			X		Concrete	Recology SUP
501 Green St		X			Renaissance	DPW (ZD 282617)
499 Union St		X			Renaissance	DPW (ZD 282617)
4292 24th St	Bank St			X	Concrete	DPW (ZD 282885)
2685 Taylor St	Beach			X	Concrete	DPW (ZD 282885)
3 Clementina St	3rd St		X		Renaissance	DPW (ZD 282885)
1302 Columbus Ave	Leavenworth			X	Renaissance	DPW (ZD 284052)
899 Divisadero St	McAllister			X	Renaissance	DPW (ZD 284052)
4400 Mission St	Colter		X		Renaissance	DPW (ZD 284052)

# Trash Can Removal Criteria

- History of illegal dumping
  - 311 data indicates trends
  - Attempt to investigate source and contact potential violators through outreach and/or enforcement
- Regular/persistent vandalism
- High volume of 311 removal requests
- Location is no longer suitable due to sidewalk space constraints



# Trash Can Removal Example



May 2016



February 2021



July 2023



June 2017



May 2021



October 2024

# Current Trash Can Styles and Oversight



Concrete cans: ~\$1,825/can



Renaissance cans: ~\$2,964/can

- **Trash Can Manager**
  - 1824 Trash Can Manager (position vacant)
    - Interviews held, position in hiring stage
- **Commission**
  - Approve policies and contracts



# Trash Can Sensors Pilot

- Nearly one third of public trash cans are outfitted with sensors
- Sensors track fullness and fill rates in real time to identify patterns of use
- Sensors feed information into the 311 system, which alerts Recology when a can is nearing capacity and needs to be emptied
- Auto-generated 311 requests are tracked to monitor response times
- Goal is to mitigate container overflow, schedule servicing based on actual use, optimize operations and improve efficiency



# Trash Can Surge Pilot

- **2017 Mission District experiment**
  - Mission St. from 14<sup>th</sup> St. to Cesar Chavez
  - A can on every corner and some midblock
  - Some locations saw decreased 311 calls; some saw increases



## PRESS RELEASE - SF Launches "Yes We Can!" Pilot to Fight Litter - 4/4/2017

For immediate release: April 4, 2017  
Contact: Rachel Gordon, 415-554-6045

[Press Releases](#)

### SAN FRANCISCO LAUNCHES "YES WE CAN!" PILOT TO FIGHT LITTER The City Doubles the Number of Sidewalk Garbage Cans on Mission Street

San Francisco, CA –Public Works, in partnership with Mayor Ed Lee and District 9 Supervisor Hillary Ronen, today rolled out the Yes We Can! pilot program in the Mission District to make more trash cans available. The goal: Reduce litter. The City installed an additional 38 new garbage cans along the Mission Street corridor between 14th and Cesar Chavez streets, for a total of 73 cans. Public Works will track, through 311 service requests and on-site evaluations, whether the additional receptacles result in less litter and fewer complaints. Yes We Can! will expand to other neighborhoods if the Mission Street experiment proves successful.

"It is one of our top priorities to keep our streets and neighborhoods clean and livable," said Mayor Lee. "To help maintain the beautiful nature of our city, we continue to explore different strategies, such as the Fix-It initiative and the Yes We Can! pilot program, to help our thriving and active corridors."

While it may seem counterintuitive, past experience has found that garbage cans actually can add to the litter problem when scavengers rummage through them and scatter the unwanted trash on the sidewalk. The street cans also can become magnets for illegal dumping when people place their household or business trash in and around them instead of paying for the legally required refuse pickup at their properties.

Because of the problems, the City removed more than 1,000 public trash cans from the sidewalks a decade ago. There now are some 3,200 sidewalk cans.

"Our aim with Yes We Can! is to find the sweet spot that provides more places for people to dispose of their trash properly, while not adding to the litter problem with people using the cans inappropriately," said Larry Stringer, operations chief for San Francisco Public Works.

