

# Going Public!

Prepared for the Office of Mayor Tom Potter  
City of Portland, 2006

Strategies for Meeting Public Restroom Need in Portland's Central City



**Relief Works thanks the many stakeholders and technical advisors who provided us with insight into Portland's public restroom issues:**

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**Portland State University  
Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program**

Planning Workshop provides graduate students with a professional planning experience. Student teams develop consulting contracts with clients for planning services that address local and regional issues and the students' personal and professional interests. The Workshop provides experience in planning for constructive social and environmental change, while considering the planner's ethical responsibility to serve the public interest.

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Public restroom sign in Seattle, WA.



A fern grows out the side of this comfort station in Ankeny Park.

***“As a nation, we lag far behind other wealthy countries in creating public restroom facilities.... It’s as if the need to go to the bathroom does not exist.”***

Arthur Frommer,  
Best-selling travel book author, *Frommer’s Travel Guides*

## Portland's Central City should have a clean, safe and accessible urban restroom network open to all.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following document summarizes the findings and recommendations contained in Relief Works' report *Going Public! Strategies for Meeting Public Restroom Need in Portland's Central City* (2006) prepared for the Office of Mayor Tom Potter.

Relief Works hopes the Mayor's Office and the City of Portland seriously consider the recommendations and findings of this report, and ultimately work towards improving and enhancing Portland's urban restroom network.

### RESTROOM ADVOCACY GROWS

Citizen activism and growing political interest have created an opportune time to lay the groundwork for public restroom planning in Portland.

- The grassroots advocacy group **PHLUSH** (Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human), published a report in February 2006 calling for public restrooms in Old Town Chinatown.
- In 2005, the **Portland Mall Revitalization Citizens Advisory Committee** requested that public restrooms be included in the Transit Mall revitalization.
- In 2005, **TriMet** conducted a study of U.S. transit agencies to collect information on public restrooms.
- A 2004 **Portland Parks and Recreation survey** found that access to clean and safe restrooms was a chief concern of citizens.
- Mayor Potter's 2006 **Street Access For Everyone (SAFE)** initiative seeks solutions to street disorder by focusing on community-driven prevention and intervention efforts through basic amenities like public restrooms.

### WHY PUBLIC RESTROOMS?

**Infrastructure.** Just as streets, parks and schools form critical elements of our city's infrastructure, public restrooms provide a basic service to all Portland residents and visitors. Everyone needs access to a restroom when away from home or work.

**Livability.** Adequate safe, clean, and accessible public restrooms are an essential component of Portland's pedestrian, bicycle and transit networks.

**Equity.** Civility laws unfairly criminalize groups such as the homeless for urinating or defecating on city streets and sidewalks, despite their limited access to public restroom facilities.

**Economic Costs.** Clean and Safe's annual costs are estimated at \$10,000 to 12,000 for the cleanup of human waste in the downtown core.

### VISION

Portland's Central City should have a clean, safe and accessible urban restroom network open to all.

### PROJECT GOALS

The goals of Relief Works' project and report are to:

1. **Plan** for the restroom needs of all Central City users.
2. **Assess** current supply of public restrooms.
3. **Locate** areas of unmet demand.
4. **Recommend** facility, management, funding and policy options for implementation.

## **PUBLIC RESTROOM ISSUES**

The primary challenges facing the Central City's public restrooms are:

- Public's negative perception
- Aging infrastructure
- Inappropriate uses
- Vandalism and intentional mayhem
- Restroom closures
- Limited operating hours
- Cleanliness

## **RESTROOM USERS**

Access to public restrooms is a cross-cutting issue. Specific populations identified as having particular need for public restroom facilities include:

- Tourists
- Shoppers
- Nightlife crowd
- Event attendees
- Transit riders
- Bicyclists
- Pedestrians
- People with medical conditions
- Pregnant women
- Homeless
- Park users
- Families and children
- The elderly
- "Restroom challenged" individuals

## **SCOPE**

The scope of this project is the Central City Plan District, which was divided into the following districts:

- Downtown
- Pearl
- Old Town Chinatown

- University
- South Auditorium
- Waterfront
- South Waterfront
- Goose Hollow
- Lloyd / Albina
- Central Eastside

## **URBAN RESTROOM NETWORK**

An "Urban Restroom Network" encompasses all restroom facilities and their corresponding levels of accessibility to the public.

**Restricted Access:** The least-accessible restrooms to the public. Includes private homes, workplaces, and "customer-only" establishments.

**Semi-Public Access:** Officially only accessible to paying customers or with a key or code, including coffee shops, malls, and grocery stores.

**Public Access:** Restrooms open and accessible to everyone without restrictions. Include public building, library, and park facilities. Public-access restrooms are the focus of this report.

## **WHAT IS A "PUBLIC RESTROOM?"**

Inspired by the American Restroom Association, a "public restroom" is a facility that provides at least one toilet for use by the general public without a fee (includes portable toilets).

Public restrooms can be categorized as interior and exterior. Exterior restrooms are directly accessible from rights-of-way and include freestanding facilities like those in parks. Interior restrooms require a user to enter a building in order to access the restroom.



# Public restrooms are needed in any area where public restrooms are lacking and human activity is sufficiently high.

## METHODOLOGY

**Stakeholder Interviews:** Representatives were interviewed from over 20 stakeholder groups representing a range of Central City restroom interests, including neighborhood associations, social service organizations, city bureaus, and non-profits.

**Case Studies:** To assess other attempts to address public restroom need, Relief Works researched Amsterdam, Beijing, Denver, London, San Francisco, Seattle, Singapore, and Taiwan.

**Existing Conditions.** An assessment of Portland's current public restroom facilities was conducted for safety, services provided, ADA accessibility, building components, and maintenance. Each restroom was scored and ranked on a scale.

**Supply.** The current supply of public restrooms was assessed to determine total number of toilets, ADA-accessible stalls, male-to-female ratio, and baby-changing facilities.

**Demand.** Major transit junctions, high-use paths, parks and plazas, nightlife activity clusters, and social service clusters, were the criteria used to determine demand.

**Need.** Public restroom need was determined by comparing existing public restroom supply to district demand.

Relief Works defined public restroom need as any area where public restrooms are lacking and human activity is sufficiently high to warrant a public restroom.

## ALTERNATIVES

We evaluated options in each of these categories:

- Facility types
- Management
- Funding
- Policy

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis of alternatives, the following recommendations were developed for the Office of the Mayor.

### Task Force Recommendations

The City should create a Public Restroom Task Force to implement public restroom-related projects. The Task Force should:

- Consist of representatives from city bureaus, neighborhoods, public safety, and other concerned citizens.
- Coordinate development of resources for managing, cleaning, monitoring, and funding public restrooms.
- Consider siting new public restrooms with public input as appropriate, and evaluate the impact of any restroom closures.

### Overall Recommendations

#### Shared Responsibility

- The responsibility for providing public restrooms should be shared. For example, a partnership between the City and the Portland Business Alliance could effectively locate facilities downtown.

#### Signage

- Adequate exterior signage is necessary to identify the nearest public restrooms, especially those inaccessible from the street.
- The Central City Pedestrian Wayfinding Signs should indicate public restroom locations.

## District-Specific Recommendations

### Old Town Chinatown

- Support PHLUSH/City Repair artist-designed public toilet.
- Consider the feasibility of a hygiene center.

### Transit Mall Revitalization

- TriMet and the City should provide public restrooms along the new MAX Green Line at Union Station, Pioneer Courthouse, and PSU.

### Three Downtown Parks

- Consider incorporating public restrooms into the designs for the new park at Park Block 5, the renovation of the Smart Park at 10th & Yamhill, O'Bryant Square, and Ankeny Park.

### Bicycle end-of-trip facilities

- New bike stations are planned for the westside Hawthorne Bridgehead and PSU campus.

### Pearl District

- Provide a public restroom at Jamison Square, as the fountain attracts many children and families.
- Provide a public restroom in the planned two-acre Neighborhood Park.Lloyd / Albina
- Provide a public restroom adjacent to the existing coffee kiosk at the Rose Quarter Transit Center.

### South Waterfront

- Plan for restrooms along the Willamette Greenway Trail extension and the neighborhood park.

## Opportunities

Include public restrooms in upcoming public projects and plans in districts where significant need exists. Examples include:

### Central City Plan Update

- The 2007 update to the 1988 Central City Plan should be used to prioritize and plan for future restroom needs.

### Fire Station #1 Relocation

- Design a public restroom in the new Fire Station #1 that is accessible either from the exterior or from the fire museum.

(See **District-Specific Recommendations** for the following:)

### Transit Mall Revitalization

### Three Downtown Parks Master Plan

### Bike end-of-trip facilities

## Management & Maintenance Recommendations

- Public restrooms should be supervised by a roaming restroom attendant, a nearby retail kiosk, or a security guard.
- Select management based on level of service.
- Address maintenance and repair as critical infrastructure needs.
- Schedule cleaning frequently according to time and level of use.

## Funding Recommendations

### Sponsorship

- Restrooms may be sponsored following the Portland Parks Foundations' "10-for-10 Campaign" model. Possible sponsors include Kaiser Permanente and Widmer Brothers Brewing.

### Urban Renewal Funds

- Use tax increment financing (TIF) to fund new restroom construction in Urban Renewal Areas with significant public restroom need. Funding should be contingent on a community plan for restroom management and ongoing maintenance. See RiverPlace as example.

### Advertising

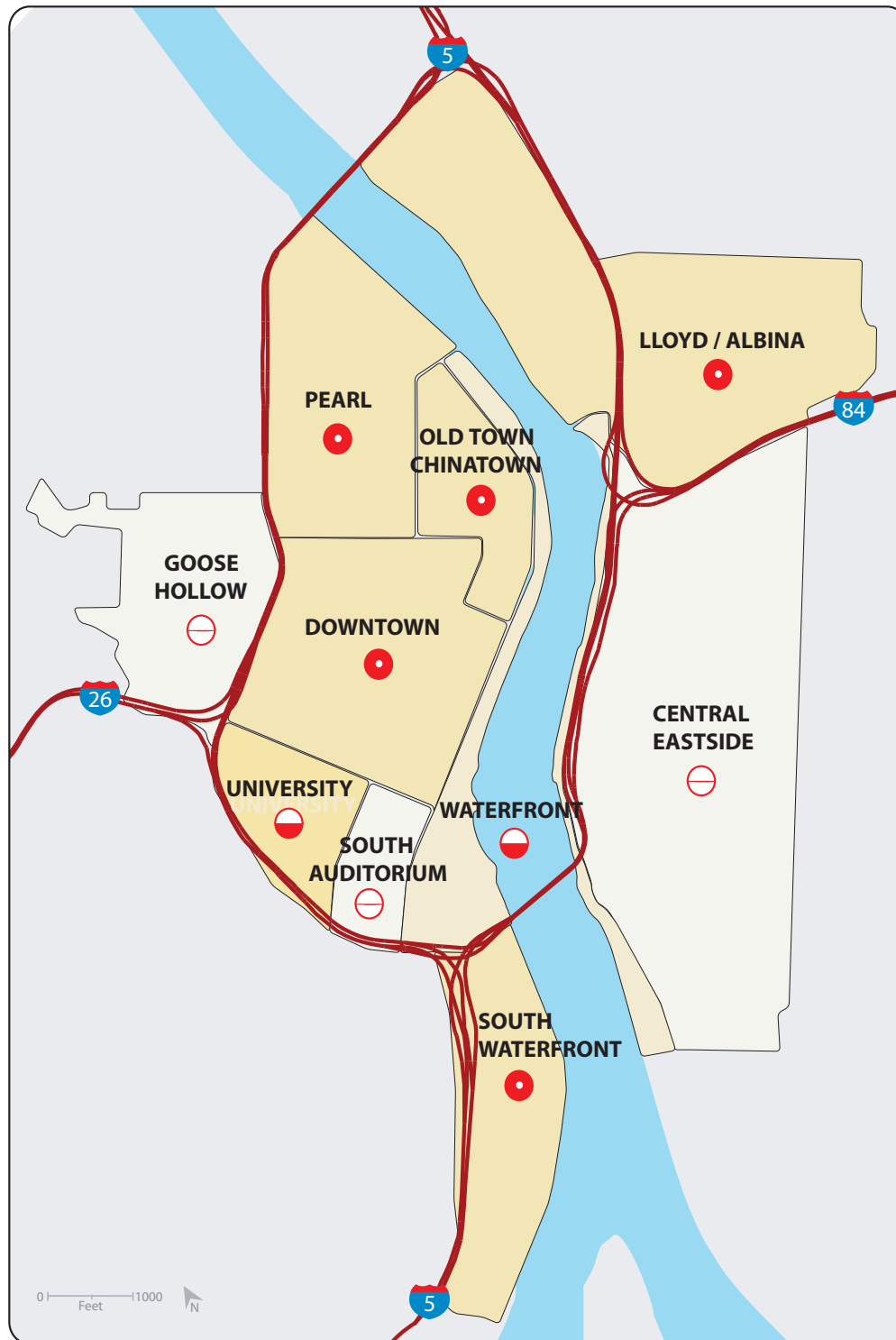
- Explore the possibility of allowing exterior and/or interior advertising to pay for restroom maintenance and operations.

## Pilot Projects Recommendations

Relief Works proposes the City and Public Restroom Task Force facilitate the following pilot projects.

- Support the City Repair/Old Town Chinatown collaboration to design and build an art toilet made of recycled materials from the Transit Mall project.
- Place signage outside a public building with ground floor restrooms to increase awareness of facilities.
- Conduct mobile public urinal installation in popular nightlife location to combat after-hours street urination.
- To gauge public use, install temporary port-a-potty units in areas where a public toilet facility is being considered.

# Central City Public Restroom Priority Areas

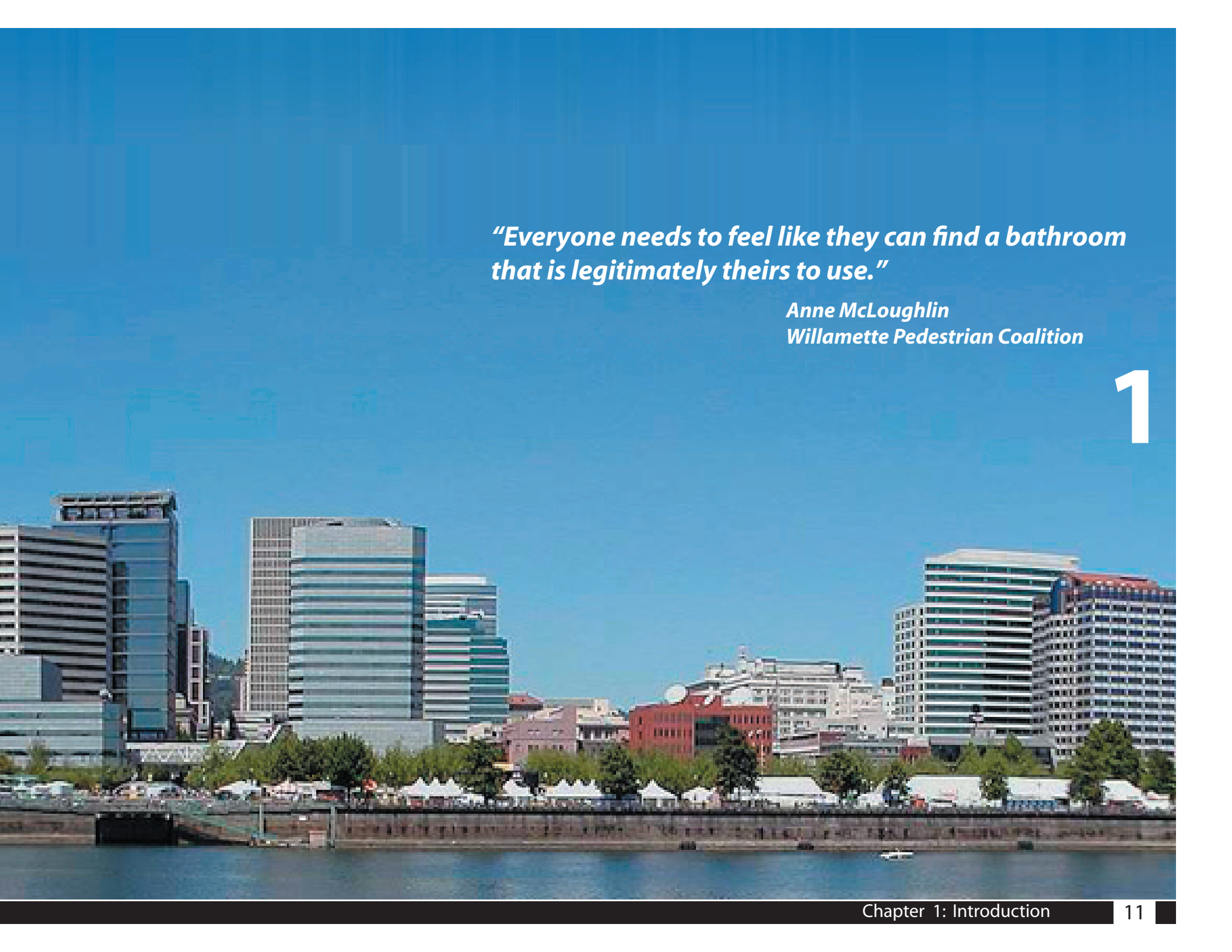


- 
**New Restrooms needed (High Priority)**  
 Concentrations of users and / or lack of facilities requires immediate need for new facilities.
- 
**New Restrooms needed (Medium Priority)**  
 Future plans dictate a need for more restrooms, but existing facilities are adequate.
- 
**No immediate restroom need (Low Priority)**  
 No need exists. District should be re-evaluated at a later time for future need.

# INTRODUCTION



Photo credit: portland communique



*“Everyone needs to feel like they can find a bathroom that is legitimately theirs to use.”*

*Anne McLoughlin  
Willamette Pedestrian Coalition*

1

1915

**PORTLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

PORTLAND, OREGON.

July 30, 1915

Honorable H. R. Albee, Mayor,  
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Sir:

Has the thought occurred to you that after January 1st, when prohibition becomes effective, there will be considerable need for comfort stations throughout the city, on account of the saloons going out of business?

The construction of large underground stations is pretty expensive, and in taking up the matter with Seattle I find that they have come to the conclusion that it would be better to erect a number of individual single unit stations on the sidewalks adjoining the alleys, rather than to build a few stations with a greater number of fixtures.

If we adopt such a measure the city having no alleys would have to place them on the street corners, and this, to my mind, would be very objectionable.

If our Civic Bureau can be of any assistance to you in the way of a Committee to find out how the matter is being solved in other cities, please feel at liberty to call upon us.

It may be, of course, that you have the matter entirely solved, and this is just a thought that occurred to me that I should bring to your attention.

Yours very truly,  
*Anna Smith*  
Secretary

2005

**Memorandum**

April 13, 2005

To: Mayor Potter

From: Mayor's Downtown Livability Group

Subject: Availability of Public Restrooms in the Central City

The discussion on public restrooms in the Central City has been going on for well over a decade. The issues of security and maintenance have been the roadblocks to finding a solution to this problem in the past. The Portland Business Alliance and the Old Town/China Town Neighborhood Association, along with other organizations, would like help from the City to seriously explore solutions.

Both Seattle and San Francisco are two cities that have moved forward with public toilets. Seattle has taken a multi prong approach using portable toilets, self-cleaning toilets and monitored facilities. The city pays for this program internally.

San Francisco has provided public toilets mainly thru a contract with Viacom Outdoor. Through a long-term lease, they install self-cleaning toilets that include advertising rights that subsidize the costs.

We have three recommendations:

- High-level discussion about installing public restrooms as the Central City Transit Mall is rebuilt to accommodate light rail, as well as other public projects such as the relocation of Fire Station #1. This discussion should include the Mayor's office, Portland Business alliance, Tri Met, Portland Development Commission, Portland Department of Transportation, Portland Visitor's Bureau, Portland Parks Department and the Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhood Association.
- An inventory of all public restrooms and ADA accessibility in the Central City, including Waterfront Park and Saturday Market. Some of these facilities are open periodically and some are closed at this time.
- Consider a trial project that would allow the toilets at Saturday Market to open during the week, staffed in a manner similar to the Clean and Safe street cleaning program. The area below the Burnside Bridge is problematic, and plagued by the stench of urine and defecation. A trial will help us learn the problems and advantages of monitored public toilets.

We look forward to helping move these discussions along.

Sub Committee Members: Howard Weiner and Bob Robison

90 years apart, both of these letters were written by concerned citizens to Portland's mayor about the need for more public restrooms.

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

Citizen advocacy for public restrooms has a long tradition in Portland. Letters dating to 1915 document citizens requesting elected officials to address the city's need for public restrooms. Today, voices from the community continue to advocate for meeting the basic human needs of Portland's residents and visitors.

Portland's Old Town Chinatown (OTCT) Neighborhood Association has been at the forefront of local advocacy efforts for public restrooms. OTCT planning and visioning documents have consistently called for the establishment of public restrooms.<sup>1</sup> On a walking tour with Mayor Tom Potter in early 2005, OTCT residents prioritized public restrooms as a cross-cutting issue affecting all neighborhood constituents.

In May 2005, residents, business owners, and staff of human service agencies in OTCT formed a public restroom research and advocacy group called "Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human" (PHLUSH). With the support of national and international public restroom organizations and Portland State University graduate students, PHLUSH produced a 35-page report with proposals for public restrooms in OTCT.<sup>2</sup>

Citizen interest in and advocacy for public restrooms is growing in Portland:

- A 2004 Portland Parks and Recreation survey found that access to clean and safe restrooms was a chief concern of citizens.
- In 2005, former Mayor Vera Katz's Downtown Livability Group sent a memo to newly elected Mayor Potter requesting his office take action on addressing the need for public restrooms in the Central City.<sup>3</sup>
- The Portland Mall Revitalization Citizens Advisory Committee requested that public restrooms be installed as part of Portland's renovated Transit Mall project.
- TriMet initiated a study on the provision of public restrooms by U.S. transit agencies.<sup>4</sup>
- On Feb. 7th, 2006, PHLUSH presented its findings at a meeting OTCTNA, attended by neighborhood residents and city staff.
- Mayor Potter's recent Street Access For Everyone (SAFE) initiative seeks solutions to street disorder by focusing on community-driven prevention and intervention efforts through basic amenities like public restrooms.

After the PHLUSH report, a group of PSU Urban & Regional Planning graduate students contacted the Office of Mayor Tom Potter with a proposal to conduct an in-depth analysis of Portland's public restrooms. The PSU team, Relief Works, and the Mayor's Office agreed to explore the issues and potential solutions surrounding demand and supply of public restrooms within Portland's Central City. This report is Relief Works' final product for the Office of the Mayor.



Portland Tribune article, February 6, 2006 (above); PHLUSH presents its *Report to the Community* at an Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association meeting, February 2006 (below).

# HISTORY OF PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN URBAN AMERICA



The conditions in late 19th-century industrial cities gave rise to the first public restrooms in the United States. Waves of immigration and the Industrial Revolution produced an increasingly overcrowded and unsanitary urban environment. Known as “comfort stations,” public restrooms and baths were built to stem mounting public health and sanitation concerns and the needs of those without access to private toilets and baths.<sup>5</sup> By the early 20th-century, comfort stations could be found at highly trafficked intersections in cities from New York to Seattle.



Public restrooms first appeared in America’s 19th century industrial cities (above) in response to sanitation concerns. Today public restrooms continue to provide a sanitation function but also serve to reinforce the pedestrian, bicycle and transit orientation of cities like Portland.

By the mid 20th-century, comfort stations had evolved to become “places where shoppers, commuters, merchants, and travelers could wait, rest, and refresh themselves before continuing their work within the city or their journey beyond.”<sup>6</sup> Paid attendants at these facilities sold toiletries, tobacco supplies or shoe shining services. Public restrooms also became fixtures in urban parks serving the recreational needs of residents.

Pressure on municipalities to provide public restrooms eased as new building codes required businesses to provide restrooms for employees and customers. Restroom facilities became more widely available along an expanding transportation network that included restrooms in airplanes, trains, mass transit stations, and at highway rest stops.

By the 1970s and 1980s, cities began closing public restrooms. The disappearance of restroom attendants and an aging infrastructure made public restrooms targets of vandalism and illicit activity like drug use and prostitution. The perception of public restrooms shifted from clean and friendly to unhygienic and dangerous.

Recently, a revival of these public amenities can be seen in cities around the globe. In 1994, San Francisco acquired self-cleaning automatic public toilets (APTs); Seattle made a commitment to siting APTs and portable sanitation units throughout the City; Denver completed a Parks Restroom Master Plan in 2005; and, in preparation for the 2008 Olympics, Beijing is working to provide a public restroom within an eight-minute walk from any point in the City.

At the beginning of the 21st-century, public restrooms continue to play an important role in modern urban society. As citizens, elected officials and planners increasingly recognize the importance of pedestrian-oriented urban places and livable cities, onstreet amenities like public restrooms are regaining their functional place in the urban landscape.



## North Park Blocks Comfort Station SW 8th & Ankeny



Photo courtesy Oregon Historical Society

1920's

Almost a century ago, Portland opened several comfort stations downtown (such as above and below, left). The City spared no expense on the restrooms constructed of marble, ceramic tile, and porcelain.



Photo courtesy Oregon Historical Society



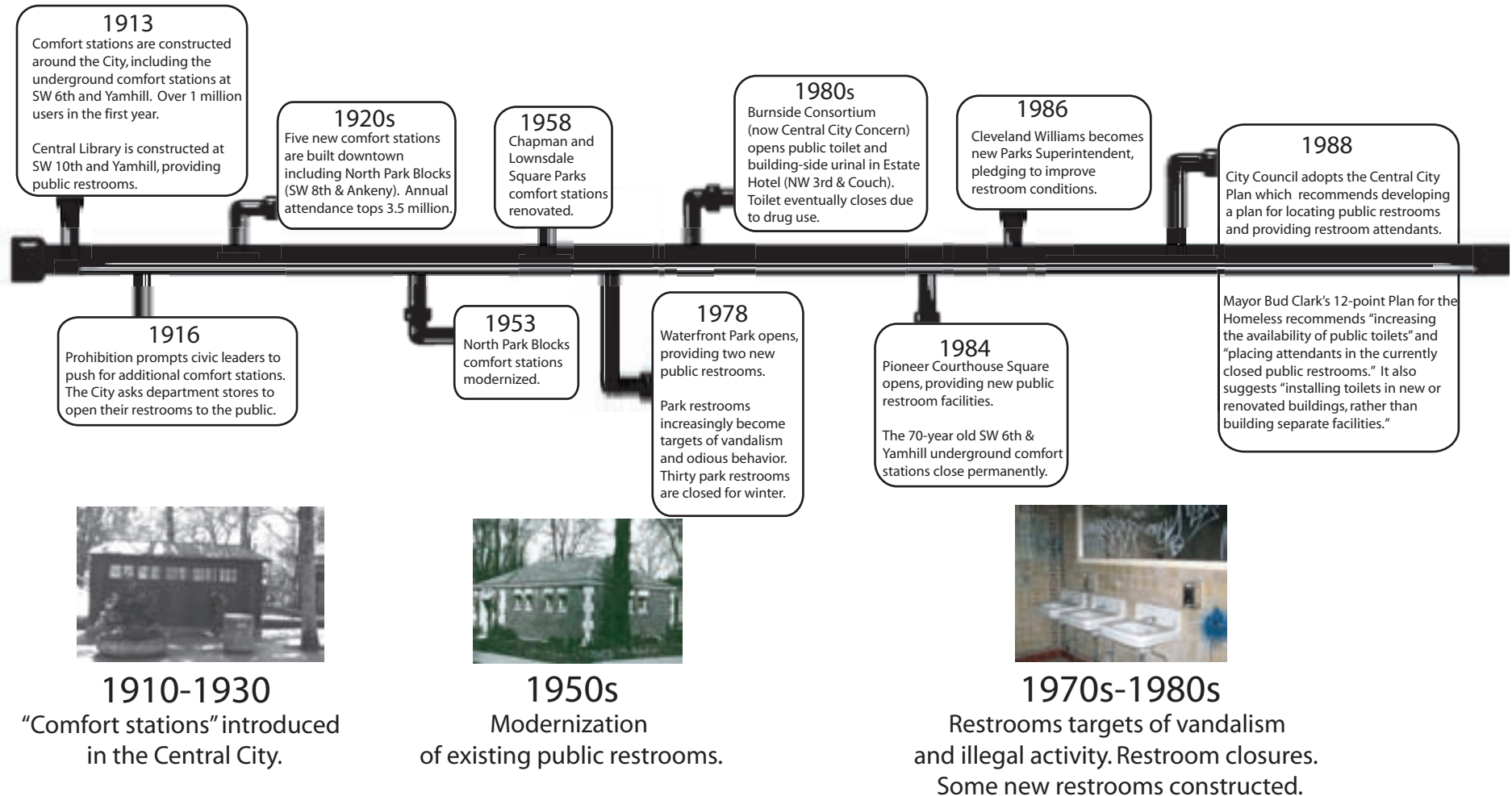
2006

In the mid 1980s, this restroom was converted to single occupancy, unisex stalls. Unsupervised with no windows and lockable doors, once inside users can do whatever they want.



