



PRELIMINARY NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Date of Publication of
Preliminary Negative Declaration: September 24, 1993

Lead Agency: City and County of San Francisco, Dept. of City Planning
450 McAllister Street, 5th Floor, CA 94102

Agency Contact Person: John Billovits Telephone: (415) 558-6390

Project Title: **93.504E, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC TOILET AND ADVERTISING KIOSK PROGRAM** Project Sponsor:
Dept. of Public Works

Project Contact Person: Jake Szeto, DPW (415) 554-5807

Project Address: Various, Citywide
Assessor's Block(s) and Lot(s): Various
City and County: San Francisco

Project Description: Installation of freestanding public toilets and general advertising/public service kiosks on sidewalks and public spaces citywide, concentrated in the downtown area. Initial contingent of about 27 toilets and 120 kiosks, with possible future installments up to a total of about 50 toilets and 225 kiosks.

Building Permit Application Number, if Applicable: N/A

THIS PROJECT COULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. This finding is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Sections 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance) and 15070 (Decision to Prepare a Negative Declaration), and the following reasons as documented in the Initial Evaluation (Initial Study) for the project, which is attached.

Mitigation measures, if any, included in this project to avoid potentially significant effects: -NONE-

cc: Robert Passmore
Gerald Green
Project Sponsor
Distribution List
Bulletin Board
Master Decision File
Monica Jacobs (front page only)

93.504E

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

At the request of the Mayor's Office, the Department of Public Works is proposing to implement a citywide public toilet and advertising/public service kiosk program (the project). The initial installment would consist of approximately 27 freestanding public toilets and about 120 freestanding advertising/public service kiosks concentrated in the downtown financial and retail shopping areas, and along Market Street to Upper Market; with lesser densities in the Civic Center area and along Van Ness Avenue; along Columbus Avenue; in the Fisherman's Wharf/Pier 39 area; and several neighborhood locations.¹ Up to an additional 23 toilets and 105 kiosks may be provided in future installations, for respective totals of about 50 and 225. A private company under contract to the City would provide and maintain the toilet facilities and kiosks in exchange for kiosk advertising revenues. All facilities would be located on sidewalks and other public properties.

The public toilets would be self-cleaning, handicapped accessible, and connected directly to city sewer, water and electrical lines. They would be about 10 feet in height, and 12 feet by 7 feet in floor area (see schematic drawings in Figure 1). The advertising/public service kiosks would be cylindrical in shape, about 14 to 17 feet in height (depending on ultimate roof design), about 5 to 6 feet in diameter, and have three illuminated vertical panels about 12 feet tall. Approximately 65 of the kiosks would open to contain newsstands and would replace existing sidewalk newsstand structures.

The final locations and design of these facilities would be subject to review by the Department of Public Works and other agencies and bodies including the Arts Commission Civic Design Review Committee, the Recreation and Park Commission, the Port Commission, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and the California Department of Transportation (State Highway jurisdiction along Van Ness Avenue). City Planning Code text amendments may be required to allow for the proposed general advertising signage near schools, parks and recreation facilities, and in some special sign districts (such as along Market Street and in the Civic Center).

¹ A map set displaying the tentative proposed locations is available for public review in the Department of City Planning office at 450 McAllister Street as part of the case file (#93.504E).