Yes We Can! was launched in conjunction with Mission Giant Sweep – an intensive month-plus cleanup, outreach and enforcement campaign in the Mission District, focused on the Mission Street and Valencia Street corridors, from 15th to 20th streets; and the 16th Street corridor from Mission to Guerrero streets.

# Trash Can Replacement Initiative

- **Need for new trash cans**
  - Durability issues with locks and hinges
  - Renaissance cans' material is degraded and at end of useful life
  - Cannot repair Renaissance can parts
  - Increased use of cement cans
  - Recology requests 32-gallon rolling plastic liners for efficiency and employee safety
  - Rummaging is a persistent problem
- **Key criteria**
  - Rummage-resistant
  - Tamper-resistant
  - Easy to service
  - Durable and easy to maintain
  - Rodent-resistant
  - Sensor-ready
  - Accommodate 32-gallon rolling plastic liners
  - Accommodate recycling exchange
  - Reasonable cost



# Trash Can Pilot Efforts

- **Various options reviewed**

- Off-the-shelf versions
  - Open Wire Mesh
  - Ren Bin
  - BearSaver
- Custom-built versions
  - Slim Silhouette
  - Soft Square
  - Salt & Pepper
- Bigbelly cans (assessed via CBDs)



Open Wire Mesh



Ren Bin



BearSaver



Bigbelly

- **Trash Can Pilot in 2022**

- 52 locations for pilot trash cans
- Two-month multi-language outreach strategy
  - 1,027 survey responses
  - 66k responses on social media
- Stakeholder feedback
  - Recology
  - Public Works
  - CBDs



Slim Silhouette

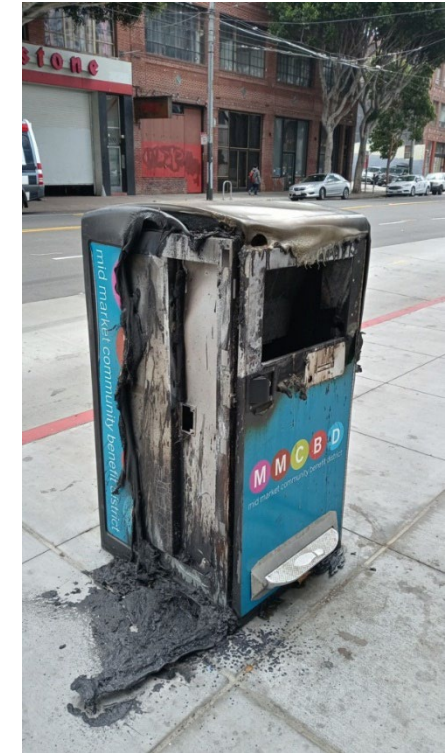


Soft Square



Salt & Pepper

# Trash Can Pilot Efforts



# Public Works Trash Can Replacement Funding Request

- **Finalizing RFP**
  - Working with Office of Contract Administration to issue Request for Proposal (RFP) this month
  - RFP will contain detailed design specifications
  - Manufacturer will do shop drawing
  - Rollout and implementation scenarios
- **Refuse Rate Board**
  - Considering allocating \$15 million in Refuse Rate Reserve Account to fund request
  - No additional rate hike needed to fund replacement cans; no impact to General Fund



Program	No. of Trash Cans	Procurement	Installation	Total
Year 1	500	\$1.25M	\$ 1.0M	\$ 2.25M
Year 2	1,000	2.5M	2.0M	4.5M
Year 3	1,500	3.75M	3.0M	6.75M
Years 4-9	0	1.5M		1.5M
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>\$ 9.0M</b>	<b>\$ 6.0M</b>	<b>\$ 15.0M</b>