# Figure 1.1 Portland Central City Public Restroom Timeline

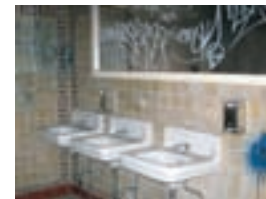
Portland's Central City public restroom history at a glance.



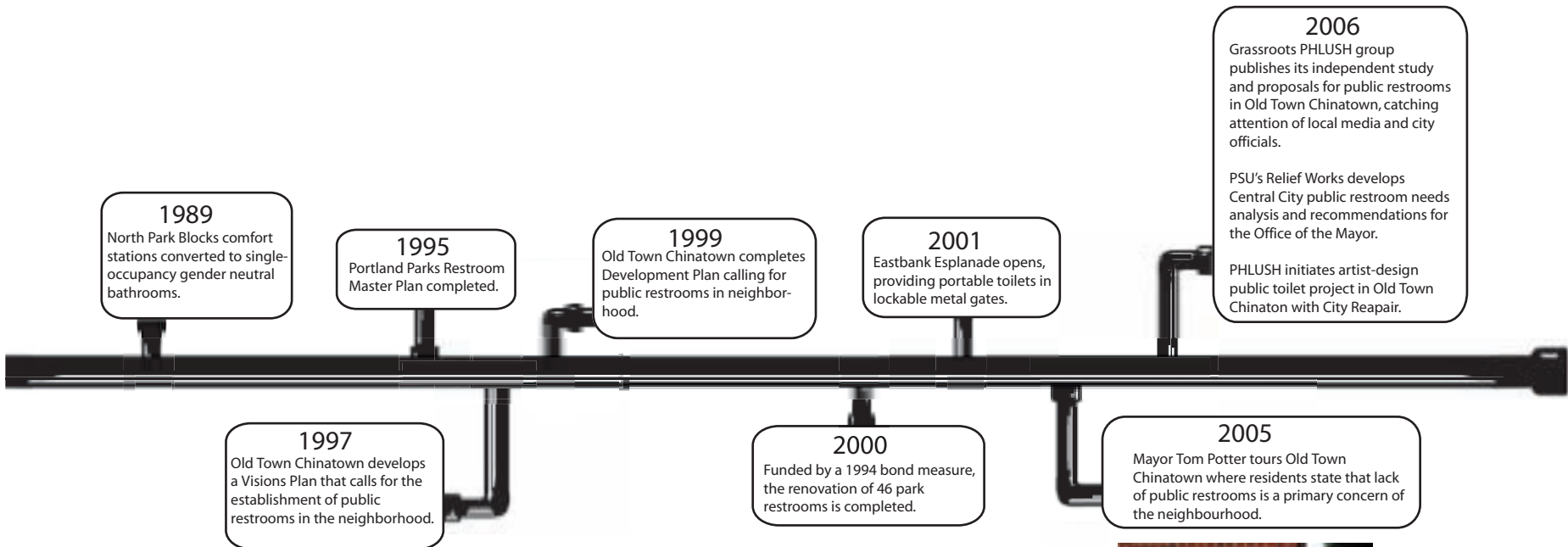
**1910-1930**  
"Comfort stations" introduced in the Central City.



**1950s**  
Modernization of existing public restrooms.



**1970s-1980s**  
Restrooms targets of vandalism and illegal activity. Restroom closures. Some new restrooms constructed.



**1990s**  
Community draws attention to Central City restroom issues. Parks initiates massive restroom renovation.



**2000- present**  
Grassroots public restroom advocacy. City officials respond to public demand.

# WHY PUBLIC RESTROOMS?

## Why Are Public Restrooms Important?

In a 24-hour period, the average person uses a restroom every 2-3 hours or 8-12 times a day.<sup>8,9</sup> Portland's public restrooms provide a basic service to the City's residents and visitors. Facilities dedicated to performing necessary biological functions are as fundamental a need in our city as streets, parks and schools.

Although public restrooms have been an ongoing topic of public discourse in Portland for decades, public restroom needs in the Central City have never been addressed. Citizen activism (PHLUSH) and growing political interest have created an opportune time to lay the groundwork for public restroom planning in Portland.

The Central City was selected for study based on public demand for restrooms in the City's core. The Central City boundary used in this report is taken from the Central City Plan (1988).

## Project Goals

- 1) Plan for restroom needs of all Central City users
- 2) Assess current supply of public restrooms
- 3) Locate areas of unmet demand
- 4) Recommend facility, management, funding and policy options for implementation



## Public Restrooms & City and Regional Plans, Policies and Goals

The City of Portland has been shaped by planning that emphasizes a human-scale urban environment easily accessed by foot, bike, or transit. The local plans, policies and goals responsible for Portland's development have helped the City earn its reputation as one of the most livable cities in the United States. Adequate safe, clean and accessible public restrooms are an obvious component of Portland's infrastructure and successful pedestrian, bicycle and transit networks.

The following plans either address public restrooms explicitly or support the creation of a healthy public restroom network:

- Portland Parks & Recreation Restroom Master Plan (1995)
- The Central City Plan (1988)
- The Comprehensive Plan (1980/2004)
- The Pedestrian Master Plan (1998)
- The Bicycle Master Plan (1996)
- Metro's 2040 Growth Concept (1995)

(See **Appendix A** for plans related to public restrooms)

These plans and policies emphasize the need to provide facilities and amenities that support peoples' needs while on the streets. The restroom needs of pedestrians, cyclists, or transit riders on City streets require the attention of planners and elected officials. Public restrooms can play a key role in providing for and increasing the use of alternative modes of transportation, thus reinforcing an essential aspect of Portland's livability.

## Economic Costs

Economic costs of the underprovision of public restrooms include costs borne by the City and businesses when restrooms are closed, unavailable or otherwise inaccessible.

### Costs to City:

- Costs of Clean and Safe's cleanup of human waste from city streets and sidewalks are estimated at \$10,000-12,000 annually in the downtown core.<sup>10</sup>
- "Restroom challenged" individuals often avoid traveling downtown when they are unsure if and where public restroom facilities are available.

### Costs to businesses:

- Decreased business activity in districts affected by the presence or smell of urine and/or feces.
- Costs of time and supplies in sanitizing property, storefronts and sidewalks.
- Costs of additional utilities, cleaning, and repair associated with more intensive use of business restrooms when public facilities are unavailable or unclean.

## Social Equity

### Homeless

Civility laws prohibit urination or defecation on City streets, sidewalks, and parks. For groups whose access to restrooms is limited either by time of day or social status, the enforcement of civility laws is unjust if accessible public restroom facilities are unavailable. The most common citations issued by law enforcement to violators are for "Offensive Littering" and "Preservation of Property," which carry fines from \$25 to possibly jail time. The homeless frequently face criminalization for a basic human function when restrooms or social service agencies are closed. For those who have no other choice but to go to the bathroom in public, affronts to their dignity occur daily.

### **Gender Issues**

Physiologically, women need to use restrooms more frequently than men. Pregnancy and menstruation necessitate available restrooms for the majority of women, who also typically need more time in restrooms than men. Despite this, multi-stall restroom facilities typically provide men and women equal numbers of toilets / urinals. Women also suffer disproportionately from unclean public restrooms than men, since they require a clean seat, while men can stand while using the restroom.<sup>13</sup>

As political and public awareness of transgender and gender identity issues grows, pressure to address gender discrimination is mounting. Specifying single stall gender-neutral or unisex restrooms over gender-specific restrooms in new construction should be prioritized in the City's public restroom planning.

### **Public Health**

#### **Special Needs or "Restroom Challenged"**

Many people within the Central City have special and sometimes urgent restroom needs. The American Restroom Association uses 'restroom challenged' to refer to those individuals who require access to a restroom more than once per hour.<sup>11</sup> The lack of public restrooms can restrict restroom challenged individuals' participation and enjoyment of recreational or civic activities.

People with special restroom needs include those with impaired mobility or those who require ADA-compliant restroom facilities. Four groups classified as having special needs or being restroom challenged are:

- Disabled
- Families and children
- Elderly
- Those with medical conditions

A variety of medical and normal conditions demand that certain people have easy restroom access. Pregnancy, diabetes, blood pressure medication, incontinence, Crohn's Disease, irritable bowel syndrome, and stroke are among those that increase restroom need. Young children and older people generally have diminished bladder capacity and need frequent restroom access.

#### **Health Benefits of Public Restrooms**

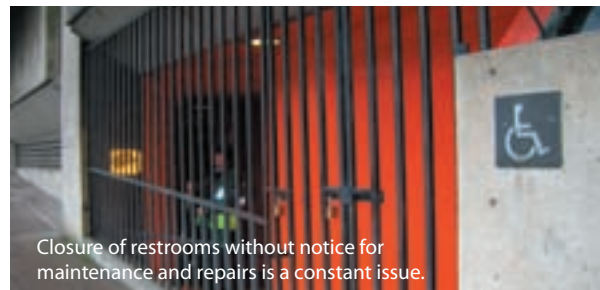
- More frequent urination results in decreased bladder cancer likelihood and other illnesses.<sup>12</sup>
- Increased water consumption due to relatively easy access to restrooms.
- Decreased public urination and defecation and risks of communicable disease.
- Increased physical activity like walking and bicycling due to increased restroom provision.

#### **Central City Public Restroom Issues**

Portland's public restrooms face a number of challenges threatening their ability to perform their intended function. The following are the primary Central City public restroom issues.

#### **Public's Negative Perception**

Many people see public restrooms as unclean, unhygienic or unsafe. Whether perceived or real, these deter use of public restrooms and create urban spaces that are feared or avoided.



Closure of restrooms without notice for maintenance and repairs is a constant issue.

#### **Aging Infrastructure**

Many of the City's public restrooms, especially in Parks, were constructed decades ago. Aging public restroom buildings and infrastructure often require expensive upgrades such as roof or plumbing replacement.

#### **Inappropriate Use**

Public restrooms provide attractive off-street locations for criminal activity and improper use such as sleeping, drug use, prostitution, and violence.

#### **Vandalism / Intentional Mayhem**

Arson, graffiti, assaults on plumbing and destruction or theft of restroom fixtures lead to long-term restroom closure.

#### **Restroom Closures**

Restrooms are closed for routine maintenance or to repair damage from vandalism. While Parks tries to avoid extensive restroom closures, more intensive repair can require delays. Closure of public restrooms contributes to an undependable urban restroom network.

#### **Limited Operating Hours**

Very few public restrooms in the Central City are open 24 hours per day. People living on the streets or those emerging from bars and nightclubs face the challenge of finding public restroom facilities and the fear of law enforcement if none are available.

#### **Cleanliness**

Keeping the City's public restrooms clean is a noble challenge. While many public restrooms are cleaned three to four times per day, unexpected events, accidents or heavy use can prevent public restrooms from meeting the public's high standards of cleanliness and hygiene.

# WHO ARE THE CENTRAL CITY'S PUBLIC RESTROOM USERS?

Access to public restrooms is a cross-cutting issue. Everyone needs access to a restroom when away from home or work.

Portland's Central City is used by a very diverse population. The Central City hosts a large amount of office space, countless retailers and restaurants, several educational institutions, and numerous tourist destinations. Central City restroom needs are as diverse as the number of users. Specific populations identified as having particular need for public restroom facilities include:

- Tourists
- Shoppers
- Nightlife crowd
- Events attendees – parades, farmer's markets, festivals
- Transit riders
- Bicyclists
- Pedestrians
- People with medical conditions
- Pregnant women
- Outdoor sports players
- Homeless
- Park users
- Families and children
- The elderly
- Restroom challenged



Figure 1.2: Public restroom users

### **Transportation and Mobility**

Restroom users travel through the Central City by many modes to their destinations:

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Transit Riders
- Motor vehicle drivers and passengers

#### **Pedestrians**

All people begin and end trips within the Central City as pedestrians. Walking is the preferred transportation mode for short trips and many longer trips throughout the Central City. Pedestrians are constrained by the ability to locate restrooms within relatively short distances due to slow travel speeds.

#### **Bicyclists**

Portland has an ever-growing contingent of bicycle commuters and is consistently ranked among the top bicycle-friendly cities in the country. A robust bicycling infrastructure of bike lanes, paths and parking increases access to and within the Central City. Bicyclists are best equipped to find public restrooms as they have relatively fast travel speeds and are not limited by extensive parking infrastructure requirements.

#### **Transit Riders**

TriMet's continued investment in light rail and extensive frequent bus service provide consistent transit access, converging on the Central City. Transit riders are the least able to access public restrooms since buses and light rail operate on fixed corridors.

In the past seven years, TriMet's customer call center received an average of one request per month for increased access to public restrooms.

#### **Motorists and passengers**

A large amount of Central City parking is available on-street, in surface lots, and in garages. This allows those in private vehicles to park within a short walk of their destinations, which often offer restrooms.

### **Special Needs and Restroom Challenged**

Disabled and restroom challenged individuals have special needs and may require more easily accessible restrooms. (See **Public Health: Special Needs or Restroom Challenged**)

#### **Residents**

The updated Central City Plan calls for the addition of 15,000 housing units between 1988 and 2015.<sup>14</sup> In a housing inventory conducted in October 2005, the Portland Development Commission (PDC) reported 20,016 housing units in the Central City. Current development in the Pearl and South Waterfront Districts are adding housing to the Central City at a fast rate.

#### **Workers**

According to the PDC, there is in excess of 16 million sq. ft. of office space in 172 buildings within the Central Business District. Offices, retail, and services within the Central City employ thousands of employees. Metro Transportation Analysis Zone data estimated 146,356 employees within the Central City in 2005.

#### **Shoppers**

Shopping opportunities abound in the Central City, home to an abundance of small and large retailers and two large shopping malls. In addition, many restaurants, bars, movie theaters, and special events draw shoppers to the Central City. Small retail establishments generally cluster near larger stores, which almost always provide restrooms. The provision of restrooms for shoppers is therefore of low priority.

### **Homeless**

Portland's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness estimates 4,000 homeless in the City of Portland. The majority are situated in clusters around social service agencies in the Central City. Demand for social services in the Central City far exceeds supply.

#### **Recreationists**

Recreation opportunities abound within the Central City. Multi-use paths frame the Willamette River, providing pedestrian, jogging, and cycling opportunities. There are nearly 100 park acres in the Central City, with several parks just outside the boundary. The Willamette River and Washington Park are accessible from points within the Central City. The two largest park systems, Tom McCall Waterfront Park and the North and South Park Blocks, provide ample space for daily use and special events. In addition to daytime recreational activity, "recreationists" includes nightlife participants. The Central City contains a multitude of restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and movie theaters.

#### **Tourists**

The Central City is the cultural and entertainment hub of the metropolitan region. Among other attractions, the Central City contains performing art and movie theaters, sports facilities, show gardens, seasonal markets, museums, and art galleries.

# URBAN RESTROOM NETWORK

Everyone requires restroom access when away from home or work. Many people can identify preferred restroom destinations in the City. Some are accessible to all while others are not. For example, a tourist may be able to use a restroom in a downtown department store, but a homeless individual may not. A bicyclist needing a restroom may not be able to use a coffee shop's restroom without locating a safe bicycle parking location.

Discussing restrooms in urban environments requires clarification on the range of available restroom facilities. An "Urban Restroom Network" identifies the range of urban restrooms and corresponding levels of accessibility by the public. The Urban Restroom Network (**Figure 1.3**) brings the complex unseen issues associated with urban restrooms into the open for discussion. These include:

- Public vs. private space
- Paying customers vs. non-customers
- Restricted access vs. public access

For the purposes of this report, the following public restroom definitions were inspired by the American Restroom Association, the premier public restroom advocacy organization in the US.<sup>14</sup>

## Public Restroom:

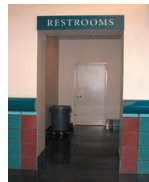
A facility that provides at least one toilet for use by the general public without a fee (includes portable toilets).

## Exterior vs. Interior Restrooms



### Exterior Restroom:

Directly accessible from the right-of-way; includes freestanding facilities (like those in parks).



### Building Interior Restrooms:

Require a user to enter a building in order to locate the restroom.

Depending on the user's familiarity with an area, interior restrooms may not be a wise choice since many public buildings are not signed and do not post the availability of public restrooms. More commonly known to most users are stand-alone (exterior) public restrooms. Stand-alone restrooms are more visible to pedestrians, cyclists, and automobile users, and are therefore a more desirable option for tourists or others unfamiliar to an area.

In this study, the urban restroom network is used to identify truly *public* restrooms. The restroom definition above and accessibility levels described in the urban restroom network diagram informed our thinking on restroom facilities. This study focuses only on restrooms provided for use by the general public.

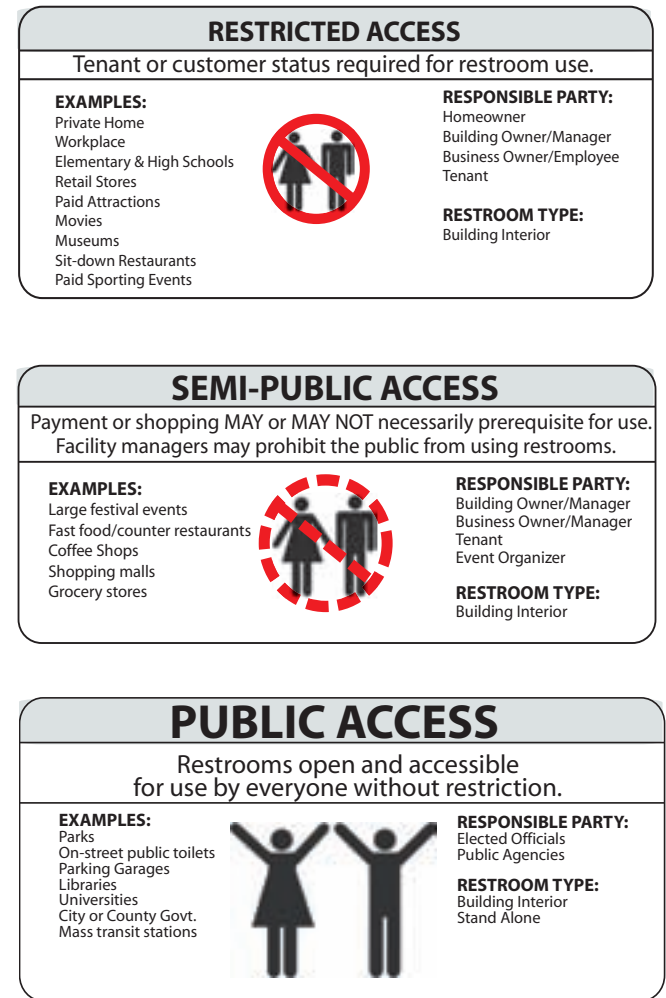


Figure 1.3: The Urban Restroom Network



# METHODOLOGY

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to describe existing conditions, demand for public restrooms, and to develop strategies to meet public restroom needs.

Initial background research revealed limited literature on public restrooms, and few plans and policies that outline public restroom provision across a city. While research included a review of books, articles and planning documents, we relied most heavily on information from interviews with local stakeholders and national and international public restroom planners.

## Stakeholder Interviews

We began with an understanding that the diverse needs of public restroom users must be considered. In order to gather input from user groups within a limited time frame, we conducted in-depth interviews with stakeholder groups that represent various restroom users. Interviews with City staff also informed restroom management, as well as finance and plans and policies that impact the provision of public restroom facilities. Stakeholders interviewed include:

ACCESS Street Intervention Program  
Bicycle Transportation Alliance  
City Repair  
Citybikes  
Clean & Safe  
CleanScapes  
Downtown Neighborhood Association  
Downtown Public Safety Action Committee (PSAC)  
Elders in Action  
Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood Association  
JOIN  
Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association  
Office of Neighborhood Involvement  
Pearl District Neighborhood Association  
PHLUSH  
Portland Bureau of Planning  
Portland Business Alliance  
Portland City Auditor Gary Blackmer  
Portland Development Commission

Portland Office of Management & Finance  
Portland Office of Transportation  
Portland Oregon Visitors Association  
Portland Parks & Recreation  
Portland Police Bureau  
Saturday Market  
Transit Mall Revitalization Steering Committee  
TriMet  
Willamette Pedestrian Coalition

## Existing Conditions

Relief Works conducted an assessment of public restroom facilities in the Central City to obtain quantitative descriptions for each restroom. A Denver Parks & Recreation restroom assessment form was modified and utilized to determine restroom supply. The assessment includes standards for safety, services provided, ADA accessibility, building components and maintenance. Each restroom was scored from one to three for each of the variables in the above categories.

To address variation in restroom demand across the Central City, Relief Works analyzed existing conditions for ten districts within our study area. We developed demand criteria that prioritize high clusters of activity. District demand was determined according to criteria concerning land use and transportation patterns with consideration for restroom users. A district-by-district analysis of supply and demand results in the establishment of need and identifies district locations that do not meet our established criteria for public restroom provision.

## Alternatives Analysis

Relief Works analyzed the most viable options in facility type, management, funding and policy alternatives for the Central City. These were informed by national and international case studies, stakeholder interviews, and current practice.

## Recommendations

Based on further analysis, we chose a few alternatives of each category as most feasible and ultimately recommended these for further action. We also recommend a task force of interested organizations and individuals to work towards implementation. Finally, three pilot projects are recommended for the City to consider as relatively easy tasks to undertake to continue public restroom momentum.

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## EXISTING CONDITIONS

**W**hile the urban restroom network identifies facilities that are publicly accessible, the various types of public restrooms are very different in terms of operation and use. Many restrooms behave exactly as intended, operating as public restrooms. Exterior restrooms are found in parks or located within rights-of-way. Other restrooms located in public buildings are open to the public, but few actually behave as public restrooms. Library restrooms are often used as public restrooms, while many restrooms in public buildings are not. Most city government buildings have security guards or appear and function as office buildings, giving the impression that the restrooms are not actually public. Other restrooms are only open to the public on a limited basis.

The assessment of Central City restrooms concerns the physical condition of restrooms. Pioneer Courthouse Square restrooms and 11 exterior public restrooms comprise the supply of public restrooms within the Central City. Relief Works derived demand based on high concentrations of activity within 10 Central City Districts. The comparison of high demand locations to existing supply establishes locational or geographic need for restroom access within the Central City.

- Existing Public Restrooms
- Facilities Assessment
- Assessing Need Introduction
- Supply
- Demand
- Need Criteria
- Need Defined
- Assessing Need: Accessibility Approach

# EXISTING PUBLIC RESTROOMS



Figure 2.1: Existing Public Restrooms

## Public Restrooms

### Exterior Facilities

- 1** North Park Blocks Comfort Station
- 2** Smart Park @ Nw 1st and Nw Davis
- 3** Waterfront Park @ Burnside Bridgehead <sup>1</sup>
- 4a** Lownsdale Square Men's Comfort Station
- 4b** Chapman Square Women's Comfort Station
- 5** Auditorium Park @ Ira Keller Fountain
- 6** Waterfront Park @ Hawthorne Bridgehead
- 7** RiverPlace
- 8** Eastbank Esplanade @ SE Salmon
- 9** Eastbank Esplanade @ Steel Bridge Crossing
- 10** St. Francis Park <sup>2</sup>
- 11** Burnside Skatepark
- 12** Couch Park <sup>3</sup>

Interior Facilities: The facilities presented are a sample of the interior facilities including those in public buildings.

- 13** U.S. Post Office
- 14** Multnomah County Central Library
- 15** Pioneer Courthouse Square Information Center
- 16** Portland Building
- 17** Portland City Hall
- 18** Portland State University Library
- 19** Portland State University Smith Memorial Student Union
- 20** Portland State University Urban Center
- 21** State of Oregon Building
- 22** Multnomah County Building

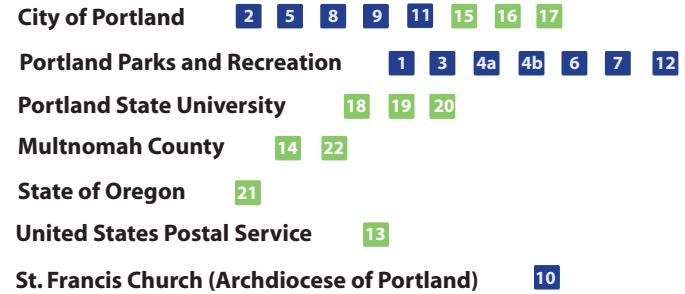
<sup>1</sup> Closed during Westside Big Pipe Construction

<sup>2</sup> St. Francis Park is owned by St. Francis Church which also provides the 24 hour portable restrooms on the site. These restrooms are included as an example of a non-public entity providing 24 hour public restrooms which are directly accessible from the public right of way.

<sup>3</sup> Outside of the Central City Plan District

## Owners

Several public and one private organizations own all public restrooms in the Central City. Portland Parks and Recreation owns the most of the exterior restrooms in the study area, followed closely by the City of Portland. The chart at right notes current restrooms and their owners.



## Maintenance

Like ownership, maintenance of public restrooms is not provided by one public or private group. Two of the most prominent maintenance providers in the Central City are Clean & Safe, a public entity provided through the Portland Business Association, and CleanScapes, a private company based in Seattle. Clean & Safe has a unique relationship as a contractor to serve the downtown's Business Improvement District (BID) with restroom maintenance and on-street security. Unlike CleanScape or other publicly-controlled maintenance firms, Clean & Safe is funded by business owners in the BID. The chart at right provides a rough list of the maintenance providers for public restrooms in the Central City.



# FACILITY ASSESSMENT

The design, condition, and placement of public restrooms vary across the Central City. To attain a better understanding of existing conditions, Relief Works conducted an assessment of Central City public restrooms. The assessment consists of five sections:

## SAFETY



The coffee stand adjacent to the restroom at Riverplace provides direct supervision

## ADA-ACCESSIBILITY



The non-ADA accessible restroom on the Eastbank Esplanade.

## Objectives

Beyond assessing location and amenities in each Central City restroom, assessment objectives included:

- Describing the current condition of the Central City's restrooms with baseline scores
- Identifying a set of criteria that accurately describes restroom characteristics
- Building an assessment that can be easily replicated
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of individual restrooms and restroom types.

## SERVICE



The baby changing station in PSU's Smith Center Men's Room

## MAINTENANCE



Trash overflow in the Portland Building's men's restroom.