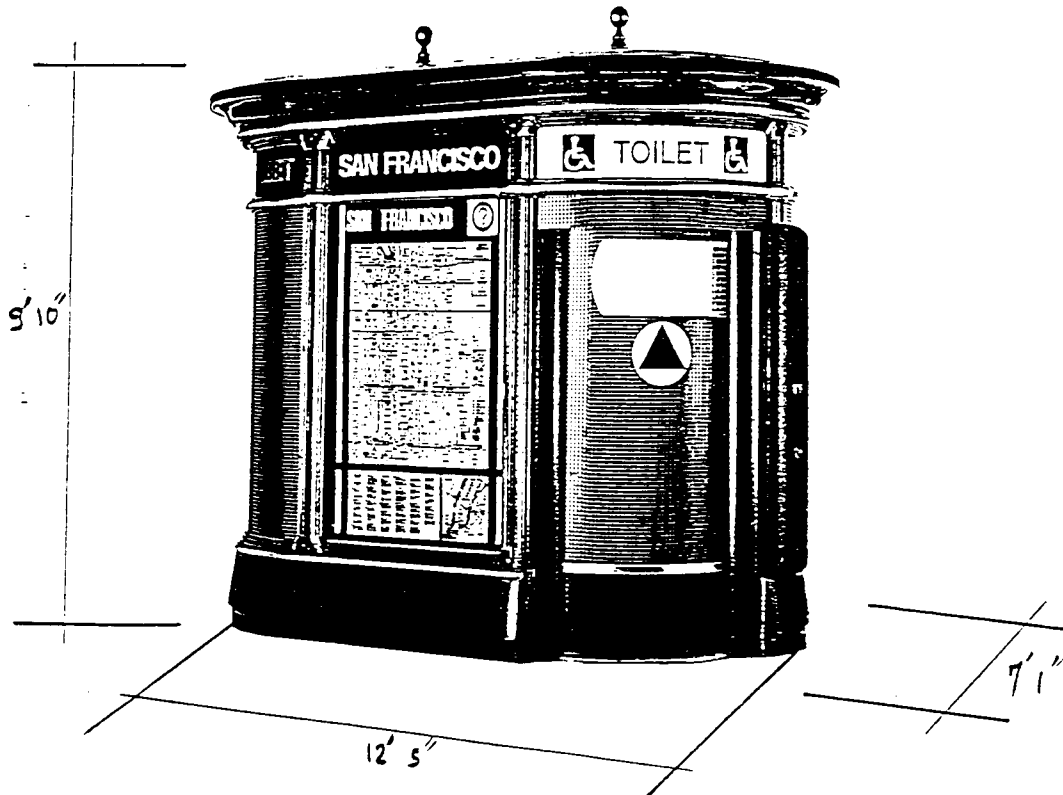
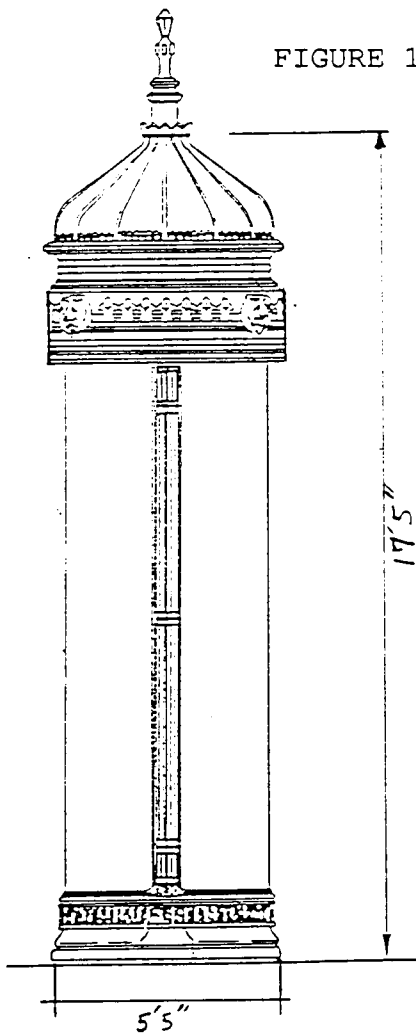
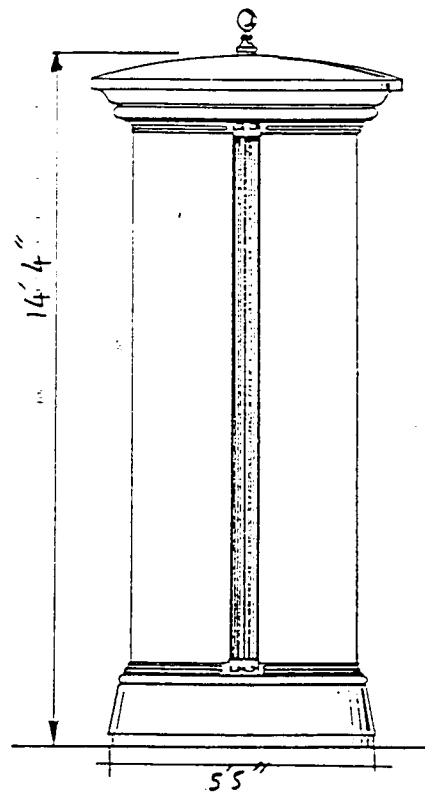


FIGURE 1: SCHEMATIC DRAWINGS OF PROPOSED FACILITY SIZES



3



POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:

The placement of freestanding toilets and kiosks on sidewalks and other public properties would not result in substantial changes in land use, and, given their relatively small scale and diffuse distribution, could not disrupt or divide established land use patterns.