# Manual Cleaning

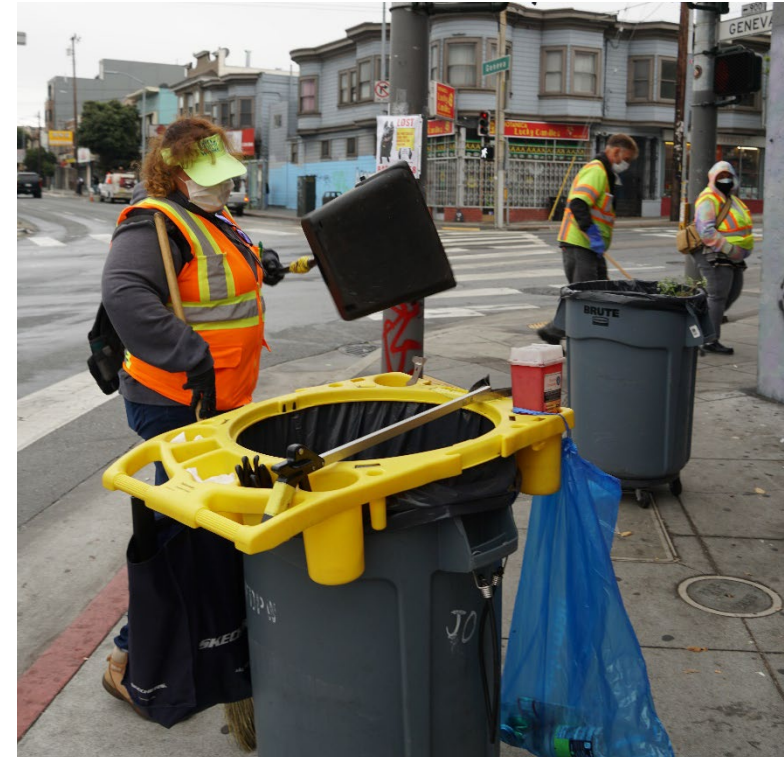
- **Cigarette Litter Abatement Fee**

- Chapter 105 of the San Francisco Admin. Code
- Instituted in 2009-2010
- As of 2025, fee of \$1.75/pack
- Collected by Treasurer and Tax Collector
- \$3.3M to Public Works to support labor and materials costs for litter cleanup
- This funding is not directly associated with litter receptacles



# Manual Cleaning

- **Manual cleaning staff**