## BUILDING COMPONENTS



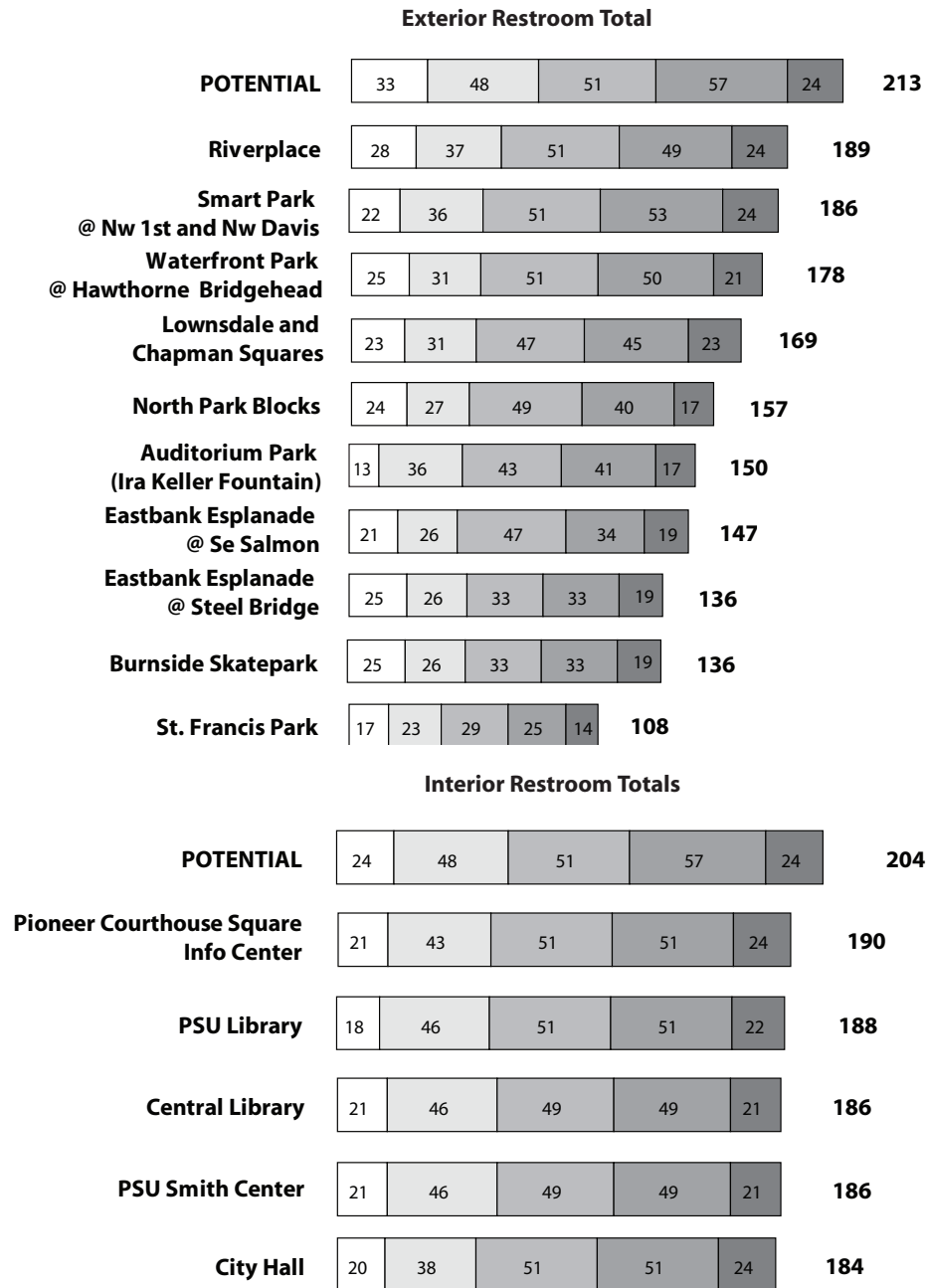
Stainless fixture and hidden valves in the Auditorium Park men's restroom.

## Methodology

The restroom assessment is based on a template from Denver's Department of Parks and Recreation. Specific assessment methodology includes:

- Each section includes questions or criteria describing an individual aspect of a restroom. (Example from **Safety Section**: How well lit is the interior of the restroom?)
- Restrooms were scored for each question on a scale of one to three (lowest to highest).
- Total scores were calculated for individual sections, and assigned overall scores.

Figure 2.2: Exterior and Interior Assessment Results



### Recommendations from Assessment

From the assessment findings on the following pages, recommendations for future restrooms and restroom updates include:

- Safety**
  - Direct or indirect supervision of a restroom should be provided whenever possible.
  - Adequate lighting for both day and night use should be provided for the interior and exterior of every restroom.
  - Hiding places made possible by privacy screens or restroom dimensions should be reduced wherever possible.
  
- Service**
  - Soap and hand towels or hand dryers should be included at every restroom should include.
  - Restrooms should include disposable toilet seat covers and needle disposal containers.
  - Baby changing stations should be provided in both the men’s and women’s restrooms where possible.
  
- Accessibility**
  - Every restroom should offer an ADA-accessible stall, whether portable or fixed.
  - Restroom design should allow space for persons in wheelchairs or mobility devices to move easily.
  - Stall heights should be variable to accommodate persons in wheelchairs and mobility devices.
  
- Building Components**
  - Future restrooms should include stainless steel fixtures, non exposed valves, and automated operation.
  
- Maintenance**
  - Additional or larger trash cans should be provided.
  - Fixtures should be cleaned thoroughly and often.

Figure 2.3: Safety Scale

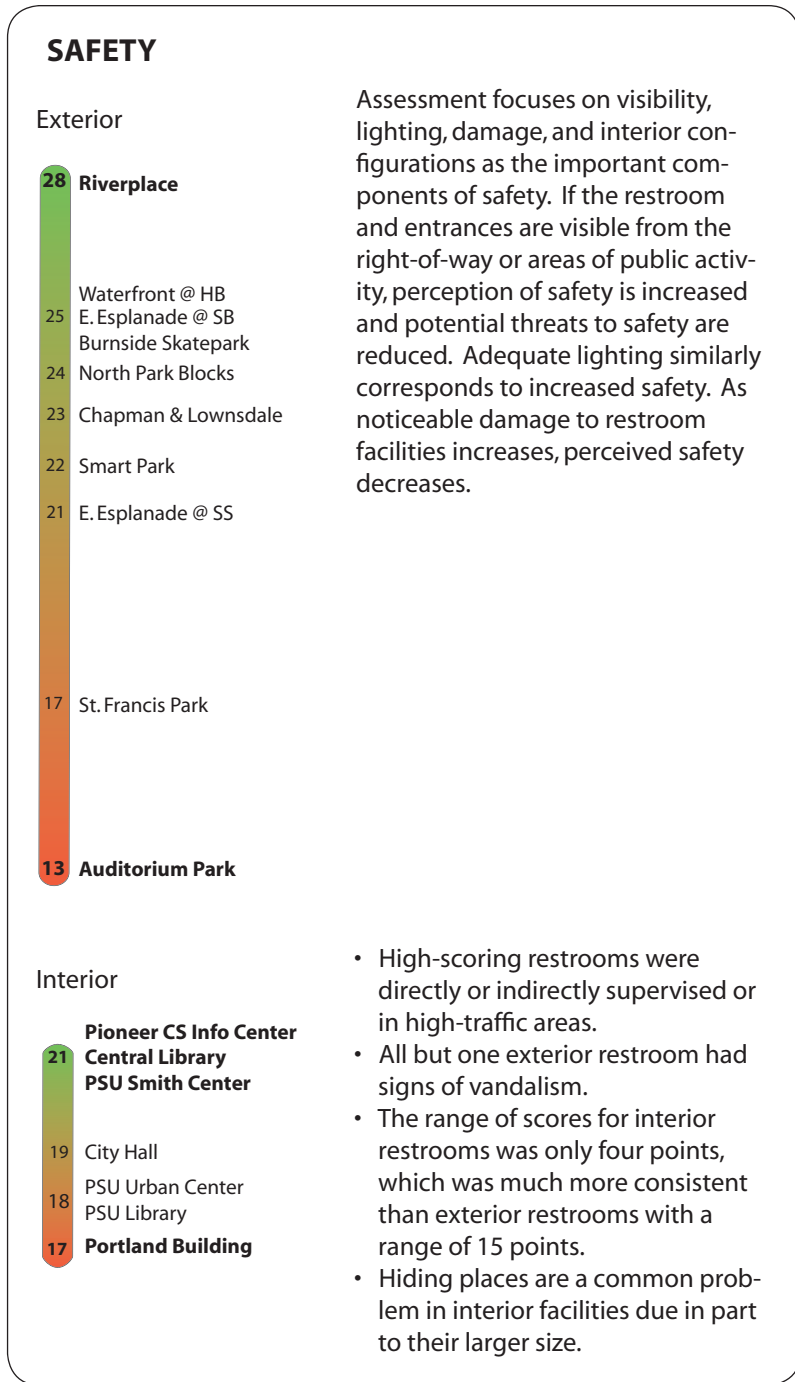


Figure 2.4: Service Scale

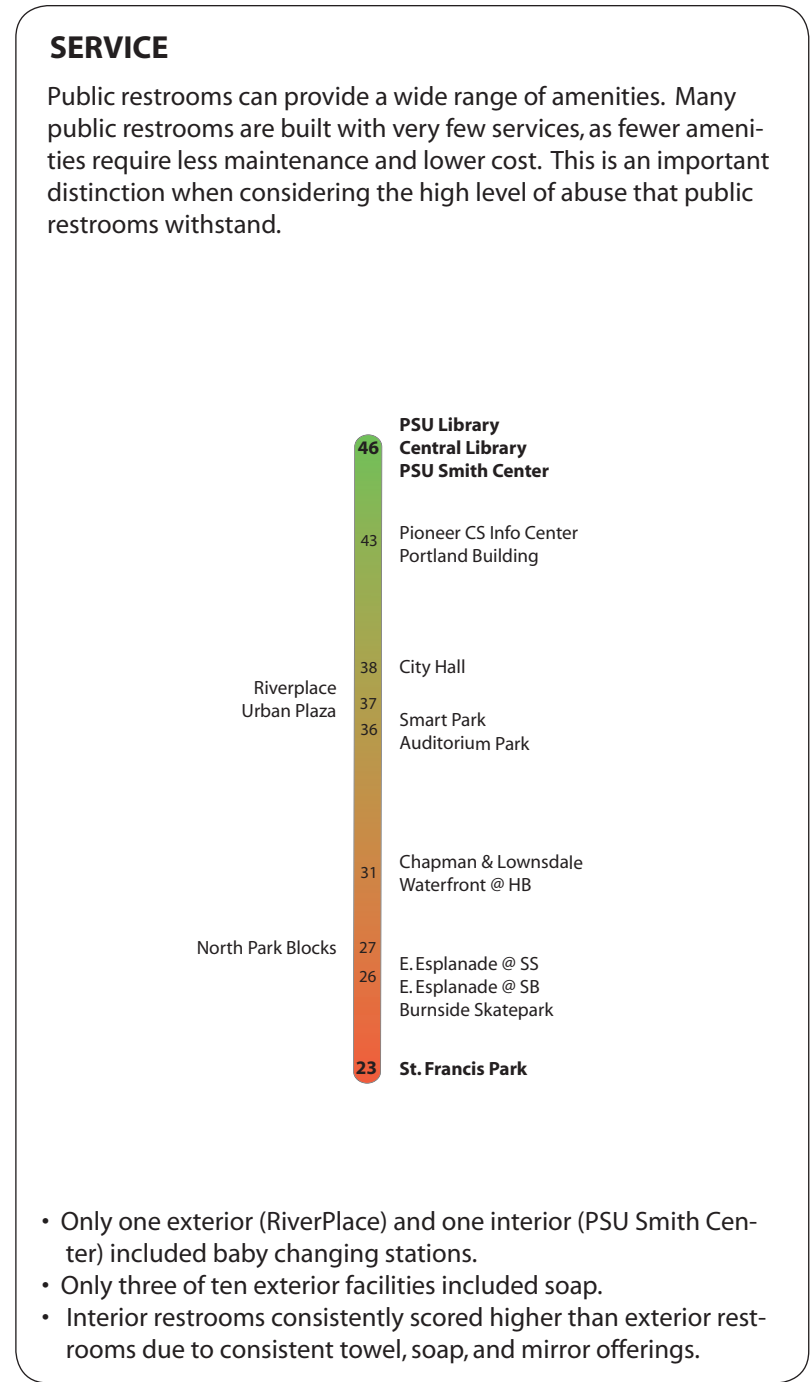
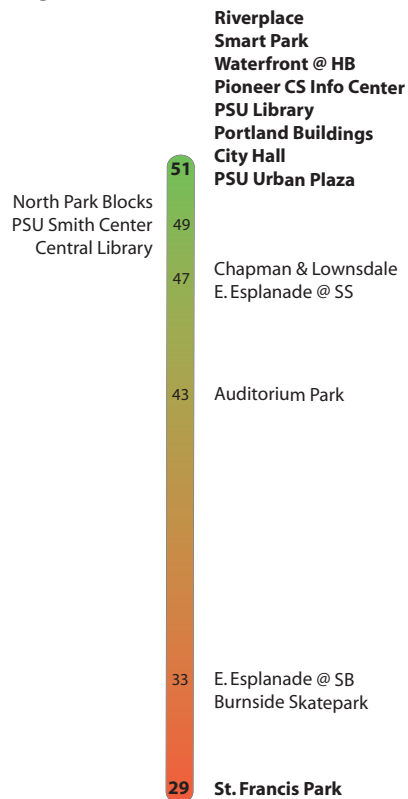




Figure 2.5: Accessibility Scale

## ACCESSIBILITY

To ensure that restrooms are accessible by the disabled, ADA standards are enforced. The assessment considers these standards for each restroom. Single stall restrooms should be ADA-accessible, while multi-stall restrooms should be equipped with at least one ADA-accessible stall. ADA-accessible stalls have grab bars and larger dimensions than regular restrooms.

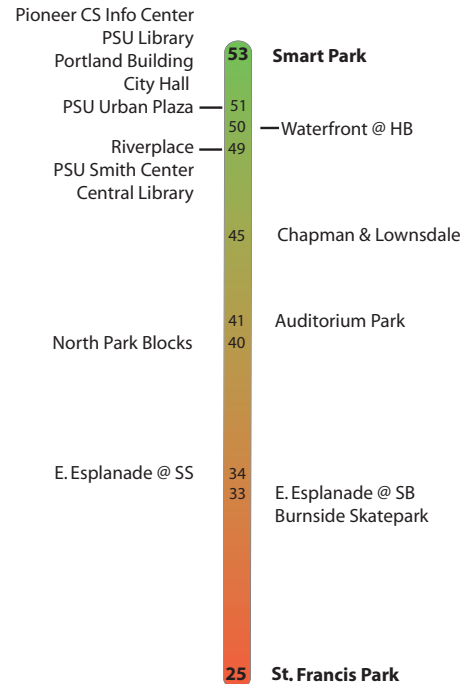


- Newer exterior restrooms, RiverPlace and the Smart Park, scored perfectly.
- The restrooms at the E. Esplanade at the Steel Bridge, St. Francis Park, and Burnside Skatepark did not include any ADA-accessible stalls.
- Five of seven interior buildings earned all possible points.

Figure 2.6: Building Components Scale

## BUILDING COMPONENTS

A wide range of building materials exists for restroom construction. For public restrooms, the materials must be high quality so they can resist damage and vandalism, while being easy to clean.

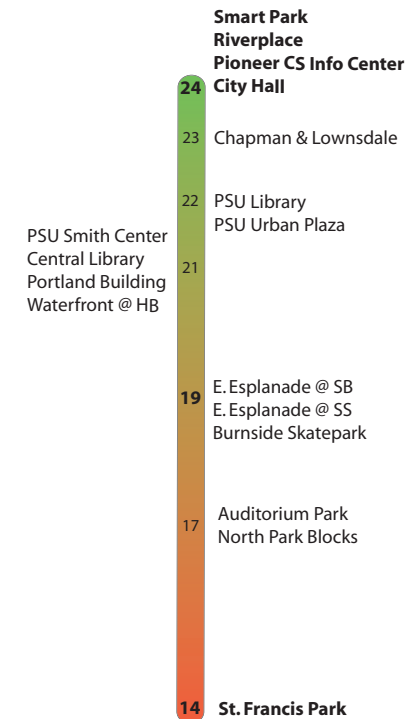


- All interior restrooms included porcelain fixtures instead of stainless steel, possibly for comfort in lieu of longevity.
- Portable toilets scored the lowest due to their vandal-prone plastic construction.

Figure 2.7: Maintenance Scale

## MAINTENANCE

The assessment focuses on the cleanliness and condition of each aspect of the interior of the restroom. The floor, walls, stalls, privacy screens, and fixtures are evaluated in addition to trash receptacle overflow, plumbing backup, and odors.



- The most notable problem with exterior restrooms is water puddles and smell.
- Trash overflow from high use was a consistent problem for interior restrooms.

# ASSESSING NEED

## An Analysis of Districts

The Central City spans 4.52 square miles and is divided by the Willamette River. To truly understand demand and supply considerations within the Central City, a smaller geographic unit of analysis is required. The Central City Plan identified eight Central City Districts. For the purposes of our analysis, we dissected the Central City further, into ten districts, based upon their disparate characteristics. Districts are distinguished by variations in user intensity, land use patterns, and tranny network.

- Downtown
- Goose Hollow
- Old Town Chinatown
- South Waterfront
- Central Eastside
- Lloyd / Albina
- Pearl District
- University District
- South Auditorium
- Waterfront

### GOOSE HOLLOW

Goose Hollow is primarily residential. Employment is highly concentrated on Burnside Street. The only notable destination within the district is PGE Park. While the stadium attracts a high concentration of activity during events, the facility provides restrooms for spectators and employees. The lack of social services translates to relatively low concentrations of homeless population.

### SOUTH WATERFRONT

The South Waterfront District is located on South of the Marquam Bridge. The district is a former industrial site undergoing redevelopment. The district will contain office and retail uses, with an abundance of high-end condominiums. Future plans entail an extension of Portland Streetcar service, as well as, the development of an aerial tram connecting to Oregon Health Sciences University to the West. Plans for the area call for a neighborhood park and a greenway along the river with the extension of the Waterfront Park multi-use trail through the district.

### PEARL

Recent development and the continuing build out of the Pearl District makes it one of the newest in the Central City. The district boasts high end condominiums and retail. Recently developed park spaces in Jamison Square and Tanner Springs Park attract tourists and recreationists to the district. In summer months, the fountain in Jamison Park is highly used by families with young children. No public restrooms exist within the Pearl District, which poses a challenge to park users. "The Fields," a planned neighborhood park, will form a chain with the other two.

### OLD TOWN CHINATOWN

The Old Town Chinatown district is the most interesting district within the Central City. Home to tourist attractions that draw people to the district on nights and weekends, OTCT offers an assortment of restaurants, bars, and nightclubs creating an energetic and extensive nightlife concentration. A large number of social services are located in the district, leading to several homeless related issues. Clean & Safe responds to about 2,250 calls annually concerning human waste on streets and parking lots.

### WATERFRONT

Waterfront Park connects Old Town Chinatown, Downtown, and Riverplace to the Willamette River. The esplanade and waterfront are comprised of parkland and multi-use paths that provide for special events and daily recreation. They facilitate easy pedestrian and bicycle access across the Willamette River between the East and West sides of the Central City. The restrooms within the park are accessible by users in adjacent districts and highly used, and abused. The social problems of the neighboring districts can relocate to the park at night. RiverPlace is an up and coming section of the Central City with recent hotel and retail development. Portland Streetcar expansion connected RiverPlace with the rest of the line in 2005.

### SOUTH AUDITORIUM

East of the University District, at the southern edge of the Interstate 405 loop, the South Auditorium District is unique in the Central City. It is significant as the first urban renewal project in Portland. The South Auditorium district is built on super blocks, largely comprised of residential towers and office buildings. While small parks and plazas exist within the district, their use is mainly restricted to residents and workers. The Keller Fountain public restroom lies just outside the district to the North and several restrooms are accessible to the public at Portland State University to the West.

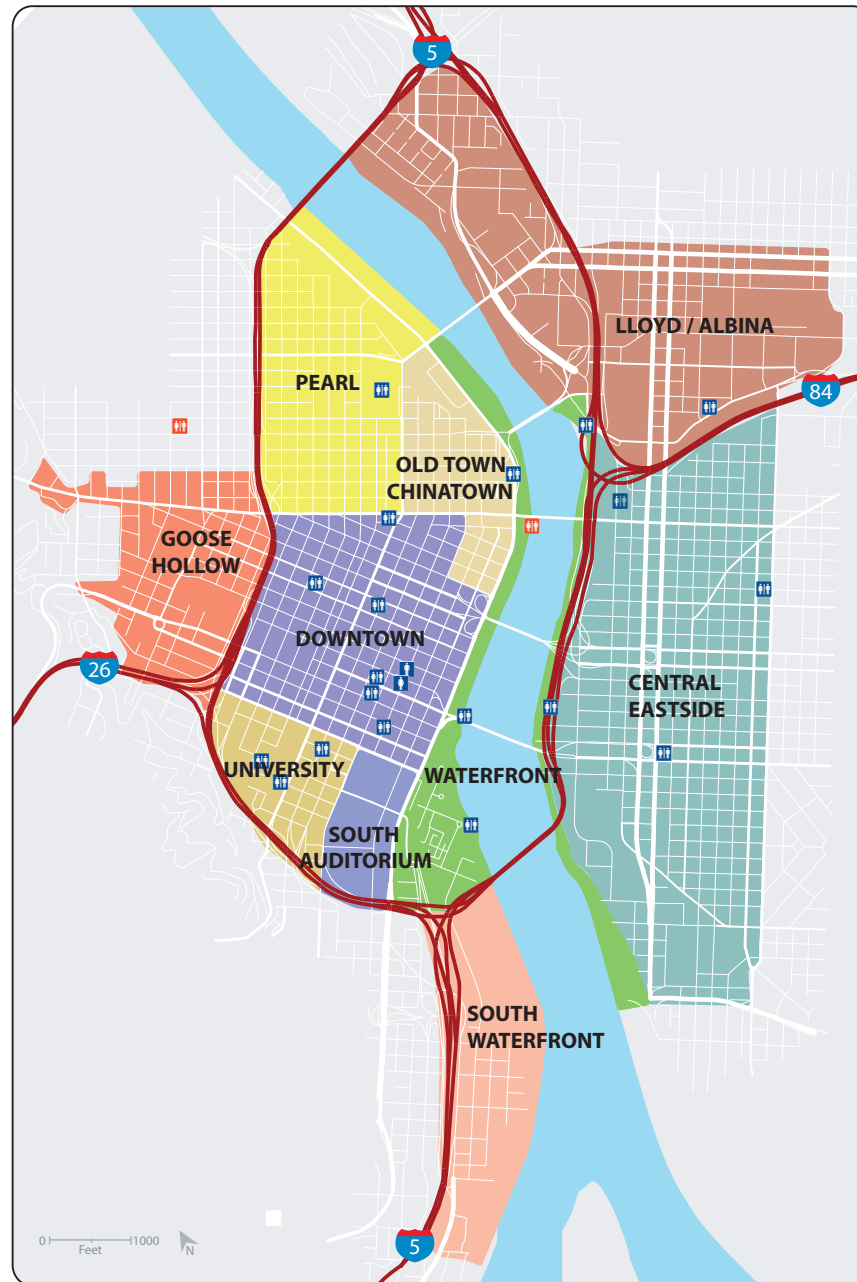
Figure 2.8: Districts Map

**UNIVERSITY**

Portland State University occupies the Southwest corner of the Interstate 405 loop. Classroom buildings, residential buildings, and parking facilities dominate the district. Many of the restrooms in PSU classroom buildings are used by the public. Commercial activity in the District provides ancillary services for the University's students and staff members. The South Park Blocks and the Urban Center Plaza are high use public spaces within the district. The Portland Farmer's Market located in the South Park Blocks contracts out to Portland State University for the use of Smith Center restrooms during market hours on Saturdays. The Urban Center Plaza is a gathering spot for students on warm days, and a transit node for Portland Streetcar and bus lines.

**DOWNTOWN**

The Downtown District is located in the geographical heart of the Central City and truly acts as the focus of activity. Downtown contains the highest concentrations of housing, workers, retail, transit routes, and transit riders in the Central City. Large city government and financial concentrations exist within the district. Pioneer Place Mall acts as the center of an active retail district. The Transit Mall, light rail lines, and the Portland Streetcar run through the district. Pioneer Courthouse Square is the focal point of most transit, with over 21,000 daily visitors.



**LLOYD / ALBINA**

The Lloyd District houses the highest concentration of office space on the east side of the Central City and employs more than any district besides downtown. The district also has restaurants, hotels, retail, and entertainment, which contribute to a high concentration of activity. The Lloyd District contains no public restrooms, but boasts several large attractions, such as the Oregon Convention Center, the Rose Quarter, and the Lloyd Center Mall. The Rose Quarter Transit Station is a large transit convergence among light rail and bus lines.

**CENTRAL EASTSIDE**

The Central Eastside District is largely industrial. High density single and multifamily residential intensifies just east of the district. Currently, there is no one significant attractor or major node in the district that could easily be identified as an obvious site for new restrooms. Social service agencies in the immediate vicinity serve as attractors of homeless.

# SUPPLY

The first step in determining if restroom needs are met in each district is to describe the existing supply, which is measured within districts as well as within a quarter mile of each district's boundary. Measuring supply within a quarter mile, based on the street network, describes user options on the edge of a district. Figure 2.9 (opposite page) includes all exterior restrooms and the interior facility at Pioneer Courthouse Square Information Center. Other interior restrooms were not included because they are intended for use by building employees and patrons as opposed to the general public. Interior restrooms are addressed under the Public Building Facilities column.



Interior of Lowndale Square Park Men's comfort station.

## SUPPLY TABLE DEFINITIONS

### Total Restrooms

All exterior restrooms and the interior facility at Pioneer Square Info Center.

### Total Toilets

Toilets in women's restrooms and all toilets and urinals in men's restrooms.

### Handicap Stalls

Stalls with ADA-appropriate dimensions and amenities, such as grab bars.

### Gender-Neutral Stalls

Total number of unisex stalls. Gender-neutral stalls are not included in the male to female ratio.

### Baby-Changing Facilities

Parents with infants or toddlers require clean and safe places to change their children's diapers. Currently, only two districts have available changing stations and only one exterior restroom, RiverPlace, has a baby changing station.

### Male to Female Ratio

Used by several cities within the U.S. and around the world, the ratio of men's to women's facilities describes restroom equity. Providing more women's restrooms is essential as women tend to need more time using the bathroom than men. Several US states, including New York, Virginia, Texas, and Pennsylvania, require a 2:1 (w:m) ratio. At 1:1.3 (w:m), Portland is severely behind, providing more men's facilities than women's.

### Public Building Facilities

Describing restroom supply in public buildings is a very difficult task. Buildings such as City Hall and Central Library are recognizable and heavily used. However, there are many lesser known buildings, such as the Port of Portland Building, which offer public restrooms. Instead of attempting to identify restrooms in all public buildings, a "plus" sign denotes the existence of public building restrooms and a negative sign denotes nonexistence. Upon completion, South Waterfront will include at least one public restroom in an Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU) building. Two other districts (South Auditorium and Waterfront) currently do not include public buildings with open restrooms.

Figure 2.9: Supply Table

	IN DISTRICT									IN DISTRICT AND WITHIN 1/4 MILE								
	Total Restrooms	Total Toilets	Handicap Stalls	Gender Neut. Stalls	Mens Stalls / Urinal	Womens Stalls	Male to Female Ratio	Baby Changing Fac.	Pubic Building Fac.	Total Restrooms	Total Toilets	Handicap Stalls	Gender Neut. Stalls	Mens Stalls / Urinal	Womens Stalls	Male to Female Ratio	Baby Changing Fac.	Pubic Building Fac.
Downtown	4	25	8	4	12	9	1.3:1	0	+	8*	33*	14*	8*	14*	11*	1.2:1*	0*	+
Old Town Chinatown	1	2	2	2	0	0	1:1	0	+	3*	3*	2*	2*	0*	0*	1:1*	0*	+
Pearl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	2**	7**	3**	7**	0	0	1:1	0	+
Goose Hollow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	1**	3**	1**	3**	0	0	1:1	0	+
University***	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	3	13	4	0	8	5	1.6:1	0	+
South Auditorium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	4	19	8	2	10	7	1.4:1	2	+
Waterfront*	5	10	5	6	2	2	1:1	2	-	11	25	11	10	10	7	1.4:1	2	+
South Waterfront	0	0	0	0	0	0	1:1	0	-	2	4	2	0	2	2	1:1	2	+
Lloyd / Albina	0	0	0	0	0	0	1:1	0	+	1	1	0	1	0	0	1:1	0	+
Central Eastside	2	4	0	4	0	0	1:1	0	+	7	10	5	12	0	0	1:1	0	+
Total	12	41	15	14	14	11	1.3:1	0										

\* Number does not include currently closed restroom on the waterfront at the west end of the Burnside Bridge.

\*\* Indicates district total which include a restroom outside the Central City boundary but within 1/4 mile of the district.

\*\*\* Although the University District does not include any exterior facilities, it does include a large number of interior restrooms available in Portland State University buildings.

