

**SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL
And PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

RECYCLING PROGRAM

April, 2004

FINAL REPORT





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Executive Summary

The San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center is one of the world's premier cultural facilities and one of the largest performing arts centers in the nation. The complex is comprised of three buildings and includes three major performance venues in addition to rehearsal and backstage facilities, offices, meeting rooms and restaurants.

Key stakeholders from the many and diverse entities involved in the complex were included in the planning for the recycling program. A comprehensive list of containers needed was developed and sourced from a commercial vendor in addition to containers provided by the San Francisco Department of Environment. These included new collection equipment for use by in-house and contracted custodial staff. Educational materials included a printed piece with program details and additional resources; container labels including 'trash only' labels for additional waste containers; advance flyers to publicize the program; and a PowerPoint training program.

The program roll-out took place over a four-day period in February 2004. The roll-out included trainings for custodians and generators, as well as one-on-one training in each area as containers were placed.

Follow-up visits following the roll-out showed excellent participation throughout the complex, and a marked increase in recyclables collected. The complex has been able to reduce trash service levels as a result.

Due to time and budget constraints, the recycling program was instituted in all areas of the complex except the public lobby areas. A plan was developed for the public areas including a container type approved by the key stakeholders, quantities, placement and budget. The consultant team and leadership at the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center feel strongly that it is important to complete the public area recycling at this high-profile venue.

I. Planning Phase

The San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center is comprised of three major public buildings: the San Francisco Opera House, Davies Symphony Hall, and the Veterans Building which includes the Herbst Theatre. Important stakeholders in the recycling program include the City staff that manage facilities for the complex (generally referred to internally as "War Memorial staff"); the three resident performance companies (the Opera, Symphony, and Ballet); the contracted catering and janitorial companies; and the numerous entities that use office and meeting space in the Veterans Building. These include several City departments, arts agencies, and veterans' organizations. Space in the building is also rented for various catered affairs, and all three performance venues are used for a wide variety of performances in addition to those of the resident companies.

In order to include the important stakeholders in planning the recycling program, SCS Engineers and C²:Alternative Services asked War Memorial staff to convene a planning meeting at the start of the project in August 2002. Since the project was delayed due to a series of contract issues, a second meeting was convened in August 2003. Representatives from each company attended, as well as key War Memorial staff and the manager for Patina Catering, the principal caterer for the Opera House. An open discussion identified specific recycling needs, opportunities and concerns.

Colleen Burke-Hill, Facilities Administrator for the War Memorial complex, was our primary contact during planning and implementation of the project. Her help was invaluable in providing us access to and information about the complicated and diverse set of facilities and stakeholders.

Because of the delays in starting the project, we decided to concentrate on establishing recycling in offices, kitchens, meeting rooms and back-stage areas, leaving out the public lobbies for the three performance venues. This was initially because we anticipated that obtaining approval from key stakeholders for aesthetically acceptable recycling containers would be time-consuming. As it turned out, we were able to obtain this approval with help from War Memorial and Opera staff; however, our container budget was totally inadequate for the desired number and type of containers needed. Fortunately, our decision to begin with the other areas meant that we were able to move forward and complete those within the available budget.

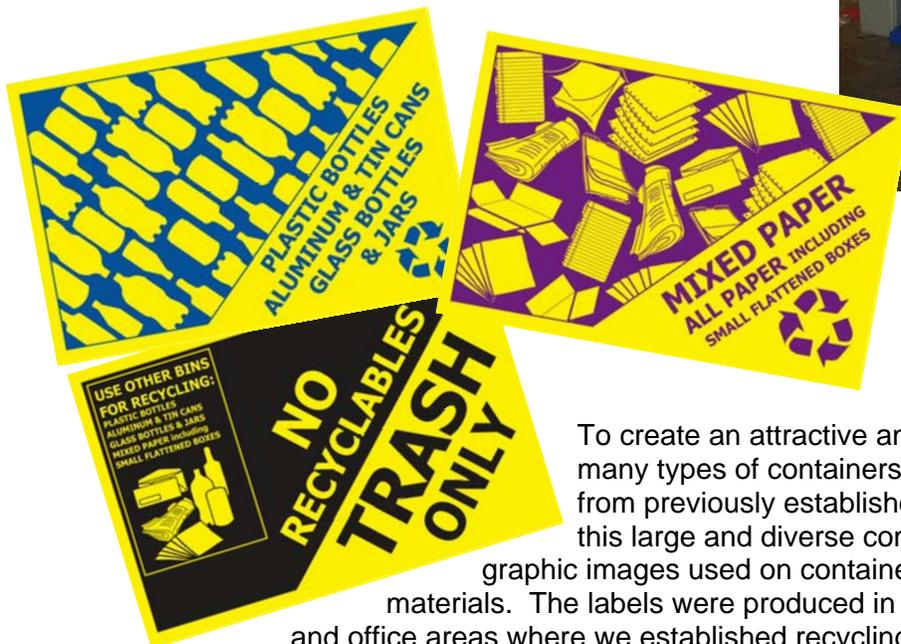
The next step in our planning phase was to conduct a thorough walk-through of facilities to determine types and sizes of containers needed. This also gave us an opportunity to talk one-to-one with contacts in each office and to discuss internal logistics with key players.