  - Public Works employs more than 450 staff in our Bureau of Street Environmental Services dedicated to cleaning streets
  - This work is done alongside CBD staff, contractors and volunteers
  - In FY2022-23, Public Works employed 417.25 staff for this role, nearly 10% less than today's staffing level.



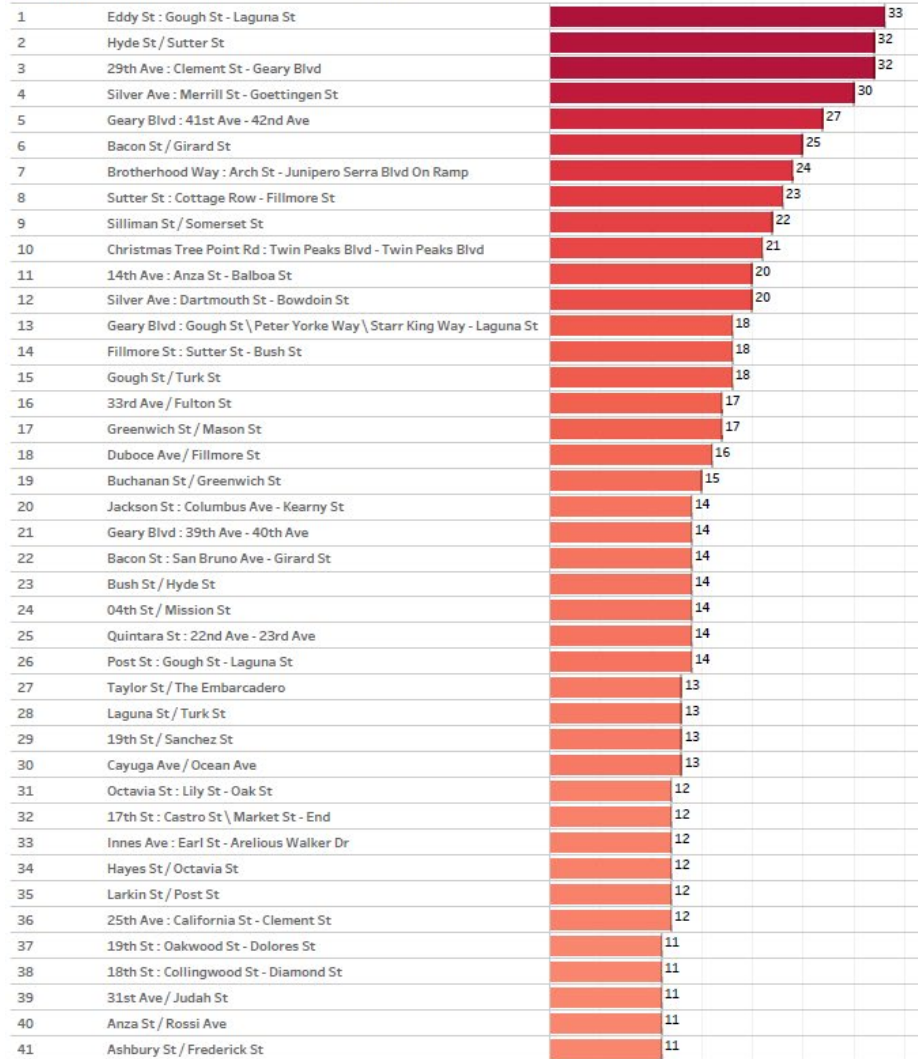
DPW Street Environmental Services - Cleaning Classification FTE