# DEMAND

Defining demand for public restrooms is inherently difficult as users' needs and travel patterns are highly variable. Relief Works identified a set of influencing characteristics to define demand and determined the presence of these characteristics in each district. This description of demand characteristics gives both visual and narrative information regarding specific aspects of demand. Five demand criteria respond to these characteristics. This approach, though not-all encompassing, describes concentrations of users and their spatial locations. Using such a technique provides a more inclusive method of prescribing demand compared to an approach that analyzes accessibility to restrooms without consideration for concentrations of users.



MAX travels through the Pioneer Square transit junction.

## DEMAND CHARACTERISTICS

### Major Transit Junctions

A major transit junction is defined as a location in which several modes of public transportation intersect with a high concentration of riders. A specific number of riders is not necessary, since junctions describe common origins, destinations, or transit mode shifts for riders. In an effort to localize transit use, junctions instead of corridors are used as demand characteristics. Transit junctions are located at the point of highest rider concentration along a transit corridor. Future transit junctions are also included. Transit junction examples include:

- NE Interstate at the Rose Garden (Lloyd / Albina)
- Pioneer Courthouse Square

### High-Use Recreation Paths

Recreation paths are defined as multi-use paths which span park areas and draw recreation seekers or through-traffic. Multi-use paths are longer than  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile which take the slowest group of users more than ten minutes to traverse. Recreation paths are of greater interest as future plans to extend the waterfront trails will enable users to spend more time on the trails, thus increasing restroom need. Path examples include:

- Waterfront Trail (Downtown and South Waterfront)
- South Park Blocks (Downtown)

### High-Use Parks and Plazas

Like high use recreation paths, many parks and plazas draw a large concentration of users. Unlike high use paths, park and plaza users are relatively stagnant for some period of time. In addition to attracting daily users, high-use parks hold special events, raising demand for restrooms. Examples of high-use parks and plazas include:

- Pioneer Courthouse Square (Downtown)
- Jamison Square (Pearl)

### Nightlife Clusters

Clusters of night clubs or bars draw high concentrations of people, primarily at night. The night club demand characteristic does not require a specific density of clubs; instead, it is assumed that clusters of night clubs draw large concentrations of club goers.

### Social Service Clusters

Similar to nightlife clusters, social service clusters are not defined by a specific density. Instead, social service clusters are identified as areas with a high concentration of meal- and shelter-services. These specific social service types lead to user queues and act as foci for homeless activity.

Figure 2.10: Demand Characteristics and Existing Restrooms Map



- # Interior Restroom
- # Exterior Restroom (OPEN)
- # Exterior Restroom (CLOSED)
- ★ High Use Park or Plaza
- ★ High Use Transit Junction
- High Use Recreation Path
- Nightlife Cluster
- Social Service Cluster

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

- 1 7:00 am - 7:00 pm
- 2 7:30 am - 12:00 am (Mon - Wed)  
7:30 am - 3:00 am (Thurs - Sat)  
9:00 am - 10:00 pm (Sun)
- 3 CLOSED
- 4a 4b 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
- 5 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
- 6 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
- 7 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
- 8 24 Hours
- 9 24 Hours
- 10 24 Hours
- 11 24 Hours
- 12 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
- 13 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- 14 10:00 am - 6:00 pm (Mon, Thurs - Sat)  
10:00 am - 8:00 pm (Tues - Wed)  
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm (Sun)
- 15 8:30 am - 5:30 pm (Mon - Fri)  
10:00 am - 4:00 pm (Sat)
- 16 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- 17 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- 18 7:30 am - 11:00 pm (Mon - Thurs)  
7:30 am - 7:00 pm (Fri)  
10:00 am - 7:00 pm (Sat)  
12:00 am - 11:00 pm (Sun)
- 19 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
- 20 7:00 am - 9:00 pm
- 21 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- 22 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

# NEED CRITERIA

Public restroom need is a new concept in Portland. Previous restroom plans in the City, such as the Park and Recreation Restroom Master Plan, have focused on a specific type or location of facility without consideration for all potential users in a given area. Another method for assessing need, used by the British Toilet Association, is to apply a ratio of population per restroom. In one example, the worst local authority area in England has one facility per 6,427 men and 11,248 per women.<sup>1</sup> Currently, England does not prescribe a facility-per-resident ratio; these ratios are merely descriptive of the restroom situation. The resident-per-facility ratio is neither a demand characteristic nor need criteria because it does not accurately describe the primary user groups for Portland. Residents are not considered a primary user group for Portland because the subject study area is small and residents require restrooms only after leaving their homes. The criteria attempt to take into consideration a diverse population of users and, more importantly, where potential users are concentrated. Although the criteria used cover a range of users and concentration areas, they do not cover all potential scenarios. An alternative needs analysis, focused on a city-wide accessibility standard, follows the criteria analysis.

## British Toilet Authority Recommended Provisions<sup>1</sup>

- One cubicle per 500 women and female children
- One cubicle and one urinal per 1100 men
- One handicap accessible stall per 10,000 people
- No fewer than one unisex baby changing station per 10,000 people dwelling in the area



Restrooms along the heavily used waterfront multi-use trail



## NEED CRITERIA

### Transit Junctions

Restrooms should be available within four blocks, or no more than 1,000 feet, from major transit junctions. One thousand feet requires a five-minute walk each way for the slowest walking population (elderly women). Limiting the walk time to five minutes allows users enough time to use the facility and still catch the next bus (assuming a 15-minute bus schedule).<sup>2</sup>

### Recreation Corridors

High-use recreation paths should include a restroom at least every half-mile. For the slowest group of walkers, one half-mile will take 15 minutes but for runners and cyclists it will take much less time. Gaps longer than one half-mile between restrooms could dissuade people from using a trail and cause discomfort to special needs users.<sup>2</sup>

### Parks and Plazas

High-use parks should include restrooms on-site or provide clear view of the perimeter. Providing restrooms in parks encourages diverse park users, including families, nearby employees, and homeless people, a convenient place to use the restroom.

### Social Service Clusters

Social service clusters should include a clearly signed restroom open continuously. Providing restrooms near social services clusters will offer homeless populations a safe and clean place to relieve themselves when other facilities are closed. In addition to having a restroom open all hours, social service patrons would benefit from a daytime hygiene facility including showers and laundry services. Providing a place for personal hygiene as well as restrooms in close proximity to existing social service clusters is an efficient way to provide necessary services, and promote dignity.

### Nightlife Clusters

Clusters of nightlife activity should include a clearly marked restroom open until at least 3:00 am. Providing public restrooms near or in clusters of night clubs and keeping the facilities open after the 3:00 am mandated closing time will reduce public urination and defecation. Additionally, such restrooms reduce police enforcement of public exposure crimes.

Figure 2.11: Need Table




	Transit Junction	Recreation Path	Park or Plaza	Nightlife	Social Service
Downtown	○	○	○	—	—
Old Town Chinatown	—	—	—	○	○
Pearl	—	—	○	—	—
Goose Hollow	—	—	—	—	—
University	○	—	●	—	—
South Auditorium	—	—	—	—	—
Waterfront	—	○	●	—	—
South Waterfront	—	○	○	—	—
Lloyd / Albina	○	—	○	—	—
Central Eastside	—	—	●	—	—

- Criteria is being met
- Criteria is not being met
- Demand characteristic not present, criteria does not apply

\* South Waterfront District Characteristics based on attributes of the adopted South Waterfront plan.

# ASSESSING NEED: NEED DEFINED

Demand for new restrooms exists in the Central City based on the current supply of restrooms, points and paths of concentrated demand, and user needs. Figure 2.13 contains a description of district restroom need with respect to current supply and applied demand criteria.

	<b>New Restrooms needed (High Priority)</b> Concentrations of users and / or lack of facilities requires immediate need for new facilities.
	<b>New Restrooms needed (Medium Priority)</b> Future plans dictate a need for more restrooms, but existing facilities are adequate.
	<b>No immediate restroom need (Low Priority)</b> No need exists. District should be re-evaluated at a later time for future need

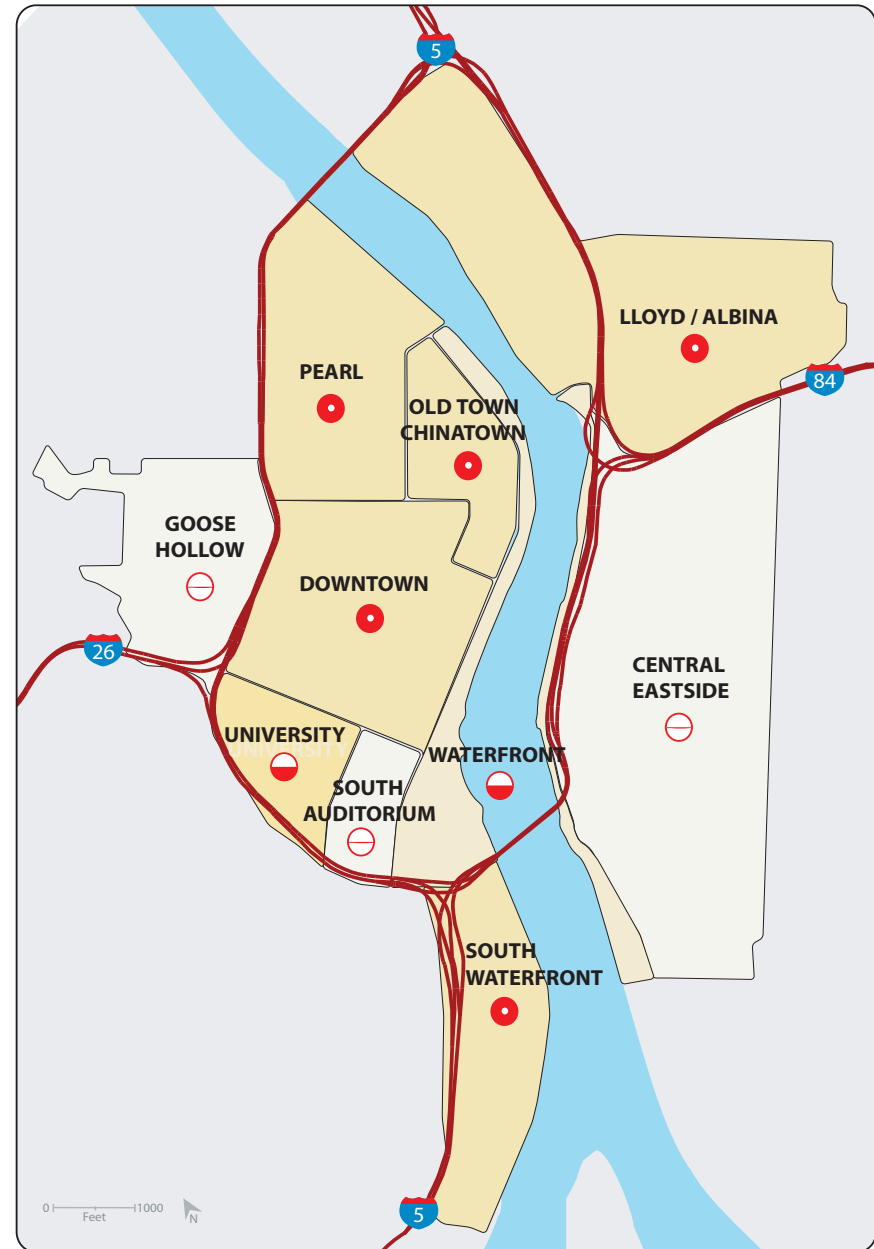


Figure 2.12: District Priority Map

Figure 2.13: District Need and Priority Table

	New Restrooms	Need Explanation
Downtown	●	<p><b>Transit Junctions:</b> The two transit junctions in downtown require restrooms within four blocks that are open during the entire span of transit service (4:00 am - 1:30 am).</p> <p><b>Recreation Paths:</b> At least one public restroom along the South Park blocks is needed to provide services for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p><b>Park and Plazas:</b> As with the recreation path criteria, the South Park blocks have a large number of users and require at least one public restroom.</p>
Old Town Chinatown	●	<p><b>Nightlife Cluster:</b> OTCT requires a public restroom open until at least 3:00 am, if not 24 hours. Expanded Smart Park restroom hours could satisfy demand.</p> <p><b>Social Service Cluster:</b> A facility including showers, laundry, and a 24 hour restroom are needed.</p>
Pearl	●	<p><b>High-Use Parks and Plazas:</b> A restroom available at one of the Pearl District's existing parks is needed and additional restrooms at the planned "Fields" park would be beneficial.</p>
Goose Hollow	◐	<p><b>No Need Exists:</b> With a high residential count, no parks, no major transit junctions, and several nearby park restrooms (Couch Park and Washington Park) available no current demand exists for restrooms in the district. Future increase in transit volume at PGE Park MAX Station could produce need for a new facility.</p>
University	◐	<p><b>Transit Junctions:</b> Future plans to expand light rail along the bus mall will create bus, streetcar, and light rail transit convergence in the district. To accommodate future need, a restroom open during the entirety of the transit schedule should be planned. Potentially, the existing interior restroom in the Urban Plaza could be opened for extended hours to accommodate future need.</p>
South Auditorium	◐	<p><b>No Need Exists:</b> Similar to Goose Hollow, the South Auditorium District includes a large number of residential units and no major transit junctions, high-use parks, recreation paths, or demand clusters. Future plans for the area do not dictate an increase in need.</p>
Waterfront	◐	<p><b>Recreation Path:</b> Once the restroom in Waterfront Park at the Burnside Bridgehead is reopened, sufficient restrooms will exist along the west side of the Waterfront District. Several more restrooms along the Eastbank Esplanade, especially, at the South end of the district, would be beneficial as volume along the trail continues to increase. Currently the 3.5 mile stretch between the SE Salmon facility and Sellwood Park lacks restrooms.</p>
South Waterfront	●	<p><b>Recreation Path:</b> Future plans for an extension of the Westside waterfront trail through the South Waterfront dictates a need for at least one restroom in the district.</p> <p><b>Parks and Plazas:</b> Future plans for a neighborhood park will produce need for a park-oriented restroom.</p>
Lloyd / Albina	●	<p><b>Transit Junctions:</b> Restroom facilities are needed close to both of the transit junctions in the Lloyd/Albina District. High priority should be given to the Rose Quarter Transit Center as it draws large transit crowds for special events.</p> <p><b>Park and Plaza:</b> Holladay Park draws a large number of daily users. A public restroom in the park would provide service to park users and the adjacent transit junction.</p>
Central Eastside	◐	<p><b>No Need Exists:</b> Future streetcar and light rail plans for the Central Eastside could increase the need for public restrooms, but in the near future no need exists.</p>

# ASSESSING NEED: NEED THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

An ideal restroom landscape in the Central City would include an evenly dispersed urban restroom network which would enable users anywhere in the Central City to easily access facilities. Beijing, in preparation for the upcoming Olympics, is aiming for complete city coverage of restrooms with any location to be within an eight-minute walk of a public restroom. Similar analysis of restroom accessibility, regardless of potential user concentration, is visually represented in the map on figure 2.14. Instead of using Beijing's standard, the analysis of accessibility presented here employs 1/4 mile service areas from each exterior restroom, as well as the interior restroom at the Pioneer Courthouse Square Information Center. Service areas are a common way to describe the potential routes a person could travel from a facility given a specific distance. For this study, restroom facilities are the focal point and pedestrian or bike networks are the paths of travel. A 1/4 mile walking distance (approximately six-and-a-half minute walk for the slowest group) is used to parallel similar transit studies addressing accessibility. Like access to public transportation, pedestrians who have to travel longer than a 1/4 mile to reach a restroom are likely to not use that facility. However, unlike public transportation, restrooms cannot be substituted. A lack of accessibility could mean potential users will avoid the Central City.

## Problems with Accessibility Method

Although measuring need according to an evenly dispersed network is visually appealing and may present clear facility gaps, it suffers from several problems that are not experienced in a demand characteristic and criteria approach.

- Concentrations of users are not identified or weighted for higher need
- The restroom network would be overbuilt
- Restrooms based on accessibility instead of need will result in high concentrations of restrooms. By not targeting certain areas based upon users, land uses, and transportation modes, potential users may actually be underserved

### Existing Conditions Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Greed, Clara. (2003). *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets*. Architectural Press.

<sup>2</sup> TranSafety, Inc. (1997). *Study Compares Older and Younger Pedestrian Walking Speeds*.  
<http://www.usroads.com/journals/p/rej/9710/re971001.htm>

### Data Source:

Metro Regional Land Information System Spatial Database (2006)

Figure 2.14: Restroom Accessibility Map

**Gaps Defined**

Using a 1/4-mile walking distance from existing public restrooms there remains a great deal of the Central City without “accessible” facilities. Some of the gaps in accessibility, especially in the Downtown, University, and South Auditorium Districts, could be filled by interior restrooms available in public or institutional buildings.

**PEARL**

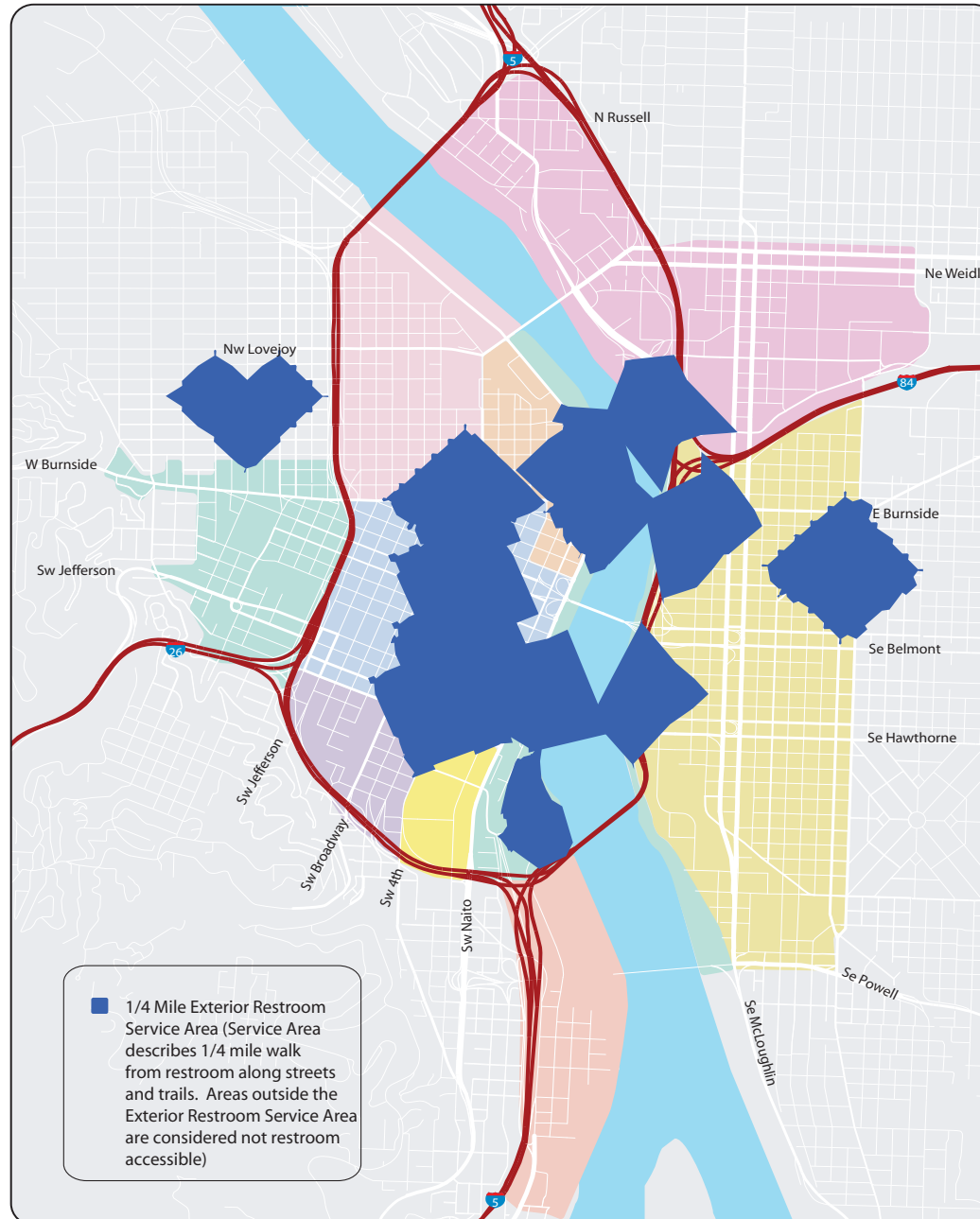
North end of the Pearl District including Jamison Square and “The Fields,” the final park to be completed.

**GOOSE HOLLOW**

The entirety of Goose Hollow is not accessible.

**SOUTH WATERFRONT**

Currently, the entire South Waterfront district has no accessible restrooms.



**LLOYD / ALBINA**

Currently the facility on the Eastbank Esplanade at the Steel Bridge is the only facility accessible from any part of the district. Unfortunately, this facility is not ADA-accessible and hard to find, from within the district.

**WATERFRONT**

A gap exists below the SE Salmon Street facility on the Eastbank Esplanade. This gap is further intensified since there is not another public restroom for 3.5 miles to the south.

**CENTRAL EASTSIDE**

Large gaps exist in the south end of the district.



Public restroom in Beijing, China.  
Photo by Connie Ozawa

## CASE STUDIES

**W**e developed case studies of public restroom facilities in cities in the United States and abroad. The case studies enriched our understanding of public restroom issues and provided a context from which to analyze restrooms in Portland. Amsterdam, Beijing, London, Singapore, and Taiwan demonstrate that certain international cities are much more advanced in the provision of public restrooms than many US cities. These cities are innovative pioneers in the relatively recent provision of public restrooms. Each city has established creative criteria from which to evaluate the supply and condition of public restrooms. Domestic case studies explore public restrooms in Denver, San Francisco, and Seattle. These are among the most progressive US cities in restroom provision. San Francisco and Seattle operate Automatic Public Toilets (APTs) as components of their restroom networks to augment their traditional restroom and portable toilet facilities. Denver Parks and Recreation Department carried out one of the first restroom master plans to address restroom demand. The plan recommended a Restroom Task Force, developed restroom siting criteria and facility size, and considered crime and safety issues, costs, and funding.

# INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Significant research was conducted into various international cities and their efforts regarding public toilets. Singapore, Amsterdam, London and Beijing were chosen because of their prevalence throughout research documents regarding their public toilet provisions. However, greater research, including literature reviews, peer-reviewed journals, books, and more, revealed little. Information about any one city in particular was very difficult to obtain. Various agencies in these cities have made general policy recommendations; specific recommendations, particularly as they may apply to Portland or other US cities, were largely absent from the literature review. This section will briefly outline the most salient points from this research.

## London

Due to various public restroom restrictions in London, different boroughs have devised different approaches to provide public toilets.

Westminster City has contracted with the private sector to provide toilets with relatively minimal oversight; these private entities can charge any usage fee, make any profit, and provide maintenance as they determine.<sup>1</sup>

Richmond upon Thames formed a Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) in which businesses are paid £600 annually to allow public access to their toilets. Businesses provide public access during operating hours, agree to certain maintenance conditions, and display a sign indicating their participation in CTS. The municipality conversely provides liability insurance, street signage, and occasionally inspects the toilets to ensure compatibility.<sup>2</sup> 70 businesses have voluntarily joined this partnership. The CTS Marketing Officer noted that, while highly successful in her borough, the model is clearly not applicable everywhere; rather, the scheme's importance lies in acknowledging and addressing business-owners' needs and concerns.

The March 2006 report, *An Urgent Need: The state of London's public toilets*, cautions against a program such as the CTS being the only provision of public toilets, due to the following potential difficulties:

- Comprehensive geographic coverage.
- The provision of good information and publicity of restroom availability.
- The need for regular inspection to ensure availability and quality standards – although this should apply to all providers.
- The limitation of opening hours.
- The uncertainty of continuing membership of the scheme.

Simply providing and maintaining traditional public toilets, the report claims, is probably less costly than cleaning public urination and defecation on a frequent basis.

Issues of toilet safety and access for the homeless have not been addressed in London. Rather, it has been argued that public dialogue should not surround service provision for the homeless, but rather how to eliminate homelessness.



A London artist-designed public toilet built with one-way mirrors: users inside can see outside, but passersby only see a reflection of themselves.





Amsterdam Restroom

### Amsterdam

Amsterdam installed Urilifts (column-shaped male urinals) throughout the city to reduce male public urination.<sup>3,4</sup> On command, these urinals hydraulically rise out of the sidewalk and sink back down to prevent sidewalk blockages during low demand times. Such solutions would likely be unacceptable in a more conservative society such as in the US. The City also required restaurants and bars to allow public use of their toilet facilities.

### Singapore

From the early 1970s, Singapore code defined how many public toilets must be built by any new development. Oversight is provided by National Environment Agency (NEA) or Housing and Development Board (HDB); a toilet owner's failure to maintain the toilet in proper working condition may incur NEA- or HDB-imposed fines. To offset expenses from public usage, owners may impose a small fee (10-20 Singapore cents) on users.

Public urination and defecation are serious offenses in Singapore and have never been significant problems. Therefore, assessing the efficacy of Singapore's public toilet provision is very difficult; the provision of public toilets for over 30 years has maintained a culture in which public urination and defecation do not occur.

More recently, Singapore has implemented the "Singapore's OK" program in collaboration with the National Environment Agency (NEA) to showcase public toilets that are exceptionally clean. NEA inspectors have been charged with inspecting all 29,000 island-wide public toilets. As part of the national Toilet Upgrading Programme (TUP), the NEA will pay half, up to US\$3,100, of upgrading costs incurred by private establishments (largely coffeeshops) aiming to upgrade and open usage to the general public.

**"When toilets are clean, people are happy and healthy. We came up with this programme (Happy Toilet Program) because today when you go to a public toilet you do not know what to expect inside."**

Jack Sim,  
World Toilet Organization

### Taiwan

Construction regulations in Taiwan require five times the number of female public toilets as male public toilets.<sup>5</sup>

### Beijing

Beijing has tremendously increased its toilet provision efforts to prepare for the 2008 Summer Olympics. The National Tourism Administration and other government agencies have allocated over US\$5 million toward public toilets (primarily at tourist sites); other sources put this figure as high as US\$100 million, noting that Beijing aims to build 3,700 "world class" toilets.<sup>6,7</sup>

Beijing is working toward a public toilet no more than an eight-minute walk from any point in the city, creating a very dense restroom network; many of these will be formerly private toilets in commercial establishments now mandated to be publicly-accessible. This has been opposed by business owners, fearing additional costs from higher usage, and by the public, fearing prohibited access despite the law.

The city also implemented a star rating system addressing toilet cleanliness and maintenance levels.



Beijing Restroom Sign

# DENVER, CO

In 2005, Denver developed a restroom master plan that included all plumbed restrooms within city limits under the management of the Parks and Recreation Department. Undertaken as a result of growing public dissatisfaction with the condition of its public restrooms, the plan:

- Included a thorough assessment of existing restrooms,
- Established a minimum level of service,
- Developed objective siting criteria for new restrooms,
- Set priorities for making upgrades and renovations,
- Developed construction budgets and an implementation strategy,
- Identified funding sources, and
- Created prototype restroom designs.

Denver Conceptual Restroom Design



“Based on the restroom site visits, departmental experience and input from the public, the Department is already designing prototypical restroom options. The prototypical restroom designs and associated guidelines are informing new restrooms at Stapleton and Lowry developments.”

## Restroom Task Force

The Denver Plan recommended assembling a Restroom Task Force (RTF) that would coordinate development of annual resources for managing, cleaning, monitoring, and maintaining the restrooms. Additionally, the RTF would evaluate all new restrooms by ensuring they meet location criteria and seeking public input. Finally, the RTF would evaluate all existing functioning restrooms before they are taken out of service.

## Location Criteria

The master plan outlines the following criteria for locating park restrooms:

- 1) Where 150 or more people gather per day in a four to six hour period at a particular location at least three times per week during the summer months.
- 2) Areas frequently permitted for private use.
- 3) Areas with frequent athletic events.
- 4) Locations with a dense congregation of uses.
- 5) Areas with dense informal use (without a permit).
- 6) Key junctions at trails, paths, parkways.
- 7) Well established uses and numbers of visitors.
- 8) Employ a public process to determine if new restrooms will create social problems for the surrounding area

Study researchers did not use direct observation to determine restroom demand. Various other methods were used, including rental and bookings of specific parks facilities, counts of the number of facilities in a particular area, and discussions with parks personnel, planners, parks district superintendents, other field personnel, and park users.