The vast majority of proposed locations are in the dense downtown area, or in commercial districts and along boulevards whose aesthetic is characterized by the diversity and high density of built urban features, including a variety of street furniture and signage. As an addition of a limited number of prominent but relatively small-scale urban features to an existing dense and diverse urban setting, the proposed program would add structures and advertising signage that some persons may find objectionable, but which could not have significant adverse impacts on the aesthetic character of the City, and would not be substantially incompatible or inconsistent with the general existing urban pattern. A more detailed assessment of the design and placement of these features would be conducted by public hearing of the San Francisco Arts Commission's Civic Design Review Committee, which would evaluate the proposal and make recommendations based in part on aesthetic considerations (such as architectural treatment) beyond the scope of this environmental review.

Like other similar features typical of urban streetscapes, such as street trees, street furniture and newsstands, the proposed toilets and kiosks would partially obstruct some existing scenic views from public streets and spaces in the immediate proximity, such as view corridors along city sidewalks. This effect would be only partial and very localized where it would occur, and therefore would not be significant. The small-scale effects of specific facilities on particularly sensitive view locations (such as along the waterfront or in public park space) would be one of the issues considered on a case-by-case basis during the approval process by various City bodies, such as the Port Commission, the Recreation and Park Commission, the Department of Public Works and the San Francisco Arts Commission's Civic Design Review Committee.

The kiosks and public toilets would be illuminated during the nighttime hours, and would introduce a new light source to the immediate area. Being located largely downtown in commercial areas or along major boulevards, these additional light sources would represent a marginal incremental increase over existing light sources, and thus would not have significant disrupting or disturbing impacts.

There may be short term impacts on vehicle traffic circulation, pedestrian circulation and parking in the immediate proximity of proposed toilet and kiosk sites during installation, due to the presence of construction vehicles, equipment and materials. These impacts would include intermittent hazards to pedestrians and vehicles due to the movement of construction-related equipment, street obstructions and reduced availability of street parking. These effects would be intermittent in character and temporary in duration, and therefore not significant.

With facilities being located generally on sidewalks, and largely in the downtown area where pedestrian volumes are the highest, the project has the potential to adversely affect pedestrian circulation. Project facilities would be sited in accordance with guidelines established and implemented by the Department of Public Works, the provisions of which include minimum circulation spaces between all street furniture, between street furnishings and structures, and minimum distances from corner cross walks, handicapped access ramps and fire escapes². Approximately 65 of the kiosks would replace existing newsstands, mostly in the busiest downtown pedestrian areas, and would not represent new impediments to foot traffic. The remaining kiosks and toilets would contribute to the cumulative impedance of pedestrian flows in areas of heavy pedestrian use already caused by existing features such as street trees, planters and furniture, newsstands and news racks, in a manner consistent with these existing impacts. The project represents a small incremental increase in overall pedestrian obstructions in the downtown area, which would not be significant. Some individual sites already experiencing pedestrian congestion may become further restricted; however, this impact would occur only for very short periods of time (weekday peak commute and lunch hours) in very limited locations (mostly downtown financial district areas), and therefore would not be significant overall. Pedestrian traffic flows for individual locations would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis during the siting and approval process by the Department of Public Works.

Installation of the proposed toilets and kiosks would result in noise and vibration that may be considered an annoyance by occupants of immediately adjoining properties. However, due to its temporary and intermittent nature, this impact would not be significant.

² Department of Public Works Orders Number 163,368 "Establishing Guidelines for the Placement of Public Toilets on City Sidewalks, and Number 163,369 "Establishing Guidelines for the Placement of Public Service Kiosks on City Sidewalks" were both in draft form at the time of publication. They establish minimum siting criteria specifically for the placement of these proposed features, similar to existing minimum guidelines now used for the siting of bus shelters on City sidewalks.

The proposed toilet facilities would be connected directly to city sewer lines, and are designed to flush, self-clean and disinfect automatically after each use, and equipped with ventilation systems. The installation of up to 50 new toilet facilities citywide, as proposed under the program, would not have the potential to create significant objectionable odors either cumulatively or in the immediate vicinity of the facilities.

The proposed maximum of 50 new toilet facilities and approximately 225 advertising/public service kiosks citywide would slightly increase demand for utilities, and slightly increase water and energy consumption, but not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in the city.