ASO Job Class	Job Class Description	FY2022-23 FTE	FY2023-24 FTE	FY2024-25 FTE	7355		7215		7514		7281		7501		9916	
					FTE	% Change	FTE	% Change	FTE	% Change	FTE	% Change	FTE	% Change	FTE	% Change
7355	Truck Driver	50.75	51.00	51.00												
7215	General Laborer Supervisor I	36.75	39.00	39.00												
7514	General Laborer	195.75	212.50	212.50												
7281	Street Environ. Svcs Ops Supervisor	15.00	16.00	16.00												
7501	Environmental Service Worker	7.00	7.00	7.00												
<b>Subtotal ASO positions</b>		<b>305.25</b>	<b>325.50</b>	<b>325.50</b>												
			20.25	0.00												
<b>TEMPM Headcount for 9916s</b>																
9916	Public Svc Aide-Public Works	112.00	133.00	133.00												
<b>Total ASO &amp; 9916s</b>		<b>417.25</b>	<b>458.50</b>	<b>458.50</b>												
					<b>Total</b>											
						<b>152.75</b>		<b>114.75</b>		<b>620.75</b>		<b>47.00</b>		<b>21.00</b>		<b>378.00</b>



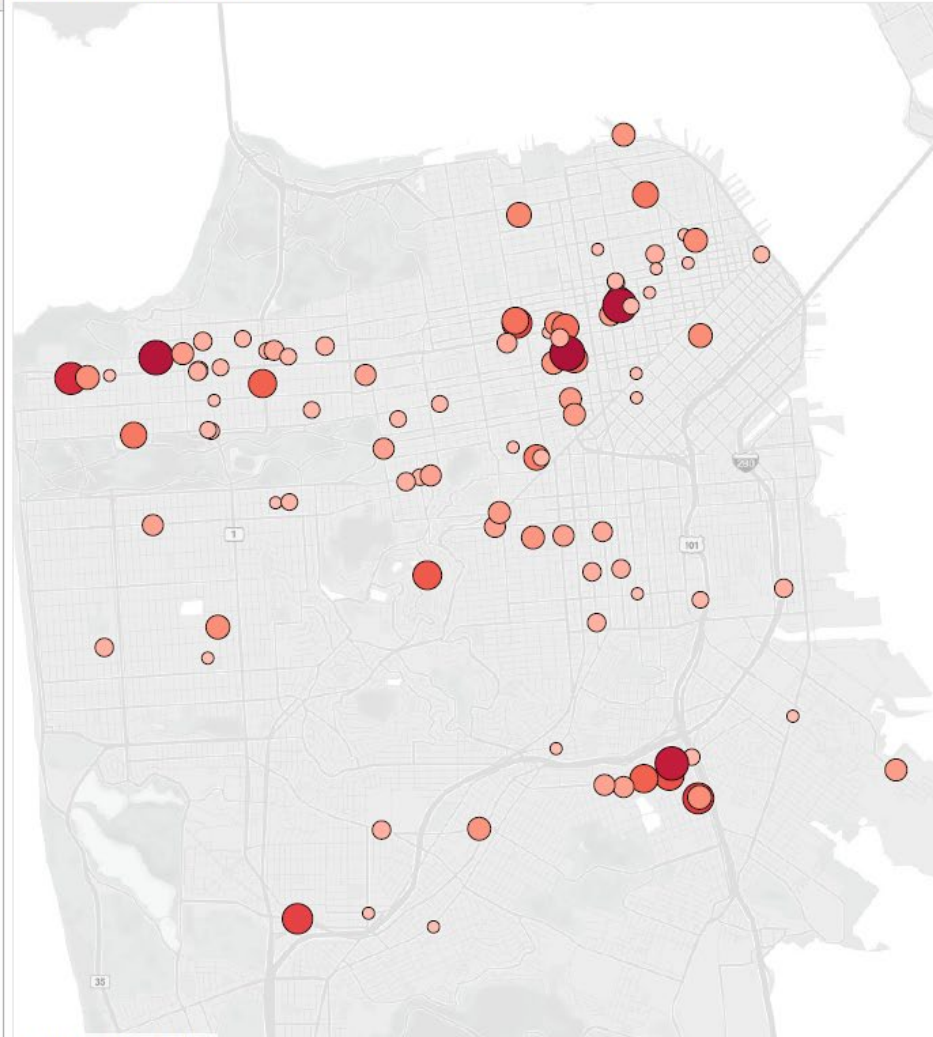
# Illegal Dumping Enforcement

**Recology** Citywide Overflowing Cans Locations



Citywide Abandoned Waste Top Locations

**Recology** Packer Truck only

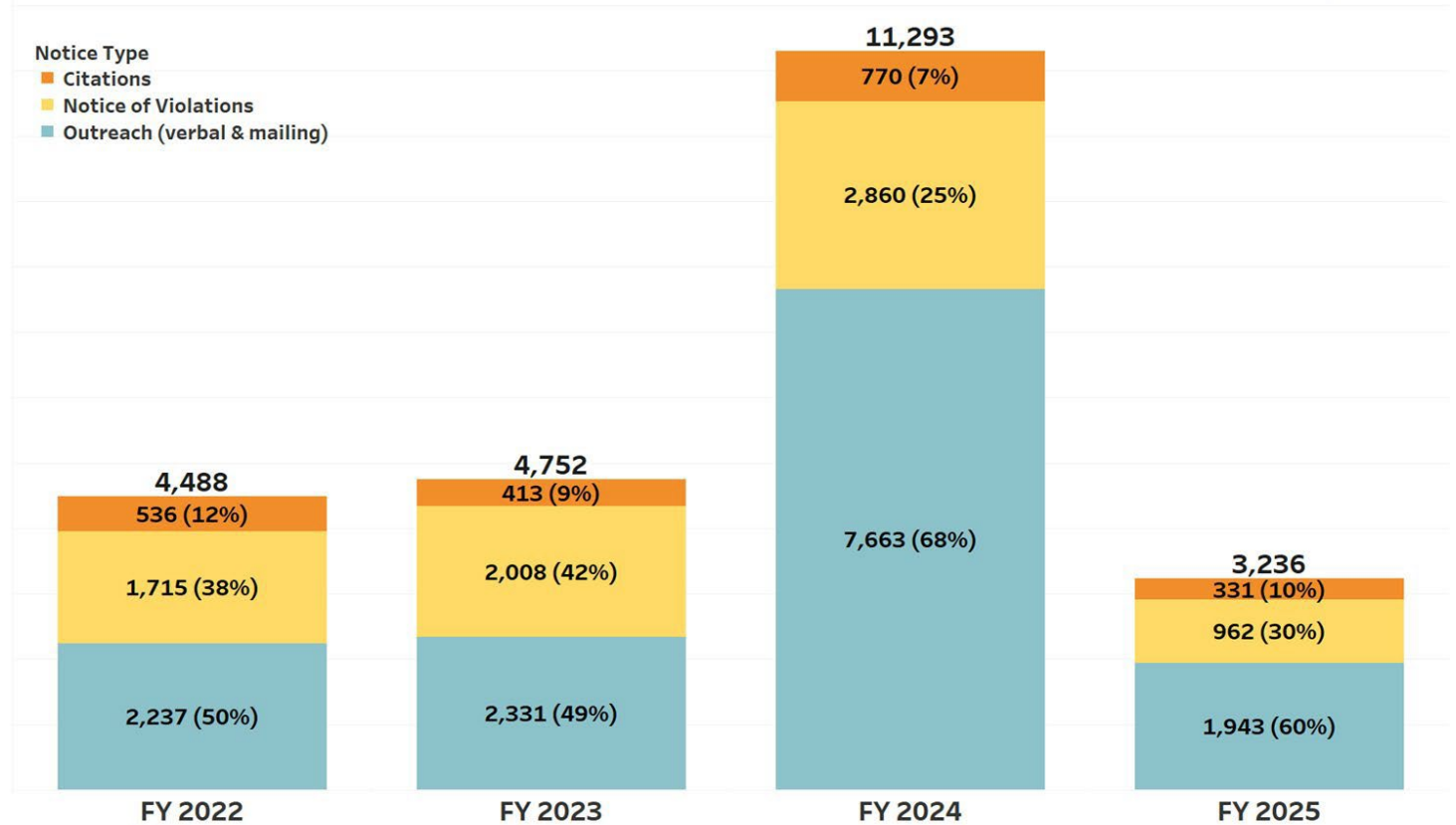


# Illegal Dumping Enforcement

- **Outreach and Enforcement (OnE) Team**
  - 10.0 full-time employees (3.0 positions vacant)
  - The team is responsible for:
    - educating merchants, property owners and residents of their rights and responsibilities regarding street and sidewalk cleanliness
    - enforcing City codes to ensure sanitation standards are met