## Restroom Sizing

Denver established minimum numbers of toilets at gender-specific facilities. Women are provided two toilets and one lavatory, and men are provided one toilet, one urinal, and one lavatory. As a site's usage intensifies, additional facilities would be provided incrementally.

# SAN FRANCISCO, CA

## Financing

An established annual Capital Improvements Planning Program funds restroom upgrades and new construction. This source does not cover maintenance or cleaning costs. To accommodate limited resources, implementation of restroom improvements will be phased in over 12 years at about \$360,000 per year. The master plan proposed issuing 10-year bonds to expedite implementation. Additional creative funding sources include considering volunteer projects or court order community service to clean restrooms, employing private cleaning of restrooms, constructing new restrooms only where there is demonstrated need (per location criteria), and using pre-built restrooms.

## Costs

Using the recommended design guidelines, Denver estimated the total cost to build a new typically-sized restroom at \$260,000 (2004 dollars) for a 28'x28' restroom, of which hard costs were 70%. The estimated average cost to upgrade existing restrooms was over \$52,000 each. As it is more expensive to build new facilities, the plan prioritizes upgrading existing facilities. New restroom construction was prioritized based on need. The plan did not develop operating and maintenance cost estimates, but recommended that be a top priority for the RTF.

## Crime and Safety

The Master Plan addressed vandalism, graffiti, drug dealing, prostitution, inconsistent cleaning and maintenance, and insufficient resources to meet usage demand. To overcome these issues, the plan recommends high quality restroom design and construction, locating restrooms in (or visible from) high activity areas, removing hiding places, thinning or removing encroaching shrubs and trees, redesigning floor plans to eliminate or decrease hiding areas, providing properly monitored and maintained nighttime lighting, repairing and continuing maintenance of existing facilities, and posting signs listing phone numbers to call for maintenance or complaints.<sup>8</sup>

San Francisco's Automatic Public Toilet (APT) Program "was developed because of a growing civic concern about the lack of sufficient public toilet facilities in the City." In 1994, the City contracted with French company, JCDecaux United Street Furniture, to provide APTs to meet public concern. Most of these toilets are open 24 hours to address the needs of the City's homeless population.

The toilets cost \$0.25 to operate. Clients unable to afford this fee can receive tokens from non-profit organizations throughout the City or by contacting JCDecaux. There is a 20-minute time limit for use of the unit, upon which the door automatically opens. The disabled community determined this time limit in order that they have ample time for use.

Initially, JCDecaux and the City of San Francisco established a two-year trial period to demonstrate program feasibility. At the end of this trial phase, if the City determined that the program was unsuccessful due to excessive downtime, vandalism or misuse, JCDecaux would remove the toilets. However, the program has been deemed a success with 25 toilets citywide and plans for at least two more in the near future.<sup>9</sup>

## Financing and Management

The 84 square-foot restrooms cost approximately \$150,000 each. JCDecaux gave the restrooms to the City at no cost in exchange for the right to install 90 matching public service and advertising kiosks. In 2001, JCDecaux began paying the City an additional 5% of ad revenue each year if total revenue exceeded an agreed-upon threshold to be altered at any time by both parties. JCDecaux is responsible for all management and costs associated with upkeep, vandalism, and misuse.

## Crime and Safety

By 2001, misuse and mechanical malfunctions were reported at about 25 percent of the toilets. There were problems with prostitution and drug use in some of the units in heavy-crime areas. JCDecaux maintenance workers regularly found homeless people sleeping inside by jamming the door shut. Problems with misuse led the Police to ask JCDecaux to lock specific toilets at night.

In response to crime and safety issues, legislation now allows only one user at a time unless a user requires assistance, and bans loitering within 20' of the unit. Violators are first warned, with second violations carrying as much as a \$100 fine, and subsequent violations carrying \$500 fines.<sup>10</sup>

## Additional City Restrooms

In addition to APTs, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department maintains 114 public restrooms in various parks throughout the City. There are also restrooms that are considered "public", which are located inside public buildings. These include City Hall, the Civic Center, all public libraries, Health Department facilities, and City parking garages.<sup>11</sup>

# SEATTLE, WA

In 1984, the Human Services Advocacy Committee, a sub-committee of the Downtown Human Services Council (DHSC), surveyed Seattle's downtown community and identified the lack of public restrooms as the top problem facing Seattle's downtown.<sup>12</sup> Over the next several years, the DHSC and University of Washington's Department of Architecture studied public restroom demand, siting and design. In 1993, the City put out its first RFP for APTs, but later abandoned this plan due to high program and funding costs. Washington State law prohibits charging a fee to use public restrooms, and a Seattle sign ordinance prohibits the type of advertising used to fund APTs in many other cities.

Soon thereafter, then-City Attorney Mark Sidran sought to make public urination a misdemeanor, leading City Council to require the installation of public toilets before passing the ordinance. In 1993 Seattle placed 13 portable toilets throughout the city to serve this need within the city's financial and regulatory constraints. When Paul Schell was elected Mayor in 1998, he looked into APTs again to provide a more attractive option for Seattle's streets. After much political debate, City Council pushed through an ordinance to accept a contract for six APTs (later reduced to five). They have been in operation since 2004.

## Siting

There were no exact siting criteria used to determine placement of Seattle's five APTs. Locations were instead guided by pedestrian use (shoppers, shopping districts, and tourists), the concentration of homeless residents, and APT unit sizes, which limited their placement. The structures are approximately 20 feet long, and maintenance access requires a three-foot perimeter around the entire unit. The APTs are located at Occidental Park in Pioneer Square, Hing Hay Park in the International District, Victor Steinbrueck Park at Pike Place Market, Waterfront Park at Pier 59 near the Seattle Aquarium, and the 1800 Block of Broadway on Capitol Hill.<sup>13</sup>

## Crime & Safety

Seattle's APTs are open 24 hours a day, due to (a) the cost-prohibitive nature of an additional visit required by maintenance personnel to lock the units manually, (b) the necessary provision of facilities to homeless individuals and bar and nightclub patrons, and (c) the belief that nighttime behavior is no less safe than possible daytime occurrences.<sup>14</sup> The APTs are also located in high traffic areas where there are "eyes on the street" to deter crime and vandalism. Since opening two years ago, there has been no significant vandalism requiring major repairs or replacement.

Seattle limits the time users are allowed in the units to increase safety and reduce improper use. Initially the APTs were programmed to open after 15 minutes. This has since been reduced to 10 minutes, and may be shortened further in the future.

Three of the four portable toilets are enclosed within architect-designed facades created to be vandal-proof. They are made of metal mesh coated in high gloss enamel, which provides little surface area for graffiti and are easy to clean. There has been no significant damage to these units since they opened ten years ago, but there have been signs of normal wear and tear.



APT user entry console



APT toilet facility

## Finance

Seattle's five APTs are leased and maintained through a joint contract with German APT manufacturer Hering Bau, and Washington-based portable toilet supplier Northwest Cascade. Hering Bau provides APTs on an 11-year lease-to-own program. The projected cost for all APT units for the next 18 months is about \$57,530 per month. Monthly expenses are:

- \$2,000 lease per unit,
- \$44,444 operations and maintenance, and
- \$116 for stocking replacement parts.

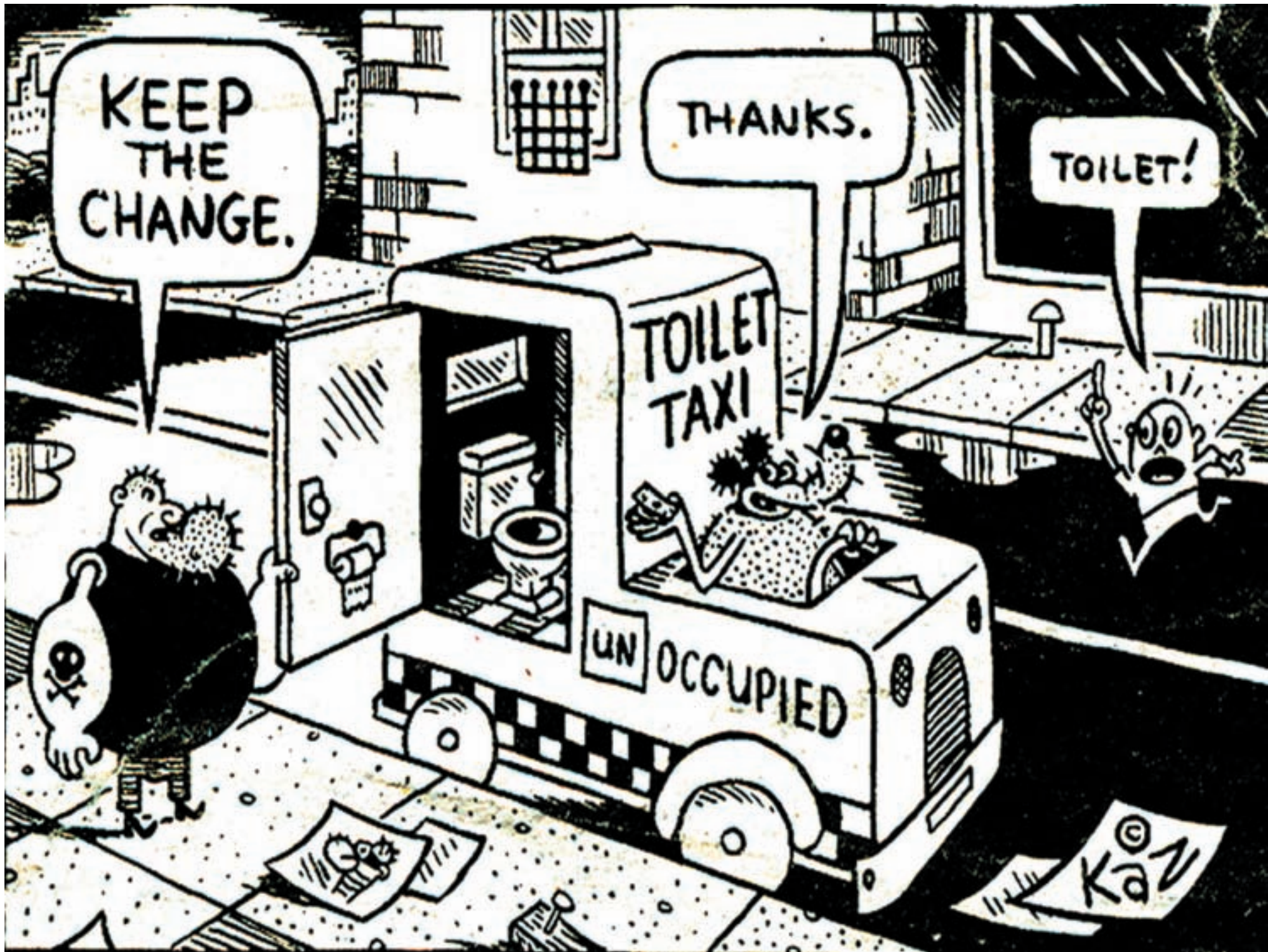
Maintenance includes twice-daily cleaning, but the City is responsible for the cost of any significant damage to the units outside of basic maintenance and repair.

Sewer revenues also pay for the four portable units that remain open in Seattle's neighborhoods outside of the central business district. Everson's Econovac cleans and maintains these ADA-compliant units for a total cost of about \$1,800/month. This cost includes a monthly rental of about \$70/unit, and a once-daily cleaning for \$11.39/unit. Additional services and cleanings are assessed at an additional hourly rate.

Purchase, installation, and maintenance are funded through Seattle Public Utilities' sewer revenue. For the average single-family Seattle household's annual sewer bill of \$323, approximately \$1.70 funds restrooms.<sup>12</sup>

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# 4

## ALTERNATIVES

**A** central component of this project was the analysis of alternatives. Descriptions of all identified alternatives are detailed in this chapter. The preferred alternatives are recommended in **Chapter 5**.

This chapter is divided into the following sections:

- 4.1 Facility Alternatives
- 4.2 Funding Alternatives
- 4.3 Maintenance Alternatives
- 4.4 Policy Alternatives





## 4.1 FACILITY TYPES

This section provides detailed descriptions of the following public restroom facility types:

- Automatic Public Toilets (APT)
- Portable Toilets
- Freestanding Urinals
- Park Restrooms
- Hygiene Center
- Restrooms with Kiosks
- Parking Garage Restrooms
- Restrooms inside Public Buildings
- Restrooms inside Private Businesses



# AUTOMATIC PUBLIC TOILETS (APTs)

APTs are freestanding, gender-neutral, single self-cleaning restroom units that contain a sink, soap, hand dryers, and a mirror. They are permanently fixed to the ground and require sewer and electric hookups.



APTs vary in design based on manufacturer and city, but are generally made of regular and enamel-coated steel, porcelain, and aluminum. Push-button doors open automatically after a set time period, usually 10-15 minutes. After each use, the unit is sprayed with disinfectant, rinsed with high power jets, and dried. The cleaning cycle usually lasts about five minutes.

APTs can be bought or leased from the manufacturer. In many cities they are part of street furniture programs in which the manufacturer leases street furniture space from the city, and costs are paid to the vendor through revenue from advertising displayed on the furniture. APTs can be available for a small fee paid through a coin slot or token, or for free. There are six primary APT vendors: Wall AG, Camusa, Hering Bau, Exeloo, JC Decaux, and Aluline.

Purchased outright, APTs cost approximately \$175,000 each, in addition to maintenance and operations costs. A \$3 million, 20-year bond would pay for 15 public toilets, for which the annual debt service payment would be about \$200,000 annually. Example cities: San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Paris



## PROS

- Can set timer, so that people can't stay inside for longer than 10-15 minutes
- Units self-clean after each use, cutting down on cleaning costs
- No attendant needed

## CONS

- Expensive to purchase and maintain
- No more resistant to abuse than architect-designed units
- Technology could intimidate some potential users; technology not always consistent
- Drug use and sleeping in units by jamming doors still occurs
- Funding through advertising probably not feasible, due to restrictions on outdoor advertising
- Portland right-of-way guidelines restrict sidewalk placement
- Over 10 gallons of water used to clean after each use.

## USERS:

- Open to All

## SITING:

- District: Should be located at transit nodes (intersection of 2 types of transit), in high-traffic areas for tourists and nightlife.
- Infrastructure: Require sewer connections and electrical source
- Physical: Would require at least a 20 ft open space to accommodate the unit and provide access.

## MANAGEMENT:

- Maintained directly by APT company through their local maintenance office, or contracted with a local maintenance.
- Units self clean after each use, and are cleaned by maintenance staff 2-3 times daily. Some units automatically lock over night, while others require manual lockdown.

## COST:

- Units can be bought or leased from the APT company for an average of \$250,000 each.
- The combined lease and maintenance cost for 5 Seattle APTs is close to \$700k/year.
- APT companies may provide APTs at no cost to the city in exchange for allowing on-street advertising through a coordinated street furniture program.



APT near Pike Place Market in Seattle, WA.

# PORTABLE TOILETS

Portable toilets are free standing, single stall, gender neutral toilets. They are most commonly used for special events, construction sites and parks with seasonal sport fields, but have also served restroom needs in urban areas. ADA compliant units are available, as well as self-contained (no utilities required) "luxury" units with porcelain flush toilets, fresh water sinks and mirrors. Portable toilets can be enclosed within specially-designed structures to make the units more aesthetically pleasing, vandal resistant, and to act as a gate to close units when not needed. Units do not require water, sewer or electric hookup.

Examples: Portland Eastbank Esplanade, select Seattle neighborhoods.



## PROS

- Inexpensive; no major capital improvement needed
- Good way to test need and level of usage for specific locations
- Easy to move to new locations

## CONS

- Negative perception of port-a-potties
- Do not work well in Central City as day-to-day public toilets
- Women more reluctant to use than men
- Generally, poor aesthetics



## USERS:

- Open to all.
- Men more likely to use than women.
- Special handicap-accessible units available.

## SITING:

- District: Well suited to areas that have fluctuating levels of activity, or that have future development potential as they can be relocated. Less suited to areas within the downtown shopping/cultural/ government district, as many people see them as an eyesore.
- Infrastructure: No sewer or electric hookups necessary, so well-suited to recreational areas.

## MANAGEMENT:

- City contracts with portable toilet company for cleaning service, repairs and relocation.

## COST:

- Seattle leases basic ADA accessible each unit for \$73/month, plus a once daily cleaning for \$11/day.
- Costs for enclosures vary depending on design; Seattle enclosures cost approx \$10k each (including design, manufacture, installation).



Portable toilet in lockable steel cage, Portland, OR.

# FREESTANDING URINALS

Permanent and mobile urinals have been shown to reduce street urination in Europe.<sup>1,2</sup> Public urinals provide modesty without total enclosure to prohibit improper use and minimize the amount of space required.<sup>3</sup> Men are responsible for the majority of street urination. Nighttime entertainment users and homeless are primarily responsible for street urination. A 2005 Homeless Street Count estimates 68% of homeless in Portland are men.<sup>4</sup>

Freestanding, single or multiple stall, male-only public urinals are found primarily in Europe. They are usually located on high-traffic sidewalks, especially in entertainment districts. Some units are portable, while others use hydraulics to lift above the sidewalk when most needed. Styles range from slender “Butterfly” units that resemble APTs and are open only at night, to shielded troughs and drains. Portable urinals may be removed for cleaning during the day and returned in the evening, in preparation for nightlife use. Examples cities: Westminster, Amsterdam, Paris.



## PROS

- Use minimal amount of space
- Inexpensive compared to traditional restroom units
- Serve male population – who are responsible for most public urination

## CONS

- Would not serve women, children, or disabled
- Modesty, privacy concerns for Americans
- No sink attached.

## USERS:

- Men only.
- Nightlife crowd.

## SITING:

- District: Entertainment districts.
- Infrastructure: Requires sewer connection.
- Physical: Require minimal space compared with other toilet facilities, located in street furniture zone of right-of-way.

## MANAGEMENT:

- Minimal maintenance required compared to traditional rest rooms. City may contract with private cleaning and maintenance company.

## COST:

- Not available.





Mobile urinals in Amsterdam, Netherlands.



# PARK RESTROOMS



Portland has public restrooms in seven Central City parks. They are usually permanent brick and mortar structures that house multiple toilets and sinks. The Parks Department favors gender-neutral, single-stall design to minimize vandalism and increase safety, though separate sex, multi-stall restrooms exist at 2 locations. The Parks Department has explored alternate facility types such as pit toilets and composting toilets, but none have been implemented downtown. In two locations in downtown Portland, men’s and women’s facilities are housed in separate structures.<sup>5</sup> Examples: Chapman & Lownsdale Square, North Park Blocks



## PROS

- Parks are common, obvious locations for restrooms, especially downtown
- Portland has many existing historic restroom structures
- Multiple stalls and lavatories

## CONS

- Low-use, neglected parks do not have “eyes on the street”
- Aging infrastructure, outdated design
- Often closed for long periods of time due to damage
- Constrained and shrinking parks budget cannot keep up with ongoing maintenance and operations
- Parks cannot afford attendants

<b>USERS:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to all.</li> <li>• Particularly suited to parks users.</li> </ul>
<b>SITING:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District: Most appropriate for downtown parks, regional parks, neighborhood parks; well-lit areas both day and night, visible from streets &amp; walkways, near playing fields.</li> <li>• Infrastructure: Requires sewer and electrical connections.</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGEMENT:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park restrooms in Portland’s Central City are currently maintained by Clean &amp; Safe, a service of the Portland Business Alliance, or Cleanscapes, a private company.</li> <li>• Downtown high-use restrooms are cleaned 2-3 times a day.</li> </ul>
<b>COST:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost to maintain all 163 Portland restrooms is approximately \$625,000 a year (\$475,000 for Parks staff and \$150,000 for Clean and Safe).</li> <li>• The Parks staff responsible for restroom maintenance consists of 1 Park Technician, 4 Utility Workers, and seasonal staff that spend about 1/3 of their time on these facilities. Per restroom, the cost is \$11-20 per day which includes staff time, toilet paper, and cleaning chemicals.</li> </ul>





Park restroom in Portland, OR.



# HYGIENE CENTER

A hygiene center is a staffed, storefront space that contains restrooms, showers and laundry facilities. Homeless and very low-income individuals can use facilities for free, and donations can be asked of those more able to pay. Model hygiene centers have private rooms containing toilets, sinks and showers. Trained staff members take appointments, clean the shower rooms after each use, and provide assistance. Patrons wait to make an appointment for a shower and doing laundry.



Funding is required for both one-time capital construction costs and ongoing operations including payroll, maintenance, supplies, utilities, rent and administrative services. Seattle's Urban Rest Stop (URS), a model urban hygiene center, had a 2005 operating budget of \$620,000, of which salaries and benefits accounted for approximately 75%. Significant funding was available through federal HUD grants for homeless programs, including McKinney Funds and the Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESPG). The City of Seattle also contributed money from its General Fund, and the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI), owner and host of the URS, raised funds through foundations and private donors.<sup>6,7,8</sup>



Brief discussions with stakeholders in Portland indicate that potential hosts for the hygiene center could include Central City Concern, Blanchet House, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, or Salvation Army. Discussions with these organizations will hopefully determine which organization would be most suited for this task. Example: Seattle Urban Rest Stop

## PROS

- Would serve a large unmet need – currently no hygiene centers exist in Portland
- Assists homeless individuals in finding and maintaining employment
- Would reduce use of other restrooms for bathing
- Contributes to human dignity by providing home-like facilities that allow rare private time for homeless individuals
- Would contribute to the City's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness; a place to shower and prepare for the workday or job interviews helps transition individuals out of homelessness

## CONS

- Would require high ongoing costs for management
- Location of facility could cause NIMBY reaction
- Locating an owner and operator
- Effective management is crucial to a successful hygiene center
- Political issues



**USERS:**

- Primarily the homeless and very low-income individuals, but would be open to all users.

**SITING:**

- District: Best location to serve user needs would be in area with a high homeless population.
- Infrastructure: Requires sewer, water and electrical hookups and a high quality ventilation system.
- Physical: Best suited to storefront space within building. Square footage depends on the number of showers and laundry facilities provided.

**MANAGEMENT:**

- For a 5-shower facility, must be staffed by a minimum of 2 people. Staff facilitate queues and admit patrons, clean shower facilities, monitor supplies and facilitate safe use of the facilities.
- Seattle Urban Rest Stop operated by a non-profit housing organization; non-profit housing or social service agency is strong candidate for Portland.

**COST:**

- Seattle Urban Rest Stop 2005 program budget was \$620k, which served 19,000 people with 900,000 services..
- Funded by a combination of federal HUD grants, City funds, private foundations and donors.



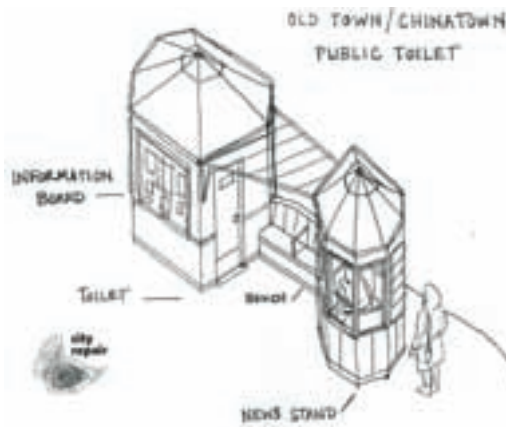
The Urban Rest Stop, a hygiene center in Seattle, WA.

# RESTROOMS WITH KIOSKS



One of the primary concerns associated with public restrooms is the lack of “eyes on the street” to monitor use. One solution is the placement of staffed retail kiosks next to restrooms. Kiosks would be architect- or artist-designed and could be built into new restroom facilities or located adjacent to new or existing facilities. Kiosks could be used as news or coffee stands, tourist information centers, food stands or craft vendors. Kiosks should be designed so vendors can view the restroom entrance.

Examples: RiverPlace, Rose Garden



## PROS

- Would bring activity to restrooms, increasing safety and use
- Kiosk vendor would provide constant supervision of restrooms

## CONS

- Would require new construction, either of combined restroom / kiosk or addition of kiosk to existing restroom facility
- Potential difficulty finding vendors for kiosk



### USERS:

- Open to all.

### SITING:

- District: Newsstand well suited to commuters (transit lines) and lunch crowd. Locate near public gathering place.
- Infrastructure: Proximity to sewer and electric hookups.
- Physical: Would require more space than freestanding restroom units.

### MANAGEMENT:

- Restroom could be cleaned and maintained through same contract as parks restrooms; kiosk could be leased by business owner, or entire unit could be bought by private entity.

### COST:

- City Repair's estimate for kiosk and restroom comes to \$14,000. This includes donated labor and materials.
- Conventional construction costs similar to new parks restrooms.



A cafe building adjoins this public restroom at RiverPlace in Portland, OR



# PARKING GARAGE RESTROOMS

Single- or multi-stall facility located within a parking structure and accessible from the right-of-way.

Examples: Naito & Davis Smart Park, Keller Auditorium parking garage



## PROS

- Fit into existing structure
- Attendant can monitor use if within view, or through security camera

## CONS

- Current siting does not allow garage attendants to monitor restroom use
- Restroom by Ira Keller Fountain is tucked under the garage, with no eyes on the street

## USERS:

- Open to all.
- Target user is parking garage customer.
- Well suited to nightlife crowd due to restroom hours (garage hours).

## SITING:

- Should be located in sight of garage attendants/cashiers and accessible from right of way.

## MANAGEMENT:

- Maintained through contract with Cleanscapes..

## COST:

- Standard service \$40-45/hour (includes all costs).



A public restroom is located behind gate at this parking garage (Portland, OR).



# RESTROOMS INSIDE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Buildings owned by public agencies and contain government offices are open to the public during business hours. Most restrooms in public buildings have separate men's and women's facilities, each with multiple stalls.

Examples: City Hall, Central Library, Portland State University



Multnomah County Public Library

## PROS

- Ready supply of restrooms
- Most public buildings have accessible restrooms on ground floor
- Most public buildings have guard / attendants who monitor use

## CONS

- Potential security risk or disruption to business; public agencies may be opposed to encouraging use by general public
- Currently very little use by passersby

## USERS:

- Office workers
- Public employees
- Pedestrians
- Visitors
- Homeless

## SITING:

- Should be located on main entry floor, with easy access from the building entrance, and in sight of building attendant/ guard.

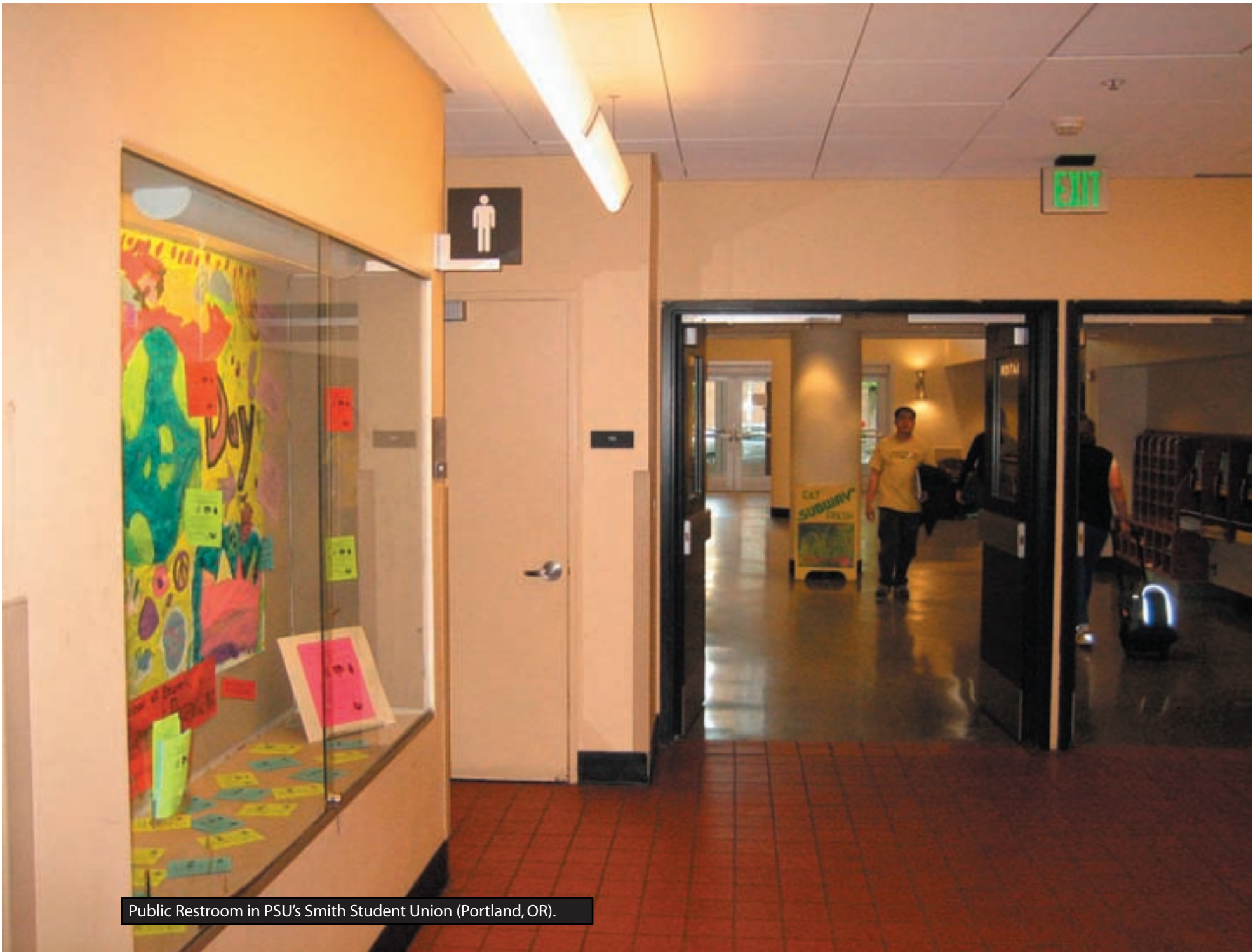
## MANAGEMENT:

- Government agency that owns building would maintain restrooms through contracted cleaning company; additional cleaning would be added.