The installation of facilities proposed by the project would require shallow excavation as is needed to connect the toilets to city utilities. This would affect only highly disturbed fill material just below the pavement surface which could not contain any significant archaeological resources that might be destroyed or disrupted by the project.

In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which establishes eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under CEQA or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

The final siting and design of these facilities would be subject to review and/or approval by the Department of Public Works and the Arts Commission's Civic Design Review Committee, and, depending on location, other agencies and bodies including the Recreation and Park Commission, the Port Commission, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and the California Department of Transportation (State Highway jurisdiction along Van Ness Avenue). Approval of City Planning Code text amendments by the City Planning Commission may be required to allow for the proposed general advertising signage near schools, parks and recreation facilities, and in some special sign districts (such as along Market Street and in the Civic Center).

Placement of each toilet and kiosk in a public sidewalk would require an encroachment permit. The encroachment permit process requires posting of public notices for at least 10 days at each individual proposed facility location. The Department of Public Works would hold a public hearing considering each toilet and kiosk siting. If approved, the encroachment permits issued for each individual site by the Department of Public Works would be appealable to a public hearing of the Board of Permit Appeals.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST
(Initial Study)

File No: 93.504E Title: SF Public Toilet and Advertising Kiosk Program
 Street Address: various/citywide Assessor's Block/Lot: various
 Initial Study Prepared by: John Billoritz

<u>A. COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING ZONING AND PLANS</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Applicable</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1) Discuss any variances, special authorizations, or changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable.	—	✓
*2) Discuss any conflicts with any adopted environmental plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable.	✓	—
 B. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS - Could the project:		
<u>1) Land Use</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u> <u>DISCUSSED</u>
* (a) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	—	✓ ✓
* (b) Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	—	✓ ✓
 <u>2) Visual Quality</u>		
* (a) Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?	—	✓ ✓
(b) Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?	—	✓ ✓
(c) Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially impacting other properties?	—	✓ ✓
 <u>3) Population</u>		
* (a) Induce substantial growth or concentration of population?	—	✓ —
* (b) Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)?	—	✓ —
(c) Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply?	—	✓ —
 <u>4) Transportation/Circulation</u>		
* (a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?	—	✓ —
(b) Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards?	—	✓ ✓

* Derived from State EIR Guidelines, Appendix G, normally significant effect.

	YES	NO	DISCUSSED
(c) Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity?	—	✓	—
(d) Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities?	—	✓	—
5) <u>Noise</u>			
*(a) Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?	—	✓	✓
(b) Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable?	—	✓	—
(c) Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels?	—	✓	—
6) <u>Air Quality/Climate</u>			
*(a) Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	—	✓	—
*(b) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	—	✓	—
(c) Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	—	✓	✓
(d) Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?	—	✓	—
7) <u>Utilities/Public Services</u>			
*(a) Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	—	✓	—
*(b) Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	—	✓	—
(c) Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	—	✓	—
(d) Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	—	✓	✓
8) <u>Biology</u>			
*(a) Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species?	—	✓	—
*(b) Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?	—	✓	—
(c) Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	—	✓	—
9) <u>Geology/Topography</u>			
*(a) Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction).	—	✓	—
(b) Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	—	✓	—

	YES	NO	DISCUSSED
10) <u>Water</u>			
* (a) Substantially degrade water quality, or contaminate a public water supply?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
* (b) Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources, or interfere substantially with ground water recharge?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
* (c) Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
11) <u>Energy/Natural Resources</u>			
* (a) Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy, or use these in a wasteful manner?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
(b) Have a substantial effect on the potential use, extraction, or depletion of a natural resource?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
12) <u>Hazards</u>			
* (a) Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
* (b) Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
(c) Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
13) <u>Cultural</u>			
* (a) Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
(c) Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or Article 11 of the City Planning Code?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
C. <u>OTHER</u>	YES	NO	DISCUSSED
Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than Department of City Planning or Bureau of Building Inspection, or from Regional, State or Federal Agencies?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
D. <u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	YES	NO	N/A DISCUSSED
1) Could the project have significant effects if mitigation measures are not included in the project?	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2) Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?	—	—	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

E. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

YES NO DISCUSSED

- *1) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history? — —
- *2) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? — —
- *3) Does the project have possible environmental effects which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Analyze in the light of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.) — —
- *4) Would the project cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? — —

F. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

- I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Department of City Planning.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures, numbers _____, in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Barbara W. Sahm

BARBARA W. SAHM
Environmental Review Officer
for

LUCIAN R. BLAZEJ
Director of Planning

DATE: 9/22/93

BWS:OER/23/4-13-92