



PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Daniel Lurie, Mayor

Correspondence Log

September 19, 2025, through October 16, 2025

Date Received	From	Subject
October 8, 2025	Jessica Nogueras	Reconsider of Removing Public Garbage Cans – A Practical & Environmental Con

From: [REDACTED]
To: [DPW-Public Works Commission](#)
Subject: Reconsideration of Removing Public Garbage Cans — A Practical & Environmental Con
Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 3:43:26 AM

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Dear Public Works Team,

I'm writing to express deep concern about the recent reduction of public garbage cans throughout San Francisco. While I understand the reasoning behind redesigning cans to prevent rummaging and overflow issues, the removal of these essential waste receptacles is creating unintended and increasingly visible consequences for our city.

Removing cans doesn't eliminate trash — it redirects it. Without accessible public garbage cans, more people are leaving waste on the sidewalks, in gutters, or piling it beside where cans once stood. This not only worsens the cleanliness of our streets but also increases the burden on individuals, volunteer groups, and environmental organizations who are forced to step in to pick up what the city has effectively displaced.

Overflowing cans should not be a reason to remove them altogether but an indicator of high use and the need for more effective systems. Whether through increasing the number of cans, improving their design, or scheduling more frequent collections, the solution should aim to meet the city's needs rather than reduce service. Public infrastructure must adapt to usage, not disappear when it's most needed.

I fully support efforts to redesign cans to reduce rummaging and misuse. But removing them entirely creates a larger problem — one that affects residents, businesses, tourism, and our environment. Strategic placement of durable, tamper-resistant garbage cans and consistent collection can reduce street litter and save the city more in the long term.

I urge the department to reconsider this approach and reinvest in a smarter, more resilient waste management system that keeps San Francisco clean, safe, and livable for everyone.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and service to our city.

Warm regards,

Jessica Noguerras

mission district San Francisco

Here are some resources to support my claim

Key Data & Findings to Support Restoration

Local & City Data

- San Francisco currently maintains more than 2,800 public trash cans, which are serviced (or at least maintained) under contract with Recology. (SF Public Works)

https://sfpublicworks.org/services/public-trash-cans?utm_source=chatgpt.com

- Overflow complaints are common: in 2024 alone, SF's 311 system received over 20,000

complaints regarding overflowing trash cans, especially in high-foot-traffic commercial corridors such as 16th & Mission, Chinatown, and North Beach. (SF Chronicle)

https://www.sfchronicle.com/sf/article/sf-trash-cans-overflowing-map-data-20148945.php?utm_source=chatgpt.com

- In SF's pilot program using smart sensors on trash cans:

- Overflow incidents dropped by 80%
- Street-cleaning service requests fell by 66%
- Illegal dumping dropped by 64%

https://nordsense.com/cases-san-francisco/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

- In SF's public trash can policy documents, one of the criteria for removal of a can is persistent illegal dumping in its vicinity. Yet, frequent removal in response to dumping creates a vicious cycle: no receptacle, more litter, more dumping.

https://sfpublicworks.org/sites/default/files/Item%205_SAS%20Public%20Trash%20Cans%202024-5-20.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com