Annual Total Actions by Type

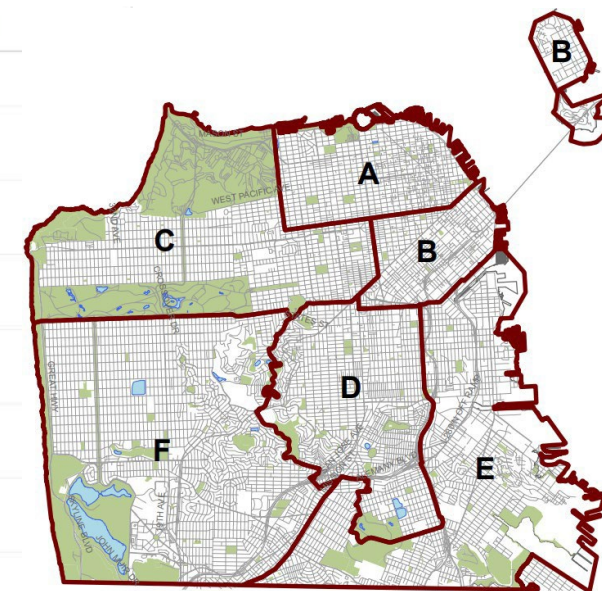
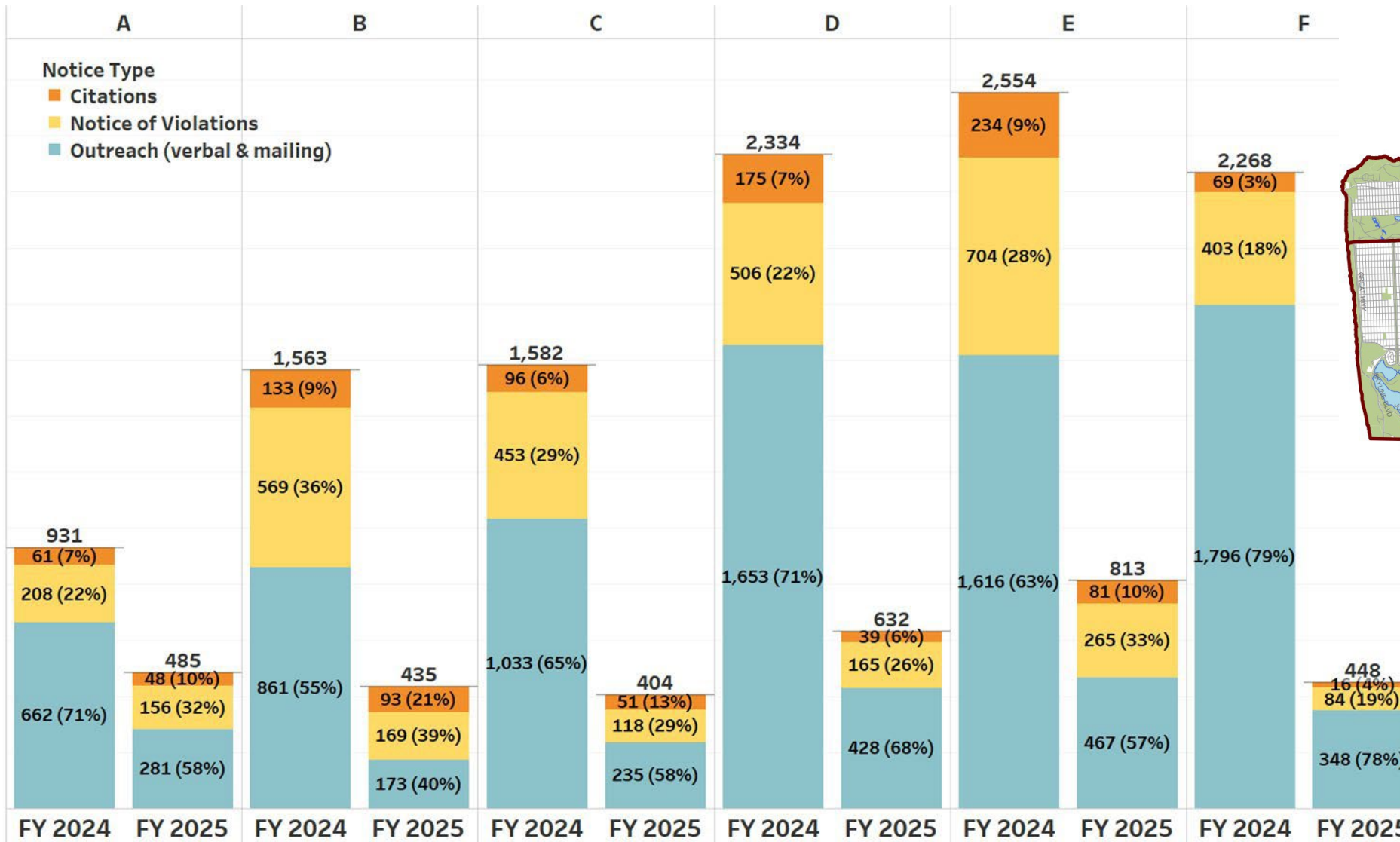
(Data as of Jan 14, 2025)



# Illegal Dumping Enforcement

Annual Actions by Type and Zone (FY 2024 and FY 2025)

(Data as of Jan 14, 2025)





[sfpublicworks.org](http://sfpublicworks.org)