**San Francisco Launches New Generation of SmithGroup-Designed Public Amenities**

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SAN FRANCISCO, December 1, 2022 – [SmithGroup](https://www.smithgroup.com/), one of the nation’s leading integrated design firms, celebrates the launch of its design for AmeniPODS, a new generation of public amenities in San Francisco including toilets, advertising, interactive information and micro-retail kiosks. The first public toilet was installed for real-life testing at Embarcadero Plaza across from the Ferry Building last week, and the new designs will replace the remaining 24 toilets and 114 advertising kiosks throughout the City.

In 2018, after an invitation-only design competition to redesign and re-envision the City’s public kiosks, SmithGroup’s innovative design was selected for development and implementation. With a clear awareness of the importance of these public amenities in the urban environment, the SmithGroup team set out to make these updated street furniture elements more accessible and approachable through their design and appearance.

“The new toilets are unique to San Francisco, with a design that blends sculpture and technology to create a cleaner, safer and more hygienic experience,” said [Bill Katz](https://www.smithgroup.com/people/bill-katz), design principal at SmithGroup. “With their modeled stainless-steel surface, they will literally reflect our diverse city neighborhoods and their deep-rooted history while creating sculptural street furniture.”

The updated design shows an understanding of the maintenance requirements in a varied urban environment. The exterior shell was conceived as a kit-of-parts, with a small number of repeated panels that come together to shape the minimalist, organic forms. The various design concepts look to sculptural simplicity as a guide for design and engineering decisions. Their modeled, polished exterior cladding creates a connected family of amenities that take on different appearances depending on the nature of their surroundings reflected on the units. The specific shaping of the form navigates accessibility requirements, breaks down the kiosk massing and maximizes the artistic reflections of people and place. The upper curves seamlessly continue below to form the shaped, protective concrete base. The re-envisioned restrooms improve upon performance and sustainability with multiple updates including the addition of interior skylights, low-flow fixtures and rainwater collection for washing the exterior shell.

The combined amenities are part of a San Francisco Public Works collaboration with street furniture company JCDecaux, which covers construction, installation and daily maintenance expenses at no cost to the City. JCDecaux also funds staffing at approximately 11 of the toilets as part of the Public Works’ Pit Stop program in which an attendant is on hand to ensure the toilets are kept safe, clean and operational for their intended use.

“These public toilets provide bathroom access for our residents and visitors, alike,” said interim San Francisco Public Works Director Carla Short. “They are clean and safe, and these updated street amenities reflect our San Francisco values, as we invest in a public realm designed to promote dignity, inclusivity and beauty. We also recognize they are an important tool to help us maintain sidewalk cleanliness, while providing people with bathrooms that are inviting and sanitary.”

“We are excited to be working collaboratively with both San Francisco Public Works and the project team from SmithGroup,” said J. Francois Nion, chief operating officer of JCDecaux San Francisco. “Together we have developed the next generation of street amenities that will better serve San Franciscans and visitors alike.”

In addition to serving as a platform for advertising, 10 kiosks will house micro-retail establishments, such as newspaper stands, coffee vendors and artists, and another 15 will include interactive screens with public service announcements and wayfinding information. In a partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission, 40 of the advertising kiosks along Market Street will include public art posters by local artists.

The new toilets, as well as the updated advertising kiosks, will be in the same locations as the original amenities. Among the public toilet locations are Embarcadero Plaza, Civic Center Plaza, Twin Peaks, the 16th Street and 24th Street BART stations and the Castro. Embarcadero Plaza was chosen for the pilot as it is at the confluence of residents, workers and visitors – and adjacent to a vibrant public space.

Open for public use during a testing period of up to 60 days, the feedback will be used to troubleshoot any mechanical problems that may emerge. After the testing, the first toilet will remain in place at Embarcadero Plaza and the remaining 24 toilets will be manufactured and then installed.

**SmithGroup** ([www.smithgroup.com/](https://url.avanan.click/v2/___https%3A/www.smithgroup.com/___.YXAzOnNmZHQyOmE6bzpmNGJkNWQ1MzkyYjhkOThkNjExMTA5ZTM5OWMzNzcyZjo2OjM3MjA6M2Q0N2IwMmQwZTkzMDM2Yzg1ZmExYzgwZGE2OTcxODc0MDI5YmVkYjljYjFlODA2YjYxOWNlOGMyMGQ2MzRjNjpoOlQ)) is one of the world’s preeminent integrated design firms. Working across a network of 19 offices in the U.S. and China, a team of 1,300 experts is committed to excellence in strategy, design and delivery. The scale of the firm’s thinking and organization produces partnerships with forward-looking clients that maximize opportunities, minimize risk and solve their most complex problems. SmithGroup creates exceptional design solutions for cultural and higher education institutions, science and technology organizations, healthcare, urban environments, diverse workplaces, mixed-use and waterfront developments, and parks and open spaces.

**San Francisco Public Works** ([www.sfpublicworks.org](http://www.sfpublicworks.org/)): As a 24/7 operation with a diverse set of responsibilities, Public Works touches every neighborhood in San Francisco. The staff designs and manages construction of civic buildings and streets, cleans and greens the right of way, maintains civic buildings; trains people for jobs, keeps the right of way free of hazards, paves the streets, repairs bridges and public stairways, expands accessibility and works at the forefront addressing some of San Francisco’s biggest challenges.

**JCDecaux** ([www.jcdecaux.com](http://www.jcdecaux.com/)), the number one outdoor advertising company worldwide, is present in more than 80 countries and 4,033 cities. For more than 55 years, JCDecaux products and services have been the benchmark in urban innovation, quality, aesthetics and functionality. A longstanding member of the San Francisco community, JCDecaux has operated street furniture programs at the service of the City since 1994.