The War Memorial custodial supervisor Kelvin Pace worked closely with us to develop an internal collection system for areas serviced by his staff. This system was mirrored for areas (including offices and some backstage areas in the Opera House and Davies Symphony Hall) that are serviced by a contracted janitorial company. In addition, staff members at the Opera and Symphony offices who were already handling some office paper recycling tasks were very amenable to enhancing their programs despite the extra work involved.

With a complete list of containers needed, SCS Engineers was able to source all through one vendor, RecyCal. In addition, the San Francisco Department of Environment provided 30-gallon blue recycling containers and two styles of cardboard desk-side containers. Types of containers sourced from RecyCal included small and medium Rubbermaid recycling containers; small saddle containers to fit onto existing trash containers in locations with very tight available space; and the “Multilevel Warrior” which provides large capacity for separate collection of paper and beverage containers in a small footprint.



Breakroom vending area with “Warrior” container



To create an attractive and consistent look for the many types of containers (including some existing from previously established programs) throughout this large and diverse complex, we created a set of graphic images used on container labels and educational materials. The labels were produced in color for the back-stage and office areas where we established recycling systems during this project. We also produced similar labels using black graphics on clear backing that will be used for the lobby containers. Labels included “Mixed Paper,” “Bottles & Cans,” and “Trash Only.”

A flyer explaining the program also lists on the reverse side a wide variety of resources for re-use and recycling of materials not accepted in the recycling bins.

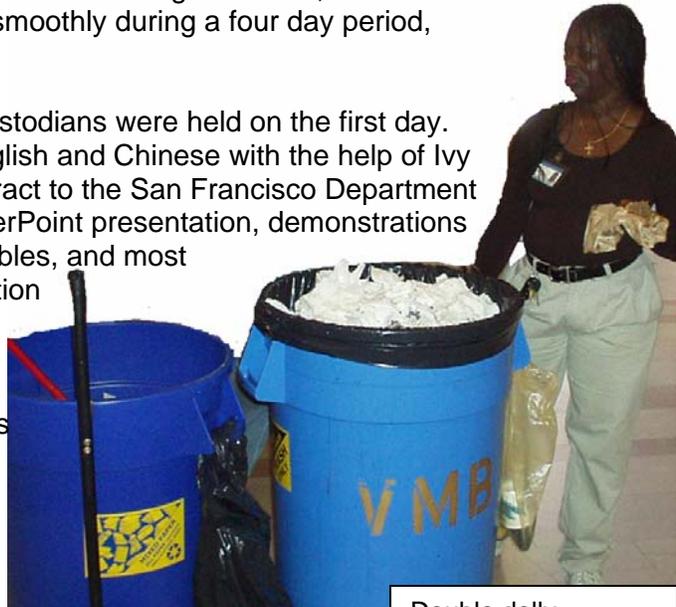
For on-site training during the program roll-out, SCS Engineers produced a PowerPoint slide show that provided background on the history and need for recycling as well as program specifics.

Several days prior to the recycling roll-out, we delivered half-page flyers announcing the programs to all departments to be posted on bulletin boards. Colleen Burke-Hill also sent emails to all departments. Both flyers and emails announced the roll-out of the program and invited all interested to attend orientation sessions.

II. Implementation Phase

There were some complicated logistics involved in receiving, labeling, and delivering containers to facilities at the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center. Despite this complexity and a record-breaking rainstorm, the installation and training schedule went remarkably smoothly during a four day period, February 24-27 2004.

Training sessions with War Memorial custodians were held on the first day. These were conducted bilingually in English and Chinese with the help of Ivy Wan of the Respect Project, under contract to the San Francisco Department of Environment. They included the PowerPoint presentation, demonstrations of examples of different types of recyclables, and most importantly, introduction to a new collection system. This uses a double dolly holding separate barrels for office paper and for trash, replacing the single trash barrel previously in use. Clear can liners for the recycling containers used for bottles and cans were also introduced, and custodians were asked to empty these into a large bag hung on one of the collection barrels.



Double dolly collection system



Training session with War Memorial custodians

Custodial supervisor Kelvin Pace asked us to have the sessions videotaped so that he could reinforce the training during regular staff meetings. San Francisco Department of Environment staff very helpfully did this video taping and provided the tape to him.

Two optional informational sessions for people working in the complex were held to explain the recycling program and answer questions. They included the PowerPoint presentation, demonstration of containers and examples of recyclable and non-recyclable materials.