## COST:

- Additional costs would result from increased water and supply usage, more rapid wear and tear, and more frequent cleaning service.





Public Restroom in PSU's Smith Student Union (Portland, OR).



# RESTROOMS INSIDE PRIVATE BUSINESSES

Restrooms intended for use by employees and customers and considered by this report as private or semi-public restrooms (see Urban Restroom Network **Figure 1.3**). Businesses are not required to open their restrooms to non-customers, but may choose to do so at their discretion. Many businesses hang “No Public Restrooms” signs in their windows to discourage non-customers from using (or requesting to use) their facilities.

Examples: small retailers.



## PROS

- Ready supply of restrooms distributed across the City
- Inexpensive solution (subsidies) compared to new capital construction
- Could bring additional customers to business
- Operational hours coincide with hours of street activity

## CONS

- Businesses may not want to participate; may not want to risk improper use of restrooms and additional cleaning / wear & tear on facilities.

### USERS:

- Customers
- Employees
- Tourists

### SITING:

- Best location is within view of employees, may pick restroom based off of location within business, but cannot control location.

### MANAGEMENT:

- Would be maintained by business employees or through their contracted cleaning service.

### COST:

- Businesses may not want to participate; may not want to risk improper use of restrooms and additional cleaning/wear & tear on facilities.

## 4.2 MANAGEMENT

Several different public and private entities manage public restrooms in Portland's Central City. With the exception of small private businesses and Parks restrooms outside of the Downtown Business Improvement District, restroom owners and managers typically handle their own repairs, and contract cleaning services to a specialized cleaning company.

The following provides an overview of current and potential management options and outlines benefits and challenges for each option. In addition to the six alternatives, partnerships between various owners, managers and service providers may help to fit the specific needs of each facility type and location.

- Management Alternatives Listed
- Contract with private management company
- Contract with street furniture company (APT company)
- City owned and operated
- Business improvement district
- Public transit agency
- Hygiene center

# CONTRACT WITH PRIVATE MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Existing and future public restrooms could be cleaned and maintained by a private company. CleanScapes, a streetscape management and enhancement company, provides street cleaning, graffiti removal, pressure washing, dumpster free alley waste services, and other streetscape maintenance services to property owners, municipalities, and business improvement districts. The Seattle-based company with operations in Portland and San Francisco operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. CleanScapes services restrooms at Portland's Smart Park garages, at the Auditorium Park garage and the Pioneer Courthouse Square Information Center.<sup>1</sup>

## Benefits

- Provides constant litter control, graffiti eradication, human waste clean-up and streetscape management services.
- On-call service available for immediate cleaning.
- Provides employment opportunities for marginally employable men and women in the social services and criminal justice networks. Many employees have left temporary housing for their own apartments and moved on to other full-time employment.

## Challenges

- Major restroom cleaning would be done only at night, restocking and "spot cleaning" during the day
- Services focus on cleaning building exteriors and sidewalks or restrooms within businesses

# CONTRACT WITH STREET FURNITURE COMPANY FOR APTs

Street furniture companies specialize in providing street furniture such as bus shelters, kiosks, newsstands, and automatic public toilets (APTs). Street furniture provision and maintenance would become privatized through a contract with the city. APTs come in two forms:

1) *With advertising at no cost to city (San Francisco)*

Public toilets are usually part of a city-wide street furniture program. In return for installing public toilets, manufacturers install advertising at numerous locations throughout the city. Advertising revenue pays for toilet installation and maintenance. APT companies staff operations centers to monitor functionality and provide daily deep cleaning services.

2) *Without advertising for lease-to-own or for sale (Seattle)*

Maintenance is not provided by the APT company. Cities contract with local cleaning companies to service the units. Joint contracts are sometimes issued by the APT manufacturer and maintenance company.

## Benefits

- With advertising, toilet facilities are provided at no cost to the city, taxpayers, or business owners
- Self-cleaning APTs imply reduced maintenance cost and fewer cleaning staff
- For advertising-funded APTs, privatization of a coordinated street furniture program may provide street furniture in a more effective and efficient manner.<sup>2</sup>

## Challenges

- City code may not permit street furniture with exterior advertising
- APTs may be cost-prohibitive: no-ad units cost \$250,000 each plus operating costs; Seattle leases five units for \$600,000 year

# CITY OWNED AND OPERATED

Portland Parks and Recreation currently maintains 163 restrooms in 94 buildings throughout the city. It may be beneficial for Parks and Recreation to manage additional public restrooms.

Most public restrooms managed by Parks are maintained by its own employees. Downtown restrooms, however, are cleaned through a Clean and Safe contract with the Portland Business Alliance. The cost to maintain all 163 restrooms is approximately \$625,000 a year, with \$475,000 for Parks staff and \$150,000 for the contract with Clean and Safe.

The Parks staff responsible for restroom maintenance consists of one park technician, four utility workers, and seasonal staff who spend about 1/3 of their time on these facilities. One staff person requires 10 to 25 minutes per day to clean each facility. Per restroom maintenance costs are \$11-20 per day, including staff time, toilet paper and chemicals.

As of 2006, 60 Parks restrooms have been renovated, with nine additional renovations scheduled from levy funds. These levy funds, which expire in 2008, also support the salaries of staff needed for maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

# CONTRACT THROUGH DOWNTOWN BID

Public restroom cleaning for parks within the Downtown BID is contracted with Clean & Safe. The PBA manages Clean & Safe for Portland Downtown Services, Inc. (PDSI), the nonprofit that runs the BID. In addition to its Parks cleaning contract, Clean & Safe provides the following services:

- Private security patrols
- Portland Police bike patrol officers
- Crime-prevention services
- Sidewalk cleaning
- Graffiti removal
- Portland i's (Sidewalk Ambassadors)

A contract with Clean & Safe would operate similarly to a contract with a private cleaning company. On-call cleanup services are available, in addition to cleaning and stocking supplies multiple times daily. The cleaning service is not responsible for repairs, but notifies the restroom owner of maintenance problems requiring their attention. Clean & Safe employs 19 janitors through Central City Concern to provide cleaning services. In June 2006, a new Request for Proposals will be issued by Parks & Recreation to clean parks within the BID.<sup>4</sup>

## Benefits

- Parks currently manages most of the City's public restrooms
- Parks has experience with restroom challenges
- Many downtown public restrooms are in parks

## Challenges

- Dwindling Parks budget translates to inconsistent restroom operating hours, temporary closures, and cleaning and maintenance cutbacks
- Parks may lack sufficient resources to build and maintain new restrooms downtown
- Parks is limited to managing restrooms in the Portland Parks & Recreation system

## Benefits

- Public restrooms contribute to Portland Downtown Services Inc.'s mission of maintaining a clean and safe downtown to live, work, play and shop.
- Clean & Safe's security, street cleaning, marketing and sidewalk ambassadors program could support public restroom facilities in the BID
- If restrooms were branded as a BID amenity, Clean & Safe would maintain them with a high level of service and cleanliness

## Challenges

- Members of the BID may not want to pay more for construction and maintenance of new facilities

# TRANSIT AGENCY OWNED AND OPERATED

Many cities, including Miami, Atlanta and Baltimore, provide restroom facilities for their transit riders, particularly at transit stations. Facility types include APTs or stand-alone or interior restrooms within a transit center. In Portland, TriMet riders have requested restroom facilities along transit, particularly at transit stations, and the Downtown Mall Revitalization Citizens Advisory Committee has urged TriMet to consider public restrooms for the new transit mall.<sup>5,6</sup>

TriMet currently owns and manages one public restroom, located at the surface level of the Washington Park MAX station. TriMet, Metro and the Oregon Zoo partner to maintain the facility. TriMet is responsible for utilities and repairs and the Zoo is responsible for cleaning and securing the facility. TriMet also monitors the area through security cameras.<sup>7</sup>

There is also a retail concession located adjacent to the restroom facility, but there was not enough consistent traffic around the site to warrant continued operation.<sup>8</sup> TriMet has concession space available for rent at numerous other transit center facilities, which would create increased activity and provide restroom supervision. A TriMet list of suggested concessions includes pay toilets, in addition to flowers, espresso and visitor information.

# NON-PROFIT MANAGEMENT

Non-profit management by social service agencies would be particularly well-suited to a hygiene center. This type of facility fits the needs of homeless and low-income individuals who do not have access to shower or laundry facilities. A facility manager's experience working with homeless and low-income individuals is crucial.

A hygiene facility would need several permanent part- and full-time staff members to manage daily activities:

- A director or manager to oversee hiring, finance and operations;
- A team leader to manage staff team; and
- Team members to make appointments, enroll new customers, monitor queues outside the center, assist customers with facility use, ensure that facility rules are followed, clean showers after each use, clean restrooms at regular intervals and stock supplies.

At Seattle's Urban Rest Stop (URS) a minimum of three staff members are needed during each of three work shifts. Staff members must to be professional, respectful and well-paid to ensure a high level of service.

In order to provide showers before the workday begins, hygiene centers must open early in the morning. The URS is open Monday-Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.<sup>9</sup>

## Benefits

- Transit junctions are areas of high pedestrian activity and restroom demand
- Restrooms could be made available to transit drivers at the same facility
- Transit agencies often monitor activity at transit stations and could simultaneously monitor restrooms

## Challenges

- TriMet has said public restroom are not part of their business

## Benefits

- A non-profit housing or social service agency would have experience regarding the needs of homeless and low-income patrons
- A non-profit housing or social service agency would have knowledge of and access to funds available for homeless and low-income individuals

## Challenges

- Lack of reliable funding from year to year
- An established and experienced agency must host the hygiene center
- Political support would be needed to site and develop a facility

## 4.3 FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

Identifying adequate funding streams for public restrooms was perhaps the most challenging element of this project. While other cities have utilized innovative methods to fund public restroom, Portland's unique situation minimizes the feasibility of some of these alternatives.

Many of the following funding alternatives could be interpreted as policy and vice-versa. We have categorized the alternatives into either funding or policy, recognizing their multi-dimensional natures. This section contains funding alternatives, and **Section 4.4** contains policy alternatives.

Further, these alternatives are not mutually exclusive: unlike some site plans, for example, it is possible (and even desirable) for multiple alternatives to be implemented simultaneously. In fact, multiple approaches (such as foundations, advertising, and code) will improve the overall merit of the project.

Finally, these alternatives are not exhaustive. If none of these alternatives is deemed viable, we hope they will generate other options that are ultimately feasible.

- Foundations
- Hotel / Motel Tax
- Portland Development Commission
- Advertising
- 10-for-10
- Portland Business District and Special Districts

# FOUNDATIONS

Several arguments can be made to foundations for funding the capital costs, maintenance, or signage of public restrooms:

Individual health is improved through:

- More frequent urination, which results in decreased bladder cancer likelihood and other illnesses<sup>1,2</sup>
- Increased hydration, due to a greater supply of accessible restrooms
- Avoiding unnecessary risks (running red lights in a car, dodging vehicles as a pedestrian) to find a restroom

Public health is improved through:

- Decreased public urination and defecation<sup>3,4,5</sup>
- Increased physical activity due to greater public restrooms supply

Other benefits include:

- Community livability – the invisible “restroom-challenged” (including as many as 33% of women over the age of 18) curtail their lives due to a perceived lack of accessible restrooms
- Increased tourism – Portland could market its improved toilet provision
- Homeless individuals have increased restroom access, improving dignity
- Increased public transportation use, since many people currently drive for fear of no restroom access

A brief search through an online foundation directory (The Foundation Directory Online, <http://fconline.fdncenter.org/welcome.php>) listed hundreds of foundations that might consider funding public restrooms based on searches under the terms public health, homeless, or health.

## Benefits

- No outlay of funds required by public or private agencies (except perhaps local foundations)
- In writing grants, increased benefits of toilet provision will become apparent

## Challenges

- Pure reliance on this idea could be problematic if funds are not awarded, resulting in lost time with no measurable results
- There is a time opportunity cost in the grant writing that should be considered if writing will require considerable time

# HOTEL / MOTEL TAX

The City's Hotel / Motel tax is levied at 6% of gross revenue derived from the rental of hotel rooms. The total revenue generated by this tax in 2006 will be about \$13.2 million. The first 5% is allocated to the City's general fund, where it goes into the discretionary revenue pot. City Council allocates this revenue at its discretion, along with several other revenue sources like property taxes and business license tax. The final 1% of the tax, this year equaling approximately \$2.6 million, is managed by the Portland Oregon Visitors Association (POVA), a private entity. Some POVA revenue could help fund some tourist-related restrooms.<sup>6</sup>

## Benefits:

- This may be an important partnership between the City and POVA to establish restrooms in areas that are heavily visited by tourists. If visitors know they have access to a clean and safe restroom they may be more likely to spend more time and money at downtown businesses. (POVA may object to this use of funds due to questionable tourist use of certain facilities).

## Challenges:

- Council would have to commit to locking part of this revenue source for ongoing costs such as maintenance of facilities.
- This tax is highly elastic and is dependent on local economic conditions. A loss of revenue from this tax could potentially limit maintenance funding to newly-built facilities and impact hours of operation and lead to closures of some restrooms.
- At least one possible challenge to getting POVA to use some of this tax for restrooms is to show how location of specific facilities would cater to tourists and visitors.



# PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (PDC)

Public restrooms can be funded by PDC through attaching the capital cost of a facility to an urban renewal area (URA) fund, as was done in the Downtown Waterfront at RiverPlace. Having a restroom available to the public became a growing concern for property owners and businesses who wanted to keep the area clean and attract more visitors to the waterfront. In turn, PDC agreed to fund a new public toilet facility as long as property owners committed to the ongoing costs of security and maintenance for the facility. This partnership between PDC and the neighborhood association is seen as one of the greatest successes of this public toilet development, because it gives neighbors a vested interest and active role in keeping their neighborhood clean and safe.

Some of the challenges PDC faced in building the new restroom involved fears regarding drug use, vandalism, public nuisance, and aesthetics of the district. In response, PDC chose a high-quality urban design for the structure and located it in the most public space possible. The building also includes a coffee kiosk, which establishes even more activity in the area and informal supervision.

## **Benefits:**

- The kiosk employee, as well as kiosk patrons, helps to promote a safer environment for restroom users.
- This model may be used in other URAs across the city to implement additional public restrooms. For instance, PDC may help incorporate a similar restroom project on the South Waterfront Greenway.<sup>7</sup>

## **Challenges:**

- Requires community involvement to manage and fund maintenance/security.

# ADVERTISING

Portland has a very complex relationship with advertising in the public sphere, stemming from state constitutional restrictions unique among all states, past and present litigation, and the earnest protection of a welcoming and special public space uncluttered by advertising. If advertising were permitted to fund restrooms, a lawsuit could be expected by one of several advertising agencies interested in tapping Portland's relatively untouched advertising market.

However, conversations with experts and stakeholders indicate that the current need for public toilets could justify discussions exploring advertising to fund restrooms. Additionally, the question of advertising within restroom facilities or other public structures has not been explored in Portland, and warrants further discussions.

Many cities have granted advertising rights to contractors in exchange for the provision of APTs at little or no cost to the city.

Through the 1994 Automatic Public Toilet and Public Service Kiosk Agreement between the City of San Francisco and JCDecaux United Street Furniture, JCDecaux provided 20 APTs to the City at no cost in exchange for locating and advertising rights on public service kiosks throughout the City. JCDecaux obtained the right to control commercial advertising for the units, and the City was given two display panels on each APT and one panel on each Information Kiosk at no cost.

After 2001, JCDecaux agreed to pay the City an additional 5% of ad revenue annually if total revenue exceeds the agreed-upon threshold amount of \$18,000, subject to change by both parties.<sup>8</sup>

Advertising can also be a revenue source for public toilets through indoor wall posters. Eye Level Media, an English company with offices in North America, has been providing indoor restroom advertising since 1996. Advertisements are hung directly above urinals, on the inside of stall walls, and above hand dryers.<sup>7</sup>

In 2004, the cities of Minneapolis/St.Paul entered into a contract with NextMedia, a provider of indoor advertising, in collaboration with digital sign company Alive-Promo, to install networked digital advertising boards in public restrooms. Managers can change ad content via the internet, enabling immediate adjustments to the content and type of advertisement.<sup>10</sup>

Advertising is a new funding source for projects that many cities might otherwise have to deny. In 1999, Toronto faced a garbage crisis with no funds for much-needed trash receptacles for the City. A private company offered to donate several new garbage bins in exchange for the right to install ads on the equipment. Similarly, some cities have traded advertising rights for signage and street furniture.

The Seattle City Council decided not to use advertising revenue for public restrooms because of the fear that lawsuits could overturn current billboard restrictions. Already committed to providing public restrooms, Council followed the example of two other west-coast cities: San Jose (currently has seven toilets, expecting to expand to 12) and Palo Alto (two toilets and expecting to add a third); each pays \$65,000 per toilet per year on a 20-year lease to build, maintain and operate the toilets.

## Benefits:

- Possibility of covering capital, as well as ongoing maintenance costs.
- Advertisers have a strong desire to come to Portland, due to a currently untapped market.

## Challenges:

- Legal and political obstacles to implementing advertising in the public right-of-way.

# 10-FOR-10 CAMPAIGN OF PORTLAND PARKS FOUNDATION

The Portland Parks Foundation was established in 2001 on the recommendation of the Parks 2020 Vision, a study of the 20-year needs and objectives of Portland Parks & Recreation. The two goals of the foundation are to: (1) create a parks expansion fund to ensure that all neighborhoods have access to parks and green spaces, and (2) provide financial aid to programs for low-income youth.

Portland's park system continually faces the challenge of balancing the operating and maintenance costs of its new and older facilities on a shrinking budget. The Portland Parks Foundation has begun a new initiative in building public-private partnerships to help meet these funding needs.

In April 2006, the Foundation introduced the "10-for-10 Campaign" aimed at enlisting local companies to fund park maintenance at specific parks at at least \$10,000 per year for 10 years. This program was initiated with a major contribution from Columbia Sportswear, committing to give \$1 million over 10 years for maintenance and improvements at Sellwood Park in Southeast Portland.<sup>11</sup>

## **Benefits:**

- If Portland Parks Foundation finds corporate sponsors for additional parks in the City, contributions will likely cover ongoing restroom maintenance for 10 years

## **Challenges:**

- The Campaign is geared towards existing park facilities, not to add new facilities

# PORTLAND BUSINESS ALLIANCE & SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Downtown Portland's Business Improvement District (BID), founded in 1988, is one of the oldest, largest and most successful BIDs in the nation, encompassing a 213-block area of downtown Portland and receiving roughly \$4 million in annual dues. Businesses tax themselves to supplement publicly-financed services for neighborhood improvement. The 610 BID property owners are billed semi-annually based upon their building's square footage.<sup>12</sup>

An alternate option is the creation of smaller special districts based on the BID model for areas within the Central City where public restroom development is identified as a priority and garners neighborhood support. The revenue generated could fund restroom development or operational costs.

## **Benefit:**

- Funding restrooms under this special district is possible as long as the PBA sees these facilities as a priority.

## **Challenges:**

- Businesses within the district already pay a self-imposed tax, and may be unwilling to pay an additional fee for these facilities. New restrooms may have to be attached to additional developments within the district
- Unlike the streetcar, restrooms are an undesirable amenity to locate in the immediate vicinity of a building or storefront, generating "not-in-my-backyard" (NIMBY) feelings among local businesses.



## 4.4 POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Please see the introduction to **Section 4.3**

Policy alternatives described in this section include:

- Community Restroom Partnership
- Fee-for-Service
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Tourism Card
- Corridors
- Code

# COMMUNITY RESTROOM PARTNERSHIP

Based on the Community Toilet Scheme in the Richmond borough of London, businesses receive subsidies in exchange for providing public access to their toilet facilities.

## Benefits

- Restrooms already exist; no need for new construction.
- Perhaps lower cost
- No need for additional land acquisitions
- Increased traffic into businesses likely leads to increased sales.
- Businesses are not forced to turn potential clients away.
- Business times & locations closely aligned with those of the public (pedestrian traffic generally occurs where and when businesses are available and open).
- Participation is voluntary.

## Challenges

- Businesses are very apprehensive of vandalism and improper usages.
- A city's full reliance on this partnership may lead to a lack of restrooms for those using public spaces during atypical times and places.
- Costs may be extensive to offset business' concerns.



# FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Although typically associated with APTs in which fees are inserted for access to the unit, fees could be charged for a variety of restroom facility types. In some countries a restroom attendant collects user fees. Park restrooms can also be equipped with a coin-slot entry requirement.

## Benefits

- Deters those planning offensive activities in the restrooms.
- Fees are allocated primarily for maintenance costs, since capital costs are likely already covered.
- Through signage, the public could be made aware of maintenance costs and fee usage, thereby increasing public understanding of fees and restrooms.

## Challenges

- NOT a primary funding source – the benefit of fee-for-service facilities is primarily in the resultant safety.
- Equity concerns, since a fixed fee is a greater percentage of some individuals' assets than others, for use of a facility that is necessary for all.<sup>1</sup>
- If an attendant is deemed necessary, funding will be required to pay an adequate salary and benefits for all attendants.



# TOURIST CARD

This policy initiative, coordinated by the Portland Oregon Visitor's Association (POVA), would open restrooms in voluntary tourism destinations / facilities (hotels, restaurants, gardens, museums, shopping destinations / boutiques) to tourists with a branded "Portland Tourism Card" with a clearly marked expiration date.

## Benefits

- A key population is provided with a potentially high-quality, dense urban restroom network.
- The work and time costs are relatively low.
- Simple solution, since the private sector funds, operates, and manages the program. Minimal City involvement.<sup>2</sup>
- Businesses attract new clients who may otherwise not patronize their establishments.
- More palatable since populations undesired by the businesses would likely be avoided; according to public perception, those groups are a distinctly different group than tourists.

## Challenges

- A very small population is served.
- Minimal local public support, since the served population is non-local. (As a private endeavor, this is a minor deterrent.)
- Facilities may still be concerned about the populations served or the level of service (quantity) required.
- The possibility of fraud exists due to cards being

# CORRIDORS

The Central City contains several north-south corridors that could be activated with public restrooms. These key east-west locations offer Portland the opportunity to attain a high-quality level of restroom service that is easily accessible from any point in the Central City. The ribbons are (from west to east):

- The South Park blocks
- The downtown bus mall
- Tom McCall Waterfront Park
- The Eastbank Esplanade
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd / Grand Ave
- SE 11th & 12th Avenues

## Benefits

- Very accessible and intuitive for the general public – the locations of public restrooms is common knowledge and not far from almost any point in the Central City.

## Challenges

- Does not address funding or specific locational criteria
- Does not ensure full urban restroom network access in certain districts of the Central City (area south of Ross Island Bridge in SW Portland, PGE Park / west of I-405, northwestern sections of the Pearl, Rose Garden areas between North Interstate and I-5)

# CODE

**Appendix D** contains an example of Code that we believe should be added to current City Code. The structure of this code was developed by the American Restroom Association, and was slightly amended to best suit Portland's specific conditions. We recommend, however, that the Code be further studied before being considered for adoption.



Figure 4.1: Public Restroom Corridors Map

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### Policy End Notes

1. This problem has been somewhat addressed with APT fees by coins provided at social service agencies for restroom access.
2. We discussed whether or not to even include this policy option in this report since there is very little, if any, City involvement. We ultimately decided that the City's role as supervising overall restroom access and encouraging this policy alternative justified its inclusion.





***“It should be clear that a public restroom task force is meant to implement a public restroom network. This has been talked about for too many years. It’s time to do it!”***

Dan Zalkow  
Transit Mall Revitalization Citizens Advisory Committee



## RECOMMENDATIONS

**R**elief Works was responsible for exploring options and providing generalized conclusions for increased restroom provision. This section contains our recommendations for a task force to continue work on public restrooms, as well as a list of alternatives and other suggestions we think will best meet the Central City’s public restroom needs.

There is no one alternative that will best address this issue; rather, several options should be implemented, which will result in the adequate supply of Central City public restrooms.

- Task Force Recommendations
- Tasks Recommended
- Recommended District-Level Facility Alternatives
- Recommended Management Alternatives
- Recommended Funding Alternatives
- Pilot Projects

# TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on extensive stakeholder input, we feel the following organizations would be best suited to serve on a Public Restroom Task Force (PRTF) in order to move this issue forward. Several stakeholders commented on the recurring public restroom discussion in Portland in recent decades and the necessity for increased restroom provision. Therefore, rather than being an advisory or research group, we feel it is in the best interests of Portland's citizens, community, economic development, and environment, that the PRTF move this issue from research to implementation.

**Old Town / Chinatown Neighborhood Association (OTCTNA) / PHLUSH** – OTCTNA's subcommittee PHLUSH was instrumental in bringing the issue of public restrooms to Portland's consciousness and deserves tremendous credit for all of their hard work and research. As representatives of the neighborhood most affected by public urination / defecation, an individual from this group should be involved.

**Portland Business Alliance (PBA) / Portland Downtown Services, Inc. (PDSI)** – Our research indicates a strong need for business community involvement in discussions on public restrooms for the City. Due to vested economic interests and large stakes in quality restroom provisions in Portland, these groups will likely play an important role in these discussions.

**Central City Concern (CCC)** – This organization in OTCT provides "a unique array of services and innovative community partnerships." CCC could offer support for development of a hygiene center and is actively involved in issues pertaining to Portland's homeless community.

**Portland Oregon Visitors Association (POVA)** – POVA is the city's voice for tourists, one of the main restroom user groups identified in the Central City.

**Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA)** – Outside of the OTCT District, the Downtown District contains the most need for restroom facilities, given the high demand.

**Portland Development Commission (PDC)** – PDC should be involved in restroom discussions as a potential funder or decision-maker determining restroom siting. Many URAs are located within the Central City.

**Marketing** – An individual with significant marketing experience should sit on the PRTF as a bridge to the general public to "sell" public restrooms. This approach was taken by the Richmond borough in London and deemed very successful (Section 3: Case Studies). A Request for Proposals (RFP) could be issued for a local firm to provide the PRTF with marketing assistance.

**Portland Department of Transportation (PDOT)** – PDOT plays an important role in the establishment of public restrooms and siting in or near rights-of-way.

**Bureau of Development Services (BDS)** – BDS should be involved to address permitting, siting, and other physical aesthetics or appearances appropriate for Portland (APTs, advertising, etc.).

**Office of Management and Finance (OMF)** – As the City agency primarily responsible for finance and revenue, a representative from OMF should be included on the PRTF to advise on funding issues.

