



*Turning Public Space
into Community Value*

- Event Planning & Scheduling
- Event Programming & Management
- Event Guidelines & Standards
- Permit Management
- Site & Facilities Maintenance
- Operations Management

Yerba Buena Gardens

Market Environment

In 1985, the site of Yerba Buena Gardens was a parking lot in a derelict neighborhood — the tattered welcome mat to Moscone Convention Center. The work of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency transformed the area and is considered a model for improving urban areas. Yerba Buena Gardens was a focal point of this strategy.

Today, Yerba Buena Gardens is a centerpiece of the City’s cultural, convention and visitor district, surrounded by museums, hotels, educational institutions and shopping. Senior housing coexists with work/live lofts and luxury high-rise residences in a multicultural neighborhood.

Two major components comprise the Gardens. The north side of the Garden features a 5-acre landscaped lawn with public art, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial and fountain, and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts performance building. To the south, across a pedestrian bridge, a five-acre children’s garden and play circle leads visitors to the Children’s Museum, ice skating rink, bowling center, and historic carousel.



Challenges

- Transform a derelict area in to a safe, comfortable, active, and attractive destination.
- Create a new management structure and qualified provider to manage, operate and staff Yerba Buena Gardens on behalf of local government agencies.
- Integrate diverse and overlapping needs of City department’s nonprofits, educational and cultural institutions, hospitality and convention businesses, and local businesses.
- Establish a sense of community among residents and visitors: seniors, disabled communities, international and local visitors, conventioners, and children and teens.

“MJMMG’s vision of activating public spaces with culture results in the creation of safe hubs and encourages the community to develop an identity around music, dance, or art, which reinforces a feeling of ownership. In the process of activating the public space MJMMG actually creates a magnet that draws people there. The space becomes a destination.”

Arturo Riera | Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival, Co-Founder and Director of the Latin Jazz Youth Ensemble of San Francisco

Services Delivered

Our work at the Gardens began when it opened in 1993 and includes a broad, ongoing range of services:

- Comprehensive property management on behalf of the City of San Francisco Administrators Office (successor to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.) Short- and long-term strategic planning for effective site management and maintenance.
- Placemaking development, including event programming, security, maintenance, and site support.
- Coordination with area stakeholders such as Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco Police Department, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Metreon, and Yerba Buena Community Benefit District.
- Revenue collection, reporting and analytics, including use of asset management software to provide scheduling and cost information for capital improvement projects.

MJMMG developed and continues to manage a wide range of programs to enliven the Gardens, draw people, and ensure a positive experience for all who visit. For example, we:

- Established the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival to draw visitors.
- Created the Garden Guides Program to engage urban youth.
- Trained staff to assist non-English speaking residents and visitors.
- Trained staff to work with artistic, festival, community and commercial users on event logistics with multiple city agencies.
- Trained staff to oversee a closed-circuit security monitoring system and radio dispatch system.
- Promote environmental sustainability of the Gardens by implementing a zero pesticide and toxic free policy and comprehensive recycling program.



Results

- Each year, 4.5 million people visit this once-vacant location.
- Yerba Buena Gardens is financially sustainable due to ground leases, many of which remain with the initial developers.
- MJMMG continues to drive heavy traffic to cafes and other operators with the Gardens. For example, the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival attracts 120,000 visitors yearly to enjoy world-class performing artists.
- The Gardens have catalyzed the area's transformation into a bustling neighborhood: more than 2,500 new residences have been built in the last decade.
- MJMMG received the award for Outstanding Achievement for Physical Improvement from the International Downtown Association and the City's Environmental Achievement Award.



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