The project team including Leslie Lukacs of SCS Engineers, and Connie Cloak and Chris Carrieri of C²:Alternative Services worked together to simultaneously deliver and place containers, label existing recycling containers and trash containers, post

educational materials, and educate staff on the recycling program. Each office received desk-side containers for every employee with an educational flyer. Larger recycling containers were placed strategically in areas such as copy rooms, break rooms, dressing rooms, backstage areas and kitchens, and were in every case paired with a trash container also labeled.

Each building already had some hauler service in place for mixed paper, cardboard, and bottles and cans from Golden Gate Recycling. In addition, the Opera House instituted an organics program for kitchen waste early in the project (this was at our instigation but was accomplished during the hiatus in our project, with the help of Golden Gate and Applied Compost Consulting). In order to assure that recycling capacity would be adequate to meet the increased volume of recyclables collected in the new program and that trash service would be adjusted so that the complex would realize cost savings as a result, we maintained contact with Chris Levaggi of Golden Gate throughout the project.

Backstage at Davies Symphony Hall



Although the delayed timeline meant that our follow-up was limited to a couple of months after the roll-out, we were able to observe marked increases in recyclables collected. War Memorial staff have reduced garbage service in at least two of the three buildings, and have increased the frequency of recycling pick-up. During our follow-up visits we

checked in with key stakeholders, observed the custodial staff utilizing the new collection system, and monitored recycling and trash collection containers. We also took photos of recyclables observed in trash containers and emailed them to the appropriate staff people with suggestions for improvement. At the request of custodial supervisor Kelvin Pace, we produced signage for trash rooms in three languages and installed them during a follow-up visit.



Tri-lingual signage, Opera House basement

III. Problems and Resolutions

The challenges faced by the consulting team (aside from the delays caused by contract issues, which were external to the project but resulted in some confusion and lost time) primarily involved the complexity and diversity of the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center complex.

Careful planning including walk-throughs and conversations with staff throughout the complex were important in making sure we understood the generation patterns and

recycling needs of each area. For example, certain rooms in the Opera House basement are used as offices for part of the year during the Opera season, but are storage or wardrobe space during the Ballet season. In the Veterans Building, many of the offices are secured areas (Treasurer's and Tax Collectors' offices) and it was difficult for us to determine just how much of the paper generated in these areas was already being collected through a confidential shred program.

Despite the multiple players involved we felt that we were successful in involving nearly everyone with the partial exception of the contracted janitorial company that services offices and some backstage areas in Davies Hall and the Opera House. Despite repeated calls and the offer to conduct staff trainings in Spanish (the language, we were told, of most workers for this company) we were unable to meet with management. We did make contact with some of the staff themselves, and managers at both buildings who routinely deal with these workers were given the list of key points that we developed. As far as we could tell during follow-up visits, the recyclables are being correctly handled by the contracted janitorial crews.

Inevitably there are internal politics among so many interacting entities. We were able to avoid falling into any pitfalls while acknowledging and working with issues that were brought to us. For example, since War Memorial custodial staff asserted that the contracted catering staff is frequently guilty of contaminating recycling containers, we met with the catering managers to discuss the importance of alerting new and temporary staff to the recycling program. We also emphasized to the custodial staff that we were working with caterers, contracted janitorial company, and generators to make the program run smoothly for everyone.

The logistics of handling and delivering all the new containers was also challenging as there was no available storage space in the complex and of the three buildings only Davies has a freight dock. We managed this by receiving at a contracted warehouse and using a rental truck as our base of operations during the roll-out. War Memorial staff blocked off a parking space for us adjacent to the Opera House and this system worked very well.



Unloading with the help of War Memorial staff



Containers staged on the Davies dock.

One category of recyclables is particularly challenging and may be impossible to capture. This is litter picked up outside the buildings by cleaning staff, which amounts to several large bags per day. Most of this is left by homeless people who routinely use the doorways and walkways around the buildings at night. Custodial staff are specifically trained to handle this material as little as possible while collecting it due to concerns about pathogens. For this reason although the litter contains beverage containers, newspapers and cardboard, it is not considered feasible to separate it for recycling.

Conclusion

Thanks in no small part to the help and enthusiasm of staff throughout the War Memorial and Performing Arts Center complex, the recycling program has been successfully incorporated into day-to-day activities. As with any program it is critical that managers continue to monitor, reinforce, and trouble-shoot, and we have assurances from key staff in each area that this will happen. The ongoing assistance of San Francisco Department of Environment staff will also be helpful to these managers.

Our greatest concern as we conclude this project is that the front-of-house recycling program for patrons remains to be instituted. Because this is such a high-profile venue serving the people of San Francisco and visitors from all over the world, we consider that a recycling program here is highly desirable. Furthermore, the War Memorial staff who have worked very hard to make the back-of-house programs a success are anxious to see the front-of-house program completed. Since this project has resulted in a plan and budget for containers, we hope that funding will be made available to carry out the plan.

Attachments:

List of containers/ locations

Key Points for Custodians

Advance flyer

Recycling handout

Container labels

Memo on recommendations for front-of-house containers