## RECOMMENDED INDIVIDUALS:

In addition to the above agencies, the following individuals have been of tremendous help to our research and possess a specific expertise that we feel would be of benefit to the PRTF. We therefore recommend these individuals (most of whom could serve in a representative capacity for one of the above agencies or organizations).

- **Mike Kuykendall, Portland Business Alliance** - Mike has been an excellent resource Relief Works, and is very connected to different boards and committees in the City. He has a strong professional interest in seeing public restrooms in Portland.
- **Carol McCreary, Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association** – One of the PHLUSH project founders, Carol has tremendous energy and is highly passionate about Portland's lack of public restrooms.

- **Bob Downing, Portland Parks & Recreation** – Bob Downing is the Downtown Zone Manager for Portland Parks & Recreation. He supervises management and maintenance for many of the Central City's public restrooms and has extensive experience with Central City public restroom issues.

- **Bud Kramer, Downtown Neighborhood Association** - Bud has an extensive history in state and local politics and citizen activism, including serving as the DNA president in 2004-05. He is very passionate about increasing public restrooms in Portland and has expressed interest in serving on the PRTF.

- **Political champion** – It was recommended by several stakeholders that an interested high-level political appointee head the PRTF.

# OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

## Macroscopic (Policy) Level Recommendations

1. Include public restrooms in upcoming public projects and plans in districts where a significant need exists. Examples of relevant plans and projects include: Fire Station #1 Relocation, Transit Mall Revitalization, and the Three Downtown Parks Master Plan.
2. All large parks (approximately the size of one downtown block or greater) should have a public restroom built on site.
3. The upcoming Central City Plan update should prioritize public restroom provision and maintenance in the Central City.
4. The new Street Access For Everyone (SAFE) initiative, proposed to City Council by Mayor Potter in May 2006, aims to address issues of “street disorder and sidewalk nuisances,” and specifically addresses “basic amenities like public restrooms.” We believe this is a very timely opportunity for public restrooms to become a mainstream element of public discourse.
5. City-sponsored prohibitions against advertising currently serve as a significant limiting factor in the provision of public restrooms. We recommend that this prohibition be re-evaluated and possibly waived in the specific context of restrooms.
6. The City should engage in discussions with the business community to discuss public-private partnerships. Business interests should be valued and given high priority. Addressing the concerns of businesses will help guarantee public restroom success.
7. The possibility of opening existing restrooms (i.e., in public and private buildings) to the public should be explored.

## Microscopic (Facility) Level Recommendations

In general, restrooms should be considered with the same level of importance as bus stops or other valued public amenities: vandalism is quickly addressed, public notices are posted if the facility is closed, and minimal level-of-service provisions are ensured.

1. All current and future restrooms should be supplied with soap, adequate daytime and nighttime lighting, and baby changing facilities in both men’s and women’s restrooms. When possible, operating hours should be extended to serve the largest possible population.
2. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED; <http://www.cpted.net>) elements should be included in the design of all new restroom facilities.
3. Attempts should be made to increase safety at current restrooms by encouraging nearby activity. The design of future restrooms should focus on either direct supervision (kiosk / attendant) or indirect supervision (significant nearby activity).
4. Wayfinding signs should be updated with restroom directions and approximate distances.
5. The inclusion of public restrooms should be considered at future bike stations, examples:
  - Portland State University
  - Westside Hawthorne Bridgehead
6. Signs should be posted in restrooms with a phone number to call regarding maintenance issues and/or safety concerns.
7. Whenever a restroom is closed for maintenance or any other reason:
  - Every effort should be made to ensure an expedient re-opening.
  - Signs should be posted with the nearest available facility and the anticipated re-opening date.
8. New signs should be made available for businesses that display the name and location of the nearest public restroom to replace current “No Public Restroom” signs (See inside back cover for prototype design).

# DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

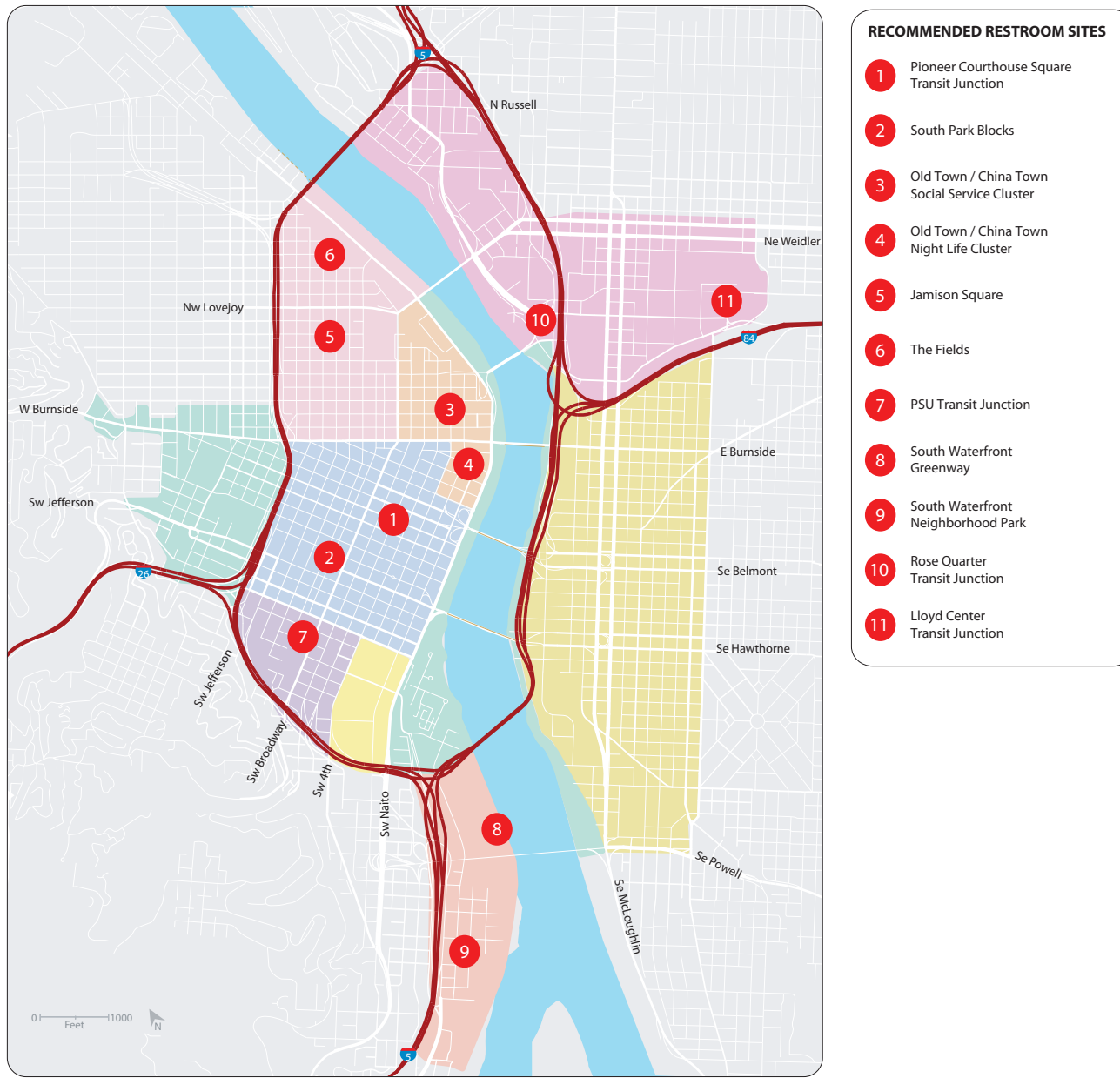


Figure 5.1: District Recommendations Map

Based on the needs assessment the following areas would benefit from new restrooms or restroom retrofits. Points shown describe general areas unless a specific location is mentioned.

## RECOMMENDED RESTROOM SITES

- 1 Pioneer Courthouse Square Transit Junction
- 2 South Park Blocks
- 3 Old Town / China Town Social Service Cluster
- 4 Old Town / China Town Night Life Cluster
- 5 Jamison Square
- 6 The Fields
- 7 PSU Transit Junction
- 8 South Waterfront Greenway
- 9 South Waterfront Neighborhood Park
- 10 Rose Quarter Transit Junction
- 11 Lloyd Center Transit Junction

**1** Pioneer Courthouse Square Transit Junction

**Primary Need(s)**

- Facility open during the entirety of the transit schedule (4 a.m. - 2 a.m.)
- Easily accessible from transit stops
- Direct or indirect supervision

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Restroom with kiosk
- APT

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Existing restroom at Pioneer Courthouse Square Info. Center.

**Opportunities**

- Existing on street retail (Ex. Food Carts)
- Heavy pedestrian flow

**2** South Park Blocks

**Primary Need(s)**

- Access for pedestrians and park users including tourists
- Facility for Farmers' Market
- Direct or indirect supervision

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Park restroom
- Restroom with kiosk
- APT

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Restroom in Portland Art Museum or Oregon Historical Society
- Restroom in private business

**Opportunities**

- Famers' Market
- Heavy pedestrian flow
- Tourist destinations

**3** Old Town / China Town Social Service Cluster

**Primary Need(s)**

- Exterior facility open 24 hours
- Basic services including shower and clothes washing

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Restroom with kiosk
- Hygeine Center
- APT
- Portable (Short Term)

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Smart Park (NW. 1st and NW. Davis)
- Existing social service agency

**Opportunities**

- City Repair trial restroom project
- Coordination with night life cluser restroom

**4** Old Town / China Town Night Life Cluster

**Primary Need(s)**

- Exterior facility open until at least 3 a.m.
- Clearly visible from right of way
- Direct or indirect supervision

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Restroom with kiosk
- APT
- Portable (Short Term)
- Free-Standing Urinals

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private building (Bar)

**Opportunities**

- Supervision via on street food vendors
- Coordination with social service cluser Restroom

**5** Jamison Square

**Primary Need(s)**

- Gender neutral facility for parents with small children

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Restroom with kiosk
- APT
- Park type restroom

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private building

**Opportunities**

- Demand for kiosk type retail (snack shack)

**6** The Fields Park

**Primary Need(s)**

- Access for park users (adults and families)

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- Park type restroom
- APT
- Restroom with kiosk

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private building

**Opportunities**

- Supervision via surrouding residential units
- Coordination with potential Jamison Square facility

**7** University Transit Junction

**Primary Need(s)**

- Facility open during the entirety of the transit schedule
- Easily accessible from transit stops
- Direct or indirect supervision
- Meet future transit volume

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- APT
- Restroom with kiosk
- Restroom in public building

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Public buildings

**Opportunities**

- Urban Plaza ground floor restroom already exists
- New development around transit can include restroom

**8** South Waterfront Greenway

**Primary Need(s)**

- Pedestrian friendly spacing
- Meet future pedestrian needs

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- APT
- Restroom with kiosk
- Park type restroom

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private buildings

**Opportunities**

- Likely demand for retail component if placed at junctions with east-west pedestrian corridors
- New development allows for early planning

**9** South Waterfront Neighborhood Park

**Primary Need(s)**

- Accessible to streetcar riders
- Meet future park user needs

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- APT
- Restroom with kiosk
- Park type restroom

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private buildings

**Opportunities**

- Likely demand for retail component if placed at junctions with east-west pedestrian corridors
- New development allows for early planning
- Supervision via surrounding residential units

**10** Rose Quarter Transit Junction

**Primary Need(s)**

- Facility open during the entirety or the transit schedule
- Easily accessible from transit stop
- Direct or indirect supervision

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- APT
- Restroom with kiosk

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- None

**Opportunities**

- Existing kiosk on site

**11** Lloyd Center Transit Junction

**Primary Need(s)**

- Facility open during the entirety or the transit schedule
- Easily accessible from transit stop
- Direct or indirect supervision

**Optimal Facility Type(s)**

- APT
- Restroom with kiosk

**Facility Retrofit Option(s)**

- Private building

**Opportunities**

- Make exterior restroom available at Lloyd Center



# MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the management alternatives outlined in **Chapter 4** is designed for specific facility types and locations. Since recommending specific management alternatives would require a more in-depth analysis of individual restroom owners and management contracts, we recommend overarching policies that should be applied to the management of all restrooms. Information gathered from stakeholders underlined common challenges of improper use, vandalism, maintenance and cleaning. The following recommendations specify management practices intended to improve these common issues.

## **1. Staff public restrooms with attendants.**

Staffing restroom facilities with paid attendants discourages improper use and is the most effective way to maintain facility cleanliness and safety. If a permanent on-site restroom attendant is not feasible, management contracts should require roaming attendants to visit all facilities at regular intervals throughout day. Attendants would clean and stock supplies, and monitor restrooms for improper activities and safety threats. A notice of monitoring should be posted at facilities to discourage improper use.

## **2. Select management based on level of service.**

Restroom management should be selected based on a high level of service for the City, rather than the lowest cost option. A well-managed public restroom network provides overall value by reducing cleanup costs associated with closed facilities, and minimizing repairs by keeping facilities well maintained and consistently monitored.

## **3. Address maintenance and repair as critical infrastructure needs.**

Public restrooms are an important part of Portland's infrastructure and should be maintained accordingly. Down time should be minimized and signs should be posted to notify restroom users of alternate facilities and reopening date.

## **4. Schedule cleaning frequency according to time and level of use.**

All public restrooms should be cleaned a minimum number of times each day, and frequency should be tailored to fit the level of use and times of high use.

# FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Through interviews with City bureaus and additional stakeholders, it became clear that Portland's public sector, alone, does not have the resources to significantly expand the current urban restroom network. Funding both the capital cost of construction, as well as ongoing maintenance and security will require partnerships between the City, private sector, and community.

It is our hope that along with helping to fund existing and potential public restrooms, these newly developed partnerships set the stage for continued collaboration between businesses, government, and citizens.

## **10-for-10 Campaign**

The City continually faces the challenge of funding public projects with a shrinking budget. At least part of this challenge can be offset by developing public-private partnerships and sponsorships. Through the Portland Parks Foundation's new "10-for-10 Campaign" or a similar program, it may be possible for corporate sponsorship to fund ongoing maintenance costs of public restrooms. Typically, funds are secured for 10 years at \$10,000 per year, per park.

Public Restroom sponsorship may be appropriate by a public health organization such as Kaiser Permanente or a company contributing to significant restroom use like Widmer Brothers Brewing Company.

## **Portland Development Commission (PDC) / Urban Renewal Area Funds**

Since PDC has secured funds for each of its Urban Renewal Areas (URAs), there is the possibility of using a portion of these monies to cover the capital cost of building new restrooms in these areas. This has been done in the Waterfront District with the RiverPlace public restroom and kiosk.

We recommend that the RiverPlace restroom become a funding model for implementation of at least some new facilities in URAs. RiverPlace has been deemed a success by many for its design, safety, and accessibility. In addition, it is a good example of how a community partnership has assisted with the ongoing cost of maintenance for this restroom. Neighborhood property owners contribute to a fund that covers maintenance and security costs for the restroom, as well as the management of the facility. This has helped foster a sense of ownership among residents.

## **Advertising**

Many cities throughout the world have turned to advertising to fund public projects for which funding would not otherwise be available. Exterior and interior advertising offer distinct opportunities to fund public toilets.

From state constitutional requirements to a history of litigation surrounding advertising, exterior advertising is a very complicated and contentious issue in Portland. Protecting the livability of public space in Portland is an issue City officials take very seriously. However, due to such policies, advertisers may have high demand for access to Portland's restricted market. As a result, exterior advertising may have great potential to fund the capital cost, as well as ongoing costs for maintenance of public facilities. We recommend that this alternative be explored further by the appropriate agencies.

Interior advertising within existing public restroom facilities has been used to generate revenue for facility owners in many US and European cities. This potential source of ad revenue may be less contentious and less controversial than exterior advertising, because it is not a part of the public right-of-way.

# PILOT PROJECTS

In order to begin the process of increasing public restroom supply, we recommend implementation of the following three projects:

1. Support PHLUSH / City Repair initiative to create artist-designed public toilet in Old Town Chinatown.
  - Preliminary cost estimates from PHLUSH and City Repair indicate an artist-designed public toilet in Old Town Chinatown will cost approximately \$14,000. The cost includes the use of recycled and donated building materials from the TriMet Mall Revitalization project and donated labor.
  - The City and PRTF can help ease the permitting process for this project and assist with costs for sewer connection fees.
  - PHLUSH and the City should develop a management plan for the public toilet that involves a partnership between the community and the City.
2. Increase public awareness of ground floor public restrooms in select public buildings.
  - Make ground floor public restrooms in select public buildings more accessible and visible to the public through signage and announcements in tourist guides, newspapers or other publications.
  - The presence of employees and on-site security and reception will discourage improper use of facilities and keep restrooms functioning as intended.
3. Conduct a mobile public urinal installation trial in a popular nightlife location to combat after hours street urination.
  - Carry out the Central City Plan (1988) proposal for “pissoirs” by installing temporary mobile public urinals for a 3 month trial run on Friday and Saturday nights. Determine if permanent structure should be installed.
4. To gauge public use, install temporary port-a-potty units (Honeybucket or other brand) in areas where a public toilet facility is being considered. The public must be made aware that the units are for public use (i.e., clear signage). Close attention should be paid to use and treatment of the units. A month-long trial should be conducted with the various hours of operation under consideration to gauge public use at different times of the day and night.



Signage in Vancouver, BC alerts the public of public restroom locations and distance.



# APPENDICES



**APPENDIX**  
**CITY PLANS, GOALS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES**  
**THAT RELATE TO PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

**A**

# CENTRAL CITY PLAN

Adopted by the Portland City Council March 24, 1988  
To be updated in 2007

The City of Portland's Central City Plan (1988) specifically recommends developing "a plan for the location of public restroom facilities." The document suggests potential restroom locations. Since 1988, only one of these has been implemented. The plan further recommends providing attendants in public restroom facilities to help reduce persistent problems with vandalism and maintenance.

## Policy 5: HUMAN SERVICES

Descriptions of Selected Actions:

HS 4:

Develop a plan for the location of public restroom facilities such as pissoirs.

HS 14:

Provide attendants in public restroom facilities. Public restroom facilities are needed by visitors to the City, homeless people and those living and working in the Central City. However, the City has persistent problems with vandalism and maintenance of existing restroom facilities and has had to close some public restrooms. In other cities these same problems exist, but have been reduced by having attendants for restroom facilities. Generally, such attendants collect a small fee for use of the facility. While a fee could be charged, those without money could collect litter or perform other community maintenance in exchange for use of the facility.

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### ACTION CHART

#	PROPOSALS FOR ACTION	TIMING			POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY	INDEX TO ACTION DETAIL
		ADOPT WITH PLAN	NEXT FIVE YEARS	SIX TO 20 YEARS		
	<b>PROJECTS</b>					
HS1	Obtain increased State funding for human service programs.		****		State Legislature	
HS2	Encourage county-wide and region-wide recognition and participation in efforts to address the problems of homeless and low income people.		****		HRB/PDC	
HS3	Conduct a study and determine how human service resources should be allocated to best assist those in the greatest distress.		****		HRB/Mult. County Pvt.	
HS4	Develop a plan for the location of public restroom facilities such as pissoirs.		****		Planning/Parks Gen. Svs./Pvt.	
HS5	Conduct a study to develop a city-wide plan that will guide the siting and expansion of social service facilities which directly provide food, temporary shelter, clothing or medical or counseling services.		****		Mult. County/PDC/ Planning/Pvt.	P 90
HS6	Create a community center which provides a social gathering place and clean-up facilities for special needs populations.		****		HRB/Pvt.	
HS7	Study and make recommendations on the transitional employment needs of special needs populations.		****		HRB/Pvt.	
HS8	Establish additional health clinics offering care and prevention programs to teenagers, indigents, the homeless and prostitutes.		****		Mult. County/Pvt.	
HS9	Establish a youth center offering recreational programs, health care, counseling and job placement services.		****		HRB/Mult. County/ MYC/Pvt.	P 90
	<b>PROGRAMS</b>					
HS10	Create an adopt-a-room program supporting SRO housing.		****		HRB/Pvt.	P 90
HS11	Establish a centralized human services information center.		****		Mult. County	P 91
HS12	Expand jobs programs for the chronically unemployed to do community service tasks.		****		PIC/HRB/Pvt.	
HS13	Encourage firms doing business with the city to have first source hiring agreements with the city.		****		City Council/PDC	
HS14	Provide attendants in public restroom facilities.		****		Park/Gen. Srv./Pvt.	P 91
	<b>REGULATIONS</b>					
HS15	Facilitate the location of day care businesses near employment centers.		****		PDC/Planning/Pvt.	

Figure A.1:

1988 Central City Plan proposals for action.

NOTE: Proposals for actions shown on the Action Charts and maps were adopted through City Council Resolution. The projects, programs and regulations listed are a starting place. As studies are undertaken, some actions will need to be amended, or in some cases, replaced with other proposals found to be better or more feasible.



The map (at right) from the 1988 Central City Plan shows proposed public restroom sites. Only one has been implemented at the Naito & Davis Smart Park. Others not implemented include Pioneer Courthouse, the Rose Quarter Transit Center, near the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, and in the inner eastside on SE Oak between Grand Avenue and MLK Boulevard.

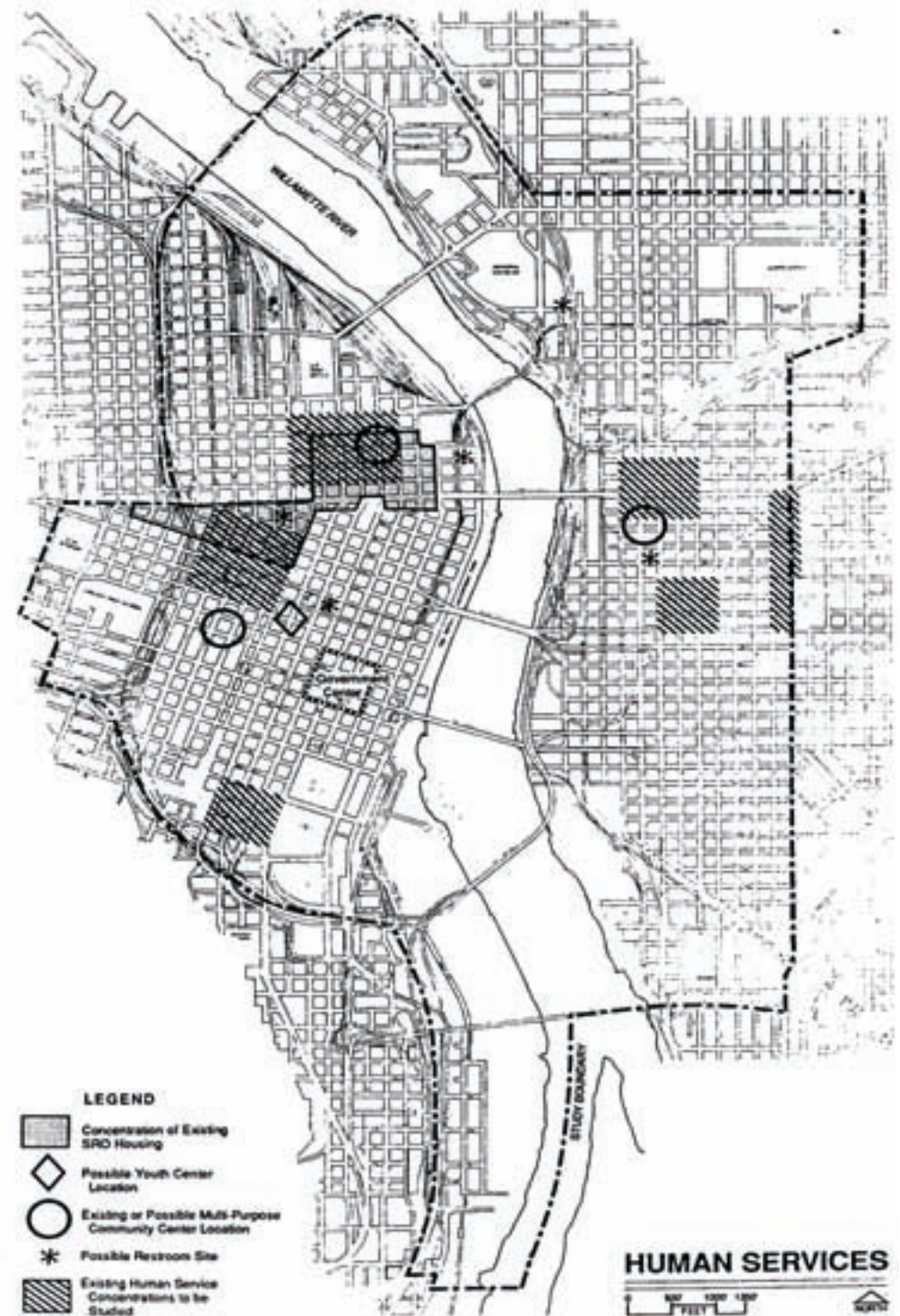


Figure A.2:  
1988 Central City Plan Map  
with Proposed Public Restroom Sites

# CITY OF PORTLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Portland's Comprehensive Plan's Goals (1980/2004) also suggest that it is within city policy to plan and provide public restroom facilities to accomplish the city's goals in urban design and transportation.

## **Comprehensive Plan Goal 12: Urban Design**

Enhance Portland as a livable city, attractive in its setting and dynamic in its urban character by preserving its history and building a substantial legacy of quality private developments and public improvements for future generations.

### **Policy 12.1 Portland's Character**

Enhance and extend Portland's attractive identity. Build on design elements, features and themes identified with the City. Recognize and extend the use of City themes that establish a basis of a shared identity reinforcing the individual's sense of participation in a larger community.

**Objectives** (only those specifically relating to public restrooms are listed here)

**D.** Expand the use of street furniture. As new street furniture is needed, incorporate Portland design themes into its design. Examples include the City's ornamental drinking fountains, street lighting standards and other features that are designed specifically for this City. Opportunities for the employment of such motifs include utility hole covers, water meter covers, bus shelters and street signs.

**G.** Extend urban linear features such as linear parks, park blocks and transit malls. Celebrate and enhance naturally occurring linear features such as rivers, creeks, sloughs and ridge-lines. Tie public attractions, destinations and open spaces together by locating them in proximity to these linear features. Integrate the growing system of linear features into the City's transportation system, including routes and facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and boaters.

**I.** Encourage the use of materials and a quality of finish work which reinforce the sense of this City as one that is built for beauty and to last. Reflect this desire in both public and private development projects. Portland's attractive identity should be enhanced. Urban linear features like the greenway should be extended.

### **Policy 12.4 Provide for Pedestrians**

Portland is experienced most intimately by pedestrians. Recognize that auto, transit and bicycle users are pedestrians at either end of every trip and that Portland's citizens and visitors experience the City as pedestrians. Provide for a pleasant, rich and diverse experience for pedestrians. Ensure that those traveling on foot have comfortable, safe and attractive pathways that connect Portland's neighborhoods, parks, water features, transit facilities, commercial districts, employment centers and attractions.

## **Comprehensive Plan Goal 6: Transportation**

Provide for and protect the public's interest and investment in the public right-of-way and transportation system by encouraging the development of a balanced, affordable and efficient transportation system consistent with the Arterial Streets Classifications and Policies by:

- Providing adequate accessibility to all planned land uses;
- Providing for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while preserving, enhancing, or reclaiming neighborhood livability;
- Minimizing the impact of interregional and longer distance intraregional trips on City neighborhoods, commercial areas, and the City street system by maximizing the use of regional trafficways and transitways for such trips;
- Reducing reliance on the automobile and per capita vehicle miles traveled;
- Guiding the use of the City street system to control air pollution, traffic, and livability problems;
- Maintaining the infrastructure in a good condition.

### **Policy 6.22 Pedestrian Transportation**

Plan and complete a pedestrian network that increases the opportunities for walking to shopping and services, schools and parks, employment, and transit.

### **Policy 6.23 Bicycle Transportation**

Make the bicycle an integral part of daily life in Portland, particularly for trips of less than five miles, by implementing a bikeway network, providing end-of-trip facilities, improving bicycle/transit integration, encouraging bicycle use, and making bicycling safer.

### **Policy 6.24 Public Transportation**

Develop a public transportation system that conveniently serves City residents and workers 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can become the preferred form of travel to major destinations, including the Central City, regional and town centers, main streets, and station communities.

# PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE MASTER PLANS

## City of Portland Comprehensive Plan

### Comprehensive Plan Goal 11 A: Public Facilities

A Provide a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of public facilities and services that support existing and planned land use patterns and densities.

#### Policy 11.1 Service Responsibility

Objectives (only those specifically relating to public restrooms are listed here)

A. Within its boundaries of incorporation, the City of Portland will provide, where feasible and as sufficient funds are available from public or private sources, the following facilities and services at levels appropriate for all land use types:

- (1) streets and other public ways;
- (2) sanitary and stormwater sewers;
- (3) police protection;
- (4) fire protection;
- (5) parks and recreation;
- (6) water supply;
- (7) planning, zoning, buildings and subdivision control.

The City of Portland should encourage the planning efforts of those agencies providing the following services:

- (8) public schools;
- (9) public health services;
- (10) justice service;
- (11) solid waste disposal;
- (12) energy and communication services;
- (13) transit services.

Pedestrian Master Plan adopted 1998

Bicycle Master Plan adopted 1996

The Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan stress the importance of capital improvements and facilities for those using alternative modes of travel like walking, cycling or mass transit. People using transit as well as pedestrian and bicycle networks require restroom facilities.

The Pedestrian Master Plan identifies “pedestrian districts” as “ areas where frequent pedestrian use exists or is intended and where priority is given to pedestrian access and activities in order to make walking the mode of choice for trips.” Pedestrian districts designate area of high street activity making public restrooms a proper amenity in such areas.

The Bicycle Master Plan advocates for “end-of-trip facilities” for bicyclists that offer amenities like showers, lockers, and bicycle parking. These facilities could provide a public toilet for the public in addition to showers and lockers for bicyclists.



## APPENDIX PORTLAND CENTRAL CITY PUBLIC RESTROOM INVENTORY

Appendix B provides a detailed portrayal of current public restrooms within the Central City.

### **Exterior Public Restrooms**

Exterior restrooms are the represent the stock of Central City public restrooms. There are 12 within the Central City.

### **Interior Public Restrooms**

Interior public restrooms are offered in several locations by the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and Portland State University. As stated previously, interior public restrooms suffer from limited hours and poor street visibility. Because of operating hours and limited visibility, interior restrooms are being presented here only as a means of informing readers where they are located and their hours of operation. Relief Works has found through anecdotal and personal experience that interior restrooms are not suitable for many user groups and are therefore not as beneficial to the public as exterior restrooms.

### **Additional Restrooms**

In addition to the public restrooms described above, there are various restrooms in the Central City owned privately and occasionally are open to the public.

# EXTERIOR RESTROOMS



## North Park Blocks

1

Location: SW Ankeny St. & SW 8th Ave.

Hours: 7:00 am - 7:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 4 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 4 Unisex

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Another of Portland's original comfort stations, these four unisex restrooms suffer from material deterioration and intentional mayhem. With no formal supervision and little pedestrian or store front activity, these restrooms are a haven for illegal activity. Due to wear and vandalism these restrooms are open infrequently. The addition of parking on Burnside in the near future and the possibility of a TriMet bus layover stop at the site will mean greater demand for these restrooms and hopefully a higher level of supervision.

## Smart Park Garage

2

Location: Smart Park @ NW 1st Ave. & NW Davis St.

Hours: 7:00 am - 12:00 am Mon - Wed, 7:00 am - 3:00 am Thur - Sat, 9:00 am - 10:00 pm Sun (Closed Sunday after Christmas until Saturday Market opens in March)

Number of Restrooms: 2 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Unisex

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: This restroom, which was remodeled in April of 2006, includes two unisex restrooms with handicap accessibility. Garage attendants can easily supervise the restrooms. Lighting is adequate in both the day and the night. Like most of the other stand alone restrooms in the central city, signage for these restrooms is minimal and several pedestrians surveyed in the area were unaware of these restrooms existed.



## Waterfront Park North

3

Location: Waterfront Park below the Burnside Bridge

Hours: NA

Number of Restrooms: NA

Total Stalls / Urinals: NA

Handicap Accessible: NA

Description: Closed due to construction of the "Big Pipe" along the waterfront, this restroom could not be assessed.



## Lownsdale Square Park

4a

Location: SW Madison St. & SW 4th Ave.

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 6 Mens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Mirroring Chapman Square is the Lownsdale Square which offers a male only restroom. Like Chapman Square, the restroom at Lownsdale Square was originally designed as a comfort station with a place for early visitors to wash before doing business in the city or returning home. With the original wash facilities removed the restroom contains three stalls in addition to three urinals. Likely due to the time of construction the men's restroom in Lownsdale Square includes three times as many stalls as the women's restroom in Chapman Square.





## Chapman Square Park

4b

Location: SW Salmon St. & SW 4th Ave.

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 1 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Chapman was one of the original comfort stations for women in Portland. Since its creation the restroom in Chapman Square was remodeled to include a handicap accessible stall. There is no formal supervision for the restroom, but surrounding businesses across Salmon St. and pedestrians can easily see the restroom.



## Auditorium Park (Ira Keller Fountain)

5

Location: SW Clay St & SW 3rd Ave. (Adjacent to Ira Keller Fountain)

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Mens & 2 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: One of the most unique restrooms in the central city, the two gender specific restrooms adjacent to Ira Keller's Forecourt fountain include extensive tiling and a "cave like" design. From street level, users of this restroom travel below grade down a dark hall to separate men's and women's facilities. The restroom does not include any supervision and lighting is not adequate. During one visit to this restroom the floor in the men's room was covered by a 2" puddle of water.





## Waterfront Park South

6

Location: Waterfront Park below the Hawthorne Bridge

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 2 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 1 Mens & 1 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: This restroom built into the stairs leading from Waterfront Park to the Hawthorne Bridge offer two unisex bathrooms. The restrooms were recently repainted but extensive graffiti still exists inside. No direct supervision exists, but the location of these restrooms along the waterfront trail provides some human supervision. Unfortunately the restrooms do not have adequate signage and can easily be overlooked by pedestrians or bikers along the waterfront trail.

## RiverPlace

7

Location: SW River and Montgomery Sts.

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 am

Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Mens & 2 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Owned by the Department of Parks and Rec. the RiverPlace bathroom is the newest stand alone public restroom in the central city. RiverPlace includes two gender specific restrooms which are handicap accessible and offer a baby changing in both men's and women's restrooms. Supervision for the restroom is provided informally via a coffee/juice stand located in the adjacent building.





## Eastbank Esplanade South

8

Location: Eastbank Esplanade @ SE Salmon St.

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 3 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 3 Unisex

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: For pedestrians and bikers along the Eastbank Esplanade the city provides three portable restrooms at paths intersection with SE Salmon St. Heavy foot and bike traffic in addition to police officers on bike patrol supervise the restrooms during the day, but bike officers explained that vandalism and inappropriate activity takes place in these units at night. The closest restrooms south of this site are 3.5 miles away at Sellwood Park.

## Eastbank Esplanade North

9

Location: Eastbank Esplanade @ the Steel Bridge Crossing

Hours: 6:30 am - 10:00 pm

Number of Restrooms: 1 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 1 Unisex

Handicap Accessible: No

Description: Located one mile north of the Eastbank South restrooms Eastbank North offers one portable toilet which is not handicap accessible. The location of the restroom directly adjacent to the esplanade trail provides adequate supervision.





## St. Francis Park

Location: St. Francis Park SE Stark St. & SE 11th Ave.

Hours: Open 24 Hrs.

Number of Restrooms: 2 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Unisex

Handicap Accessible: No

Description: St. Francis Park offers two portable toilets, neither of which is handicap accessible. St. Francis Park has a reputation amongst those surveyed as a place to avoid because of transient drug use and loitering. The restrooms available at the park are visible from SE 11th Avenue but not from Stark Street or SE 12th Avenue and while observing the park no police or security visited. Vandalism has taken a toll on the restrooms at the park.

10

## Burnside Skatepark

11

Location: Under Burnside Bridge at

Hours: 24 Hours for Skaters

Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Portable Units

Handicap Accessible: No

Description: Intended for Burnside Skatepark users and visitors, the portable units actually remain locked all hours. However, keys can be obtained through the Burnside Skatepark organization and skatepark users with keys will unlock facilities for those without keys. This system was implemented to deter growing misuse of the facilities. Future development adjacent to the skatepark and bridge may establish greater need in the area and an opportunity for a more permanent restroom facility. The Skatepark organization is pushing for a more permanent facility.



# INTERIOR RESTROOMS

## Central Library

14

Location: SW 10th and Taylor

Hours: 10:00 am - 6:00 pm Mon., Thurs. - Sat., 10:00 am - 8:00 pm Tues & Wed., 12:00pm - 5:00pm Sun

Number of Restrooms: 4 Mens & 4 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 8 Mens & 8 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Multnomah County Central Library offers gender specific restrooms for the public on all four floors. Supervision for the restrooms is provided by front desk personnel on the ground floor and informally monitored by library attendants on the upper floors. Space around the restrooms is typically active with library patrons.



## Pioneer Courthouse Square Info Center

15

Location: SW Broadway & Morrison St.

Hours: 8:30 am - 5:30 pm Mon - Fri, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Sat

Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 6 Mens & 4 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Located in the Portland Oregon Visitors Association Visitor Center at Pioneer Courthouse Square this restroom offers gender specific facilities under the supervision of POVA and TriMet desk attendants. According to employees at POVA the visitor center often experiences a line of transients in the morning, waiting to use the restrooms. Unfortunately there is no signage outside the visitor's center to signify restrooms are available and baby changing stations are not available in the men's or women's facilities.





## Portland Building

16

Location: SW 4th and Main St.

Hours: 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Mon - Fri, Closed Weekends

Number of Restrooms: 2 Mens & 2 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 20 Mens & 16 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: The Portland Building offers gender specific restrooms to the public on the first and second floors. Like City Hall, the Portland Building has entrance supervision but no supervision specifically for the restrooms. Unlike City Hall, restrooms in the Portland Building are hidden from the entrance, but are near an area of public activity. Unfortunately, the Portland Building does not have an equitable number of restrooms between men and women. This is unusual for a public building built in the 1980's.

## Portland City Hall

17

Location: SW 4th and Jefferson St.

Hours: 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Mon. - Fri., Closed Weekends

Number of Restrooms: 4 Mens & 4 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 16 Mens & 16 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Portland City Hall offers gender specific restrooms on all four floors. Although restrooms are not monitored directly, the entrances to City Hall are guarded. Restrooms are located at the corners of the building outside offices, which provide another measure of supervision. Public activity around the restrooms varies from relatively high on the ground floor rotunda to low on upper floors. Information officers described activity as relatively uneventful, but incidents with outside users have occurred.



## PSU Millar Library

18

Location: SW 10th and Taylor

Hours: 7:30 am - 11:00 pm Mon. - Thurs., 7:30 am - 7:00 pm Fri., 10:00 am - 7:00 pm Sat., 12:00 pm - 11:00 pm Sun.

Number of Restrooms: 6 Mens & 6 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 24 Mens & 24 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: PSU's library offers gender specific restrooms on every floor. Tucked away from the main entrance and most activity the restrooms offer little safety through supervision, but the front door is informally monitored by library staff. Library staff says restrooms are occasionally used by non-students and incidents involving damaged property have occurred.



## PSU Smith Memorial Student Union

19

Location: SW Broadway and Harrison

Hours: 7:00 am - 8:00pm

Number of Restrooms: 4 Mens & 4 Womens

Total Stalls / Urinals: 8 Mens & 8 Womens

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: The Smith Center offers gender specific restrooms on all four floors. The ground floor has restrooms which are informally supervised by employees at the information desk and food vendors. The restrooms were redone in Summer of 2005 which included adding baby changing stations. In addition to changing stations the restrooms in the Smith Center include hazardous waste containers.



## PSU Urban Center

20

Location: SW 6th and Mill St.

Hours: Unknown

Number of Restrooms: 2 Unisex

Total Stalls / Urinals: 2 Stalls

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Portland State's Urban Center offers two unisex restrooms on the ground floor adjacent to Rice Junkies. After completion of the building in 2000, the restrooms were open to public, but after repeated drug and maintenance issues the exterior hallway doors were locked. Now the restrooms are available, but patrons must ask for a code from either Rice Junkies or Seattle's Best Coffee Shop.

# ADDITIONAL RESTROOMS



## Saturday Market

Location: W Burnside and SW 1st Ave.  
Hours: 9:00 am - 5:30 pm Sat & Sun  
Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens  
Total Stalls / Urinals: 6 Mens & 6 Womens  
Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Available only during Saturday Market hours, these restrooms are privately owned by Saturday Market.

## Oregon Square Courtyard

Location: NE Holladay St. & NE 11th Ave.  
Hours: Lunch Hours and for Special Occasions  
Number of Restrooms: 1 Mens & 1 Womens  
Total Stalls / Urinals: 3 Mens & 3 Womens  
Handicap Accessible: Yes

Description: Intended for Oregon Square building tenants and visitors to the music at lunch events the two gender specific restrooms in the courtyard are open at varying times. Supervision for the restrooms is provided informally via a cashier at the adjacent coffee stand. Supervision of the park at night is lacking and in April a late night murder occurred in the courtyard.





# C

## **APPENDIX PUBLIC RESTROOMS ASSESSMENT FORMS**

**R**elief Works created the following assessment form based on those developed by the Denver Parks Department for their Parks Restroom Master Plan (2005).





**Section 2:  
Level of Service / Amenities:**

(1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = good)

Possible \_\_\_\_\_ Actual \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is the bathroom heated?	1000		3(yes)
2. How is the over all appearance of the restroom (exterior)?	1	2	3
3. How is the over all appearance of the restroom (interior)?	1	2	3
4. A. Is a drinking fountain available?	1000		3(yes)
B. Does the drinking fountain work?	1000		3(yes)
C. Is it ADA compliant?	1000		3(yes)
5. Is interior privacy screening available?	1000		3(yes)
6. Is the exterior modesty screening adequate to prevent people looking in?	1	2	3
7. Are air or towel hand driers available?	1000		3(yes)
8. Is toilet paper provided?	1000		3(yes)
9. Is soap provided?	1000		3(yes)
10. Are mirrors provided?	1000		3(yes)
11. Is a sink provided?	1000		3(yes)
12. Is a baby changing station provided?	1000		3(yes)
13. How well is the bathroom ventilated?	1	2	3
14. Is there storage space for extra supplies?	1000		3(yes)
Score _____			



**Section 3:  
ADA Accessibility:**

(1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = good)

Possible \_\_\_\_\_ Actual \_\_\_\_\_

1. Path of travel:			
A. Is there a path of travel from street, road, parking lot, or sidewalk?	1000		3(yes)
B. Is there a path of travel that does not require stairs?	1000		3(yes)
C. Is the routes at least 36" wide?	1000		3(yes)
D. Is the surface stable, firm, and slip resistant?	1000		3(yes)
2. Entrance:			
A. Does the entrance door have at least a 32" wide opening?	1000		3(yes)
B. Is there at least 18" of clear wall space on the pull side of the door?	1000		3(yes)
C. Is the threshold edge 1/4 inch high or less	1000		3(yes)
D. Is the door handle no higher than 48" and operable with a closed fist?	1000		3(yes)
E. If the door has a closer does it take at least 3 seconds to close?	1000		3(yes)
3. Is there a 5' turning diameter within the restroom?	1000		3(yes)
4. Is the route to the stall a minimum of 42" wide?	1000		3(yes)
5. Grab Bars:			
A. Are grab bars available in disabled stalls?	1000		3(yes)
B. Are they mounted between 33" - 36" above the floor?	1000		3(yes)
6. Is the toilet seat mounted between 17" - 19" above the floor?	1000		3(yes)
7. Is the centerline of the toilet approx. 18" from the wall?	1000		3(yes)
8. Is the lavatory accessible?	1000		3(yes)
9. Are the lavatory faucets accessible?	1000		3(yes)
Score _____			
Other Comments: _____			
_____			



### Section 4: Building Components / Plumbing Fixtures

				Possible	Actual
(1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = good)					
1. Are plumbing fixtures:	toilet	sinks	lavatories		
Porcelain	1	1	1		
Stainless Steel	3	3	3		
Valves (automation)					
Manual	1	1	1		
Automatic	3	3	3		
2. How vandal resistant are the fixtures?				1	2
3. How resistant are the valves?				1	2
4. Is there a difference between the wear and condition of the men's and women's restrooms?					
_____					
5. Wall material?	Brick	Block	Concrete	Wood Frame	
	Stucco	Plastic			
6. Wall finish? Paint or _____					
7. Vandal Resistance					
A. How vandal resistant is the interior wall system?				1	2
B. How vandal resistant is the exterior wall system?				1	2
8. What is the condition of the wall system?				1	2
9. Floor Construction? Slab Concrete	Painted Slab	Wood / Steel	Other (_____)		
10. Ceiling height?	1 (8ft +/-)	2 (8.5ft - 9ft)	3 (9ft +/-)		
11. Ceiling appearance?				1	2
12. Roof condition?				1	2
13. Signs of roof leakage?				1(yes)	3(no)
14. Is there extensive puddles in or at entrance				1(yes)	3(no)
15. How is interior light provided? Sky light	Windows	Electrical Lights			
16. Is the interior light adequate?				1(yes)	3(yes)
17. Is interior toilet screening adequate?				1(yes)	3(yes)
18. Does the interior appear in need of repair? (not including cleaning)				1(yes)	3(no)
					Score _____

Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Public Restroom Assessment 5 Relief Works



### Section 5: Maintenance / Servicing

	Possible	Actual
1. How clean are the floors and walls?	1	2
2. How clean are the privacy screens?	1	2
3. How clean are the toilets, sink, other fixtures?	1	2
4. Is there an obvious sewer backup problem?	1(yes)	3(no)
5. Does the floor have standing water?	1(yes)	3(no)
6. Is the trash can overflowing?	1(yes)	3(no)
7. Is drug paraphernalia visible? (ie. Crack pipes, syringes, rubber tubing, loose tin foil)	1(yes)	3(no)
8. Does the bathroom have an implement hanging stretch?	1(yes)	3(no)
	Score _____	

Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Public Restroom Assessment 6 Relief Works

# D

## **APPENDIX PUBLIC RESTROOM MODEL POLICY**

**R**elief Works created the following model policy to define city policy regarding public restrooms, the policy is modified from an ARA developed policy. The policy is intended to start discussions and undergo future modifications from further study.

# MODEL POLICY FOR PUBLIC RESTROOM AVAILABILITY

**Section 1: Title** [http://www.americanrestroom.org/pr/policy/policy\\_plan.htm](http://www.americanrestroom.org/pr/policy/policy_plan.htm)

This document may be cited as the Portland Public Restroom Availability Act.

## **Section 2:**

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this code is to protect the health of Portlanders, to reduce the spread of disease, to improve the livability of our communities and to make life viable for those who would otherwise hesitate to participate in activities that put them out or reach of toilet facilities.

### 2.2 Scope

The scope of this document is limited to outdoor public areas. This document is not intended to cover restroom access in the workplace. Existing ADA regulations should apply to all restrooms

### 2.3 Definitions

As used in this document:

Toilet facility: A fixture within a restroom for the purpose of defecation, urination, or both.

Lavatory: A washbasin or sink designed for hand washing.

Restroom: A distinct room maintained within or on the premises of any building or standing alone, containing toilet facilities and often, though not necessarily, a lavatory.

Urinal: A toilet facility maintained within a restroom for the sole purpose of urination. Generally, but not necessarily, specifically for men.

Public restroom: A restroom to which access by any member of the general public cannot be denied without due cause.

Bathroom: A room equipped with facilities for taking a bath or shower and usually also containing a sink and toilet. In the context of this document "going to the bathroom" indicates the need void bowel or bladder.

Portable Sanitation Unite (PSU): A chemical standalone structure, generally with a 200 gallon capacity. "Honey-buckets" or "Port-a-potties" are common examples of PSUs.

Automatic Public Toilet (APT): A pre-manufactured unit with fully or nearly fully automated features, self-cleaning, access, and more. Often, though not necessarily, require a coin or token to gain access. APTs generally cost \$150,000 or more.

### **Section 3. Application based on focused locations**

#### **3.1 Municipalities**

3.1.1 Every incorporated municipal district, borough, city, town, or village, or other entity of local self-government shall provide public restroom access at all times of the day and night and at any time of the year.

3.1.1(a) In jurisdictions unable to provide dedicated public toilet facilities, or at those times of the day or year when dedicated public facilities are closed, written and published policy should exist to allow access by the public to toilet facilities in government or private buildings (malls, universities, etc.) that are continually operational and available for public access. Examples include police and fire stations, hospitals, City Hall, and the public library.

3.1.1(b) Toilet facilities shall be provided in accordance with Table 1 of this section. Facilities are to be provided for each sex. Where restrooms are to be occupied by no more than one person at a time, can be locked from the inside, and contain at least one toilet facility, separate restrooms for each sex need not be provided. Where such single-occupancy rooms have more than one toilet facility, only one such facility in each toilet room shall be counted for the purpose of the Table. Toilet facilities for the maximum typical one-hour peak persons count within a 500-meter radius shall at least comply with FEMA's "Special Events Contingency Planning" toilet guidelines at the end of this document.

3.1.2 Provide access to toilet facilities for the public in business and retail districts throughout the period that moderate to heavy pedestrian activity (300+ visitors per hour) is typically expected.

3.1.3 Whenever established restrooms must be closed for more than one hour, alternatives (PSUs) or clear signage indicating the location of nearer restrooms should be provided.

##### **3.1.3.(a) Portable Toilet Alternatives**

3.1.3.(b) Toilet services and cleaning persons should be able to operate without closing the restroom.

3.1.4 Include restroom locations on municipal maps and with promotion materials.

3.1.5 Municipal Visitors Guides, Visitor Information Specialists and others such as police officers who interface with the public should know and be able to provide directions to public restrooms.

#### **3.2 Special Events**

For Special Events for which there are no permanent toilet facilities, PSUs should be provided as follows:

3.2.1 For a typical distribution of men, women and children, there must be 1 toilet for every 300 people.

3.2.2 For an Event attended primarily by women and children there should be 1 toilet for every 200 people.

3.2.3 For an even distribution of men and women at an event where alcoholic beverages are served, there should be 1 toilet for every 240 people.

Note: based on PSU holding capacities.

#### **3.3 Popular Locations**

3.3.1 Any location typically expected to have pedestrian activity exceeding 2000 people per day must have toilet facilities within 500 meters.

3.3.2 Any location, permanent or otherwise, typically expected to accommodate a peak average concentration of 50 persons per hour must provide additional toilet facilities if the nearest restrooms facility is greater than 500 meters.

#### **3.4 Linear Parks and Trails**

3.4.1 Restrooms should be provided at no greater than five-kilometer intervals on any multi-use trail system that accommodates (a) 2000 bicyclists and pedestrians (combined) during the months of the year in which the peak monthly temperature is over 50oF, or (b) 500 bicyclists and pedestrians (combined) during the months of the year in which the peak monthly temperature is under 50°F.

3.4.2 Trail and Park maps should include restroom location symbols and availability information.

3.4.3 PSUs should be substituted for unexpected closure of permanent facilities

### 3.5 Athletic Fields

3.5.1 Athletic fields should have toilet facilities within 500 meters during team activity.

3.5.2 Toilet facilities should be provided at fields when at least one team event per week is expected.

3.5.3 Toilet facilities should be provided at athletic fields when, during a given week, usage reaches 50 individuals per day.

### 3.6 Marinas

3.6.1 All Marina Facilities capable of mooring more than 5 (?) boats must provide restroom facilities. Portable facilities located on shore are acceptable.

## **Section 4. Application based on point-to-point transit**

### 4.1 Bus Transit Systems(1)

The transit authority will provide public restrooms at transit centers that meet the following criteria.

4.2. The transit center has been designed and sited principally to facilitate transfers between different routes.

4.3. The transit center is to be developed off-street on property that the municipality either owns or controls through a long-term lease.

4.4. County service through the transit center makes significant use of “timed meet” schedules.

4.5. The transit center has capacity for eight or more in-service coaches; layover bays or terminal space do not count toward meeting this capacity requirement.

4.6. There is adequate space on the transit center platform to provide a restroom facility without compromising operating requirements.

4.7. A daily platform population of 2,000 or more patrons is projected. This includes transfer activity as well as trips originating or terminating at the center.

4.8. At least 25 buses per peak hour pass through the transit center.

4.9. Independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operational activity at the transit center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day.

4.9 (a) If these criteria are met, the public restroom will be a unisex facility that will be used both by county employees and by the general public. The restroom will only be available to the public for those hours when a department representative is scheduled to be on-site to manage the service. During those hours, public access to the facility will be controlled by this supervisor.

4.9 (b) If a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department’s normal staff assignments, the local jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs for expanded restroom hours, provided that such agreements shall be approved by the council as required ordinance and/or applicable state law.

## **Section 5. Mass Transit Rail Systems**

5.1 Transit Stations without open public restroom access should have published policy that requires station employees to open access controlled station restrooms.

5.2 Portable toilets, preferably with waterless hand cleaner, should be placed in discrete but safe areas, adjacent to stations.

5.3 Stations with large sprawling parking lots should have a portable toilet in the area located the greatest distance from the station.

## **Section 6. Commuter Parking Lots**

6.1 All commuter parking lots with a capacity of 10 or more vehicles must provide TF.

6.2 Placement should consider esthetics, security, and maintenance.

6.3 If used, PSU’s should have a sufficiently wide base or employ other measures to prevent tipping from wind or by vandals.



# FEMA “SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINGENCY PLANNING” TOILETS

The following considerations will determine the number of toilets to be provided for particular events:

- Duration of the event,
- Type of crowd,
- Weather conditions,
- Whether the event is pre-ticketed and numbers known or unticketed,
- Whether finishing times are staggered if the event has multi-functions, and
- Whether alcohol will be consumed.

Calculating the number of toilets required for an event is a matter for conjecture. Where local laws or regulations do not exist, the following guidelines can be applied. Better management of events can be achieved by providing additional facilities. Assume a 50/50 male/female split unless otherwise advised. The following tables should only be used as a guide.

Note: Chemical Toilets have capacity limitations that may require additional units

## Toilet facilities for events where alcohol is not available

Patrons	Male			Female	
	Toilets	Urinals	Sinks	Toilets	Sinks
<500	1	2	2	6	2
<1000	2	4	4	9	4
<2000	4	8	6	12	6
<3000	6	15	10	18	10
<5000	8	25	17	30	17

## Toilet facilities for events where alcohol is available

Patrons	Male			Female	
	Toilets	Urinals	Sinks	Toilets	Sinks
<500	3	8	2	13	2
<1000	5	10	4	16	4
<2000	9	15	7	18	7
<3000	10	20	14	22	14
<5000	12	30	20	40	20

These figures may be reduced for shorter duration events as follows:

Duration of event	Quantity required
More than 8 hours	100%
6-8 hours	80%
4-6 hours	75%
Less than 4 hours	70%



**APPENDIX**  
**PUBLIC RESTROOM RESOURCES**

**E**

# PUBLIC RESTROOM RESOURCES

## Advertising

Water Closet Media. Portland, OR. <http://www.waterclosetmedia.com>

## Articles, Books and Reports

Aoki, K. (2005 April). Public restrooms: Dealing with a dirty little secret. *Planning*, 36-39.

Berner, Carlos. (2000). *The Privatization of Street Furniture*. MIT. <https://dSPACE-demo.mit.edu/bitstream/1721.2/3377/1/47006330-mit.pdf>

Citizens Commission on Homelessness. *Home Again, A 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=103921>

Denver Department of Parks & Recreation. (2005) *Denver Parks Restroom Master Plan*. Denver, CO. [http://www.denvergov.org/Planning\\_Design\\_and\\_Constr/template35708.asp](http://www.denvergov.org/Planning_Design_and_Constr/template35708.asp)

Frommer, Arthur. (2005) *Where to Stop & Where to Go: A Guide to Traveling with Overactive Bladder in the United States*. Novartis Pharmaceutical Corporation.

Greed, Clara. (2003). *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets, First Edition*. Oxford, UK. (ISBN: 075065385X)

PHLUSH. (2006) *Public Toilets for Old Town Chinatown: A Report to the Community*. <http://www.americanrestroom.org/phlush/phlushpp.pdf>

Portland Bureau of Planning. (1988) *Central City Plan*. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=88693>

Portland Department of Transportation. (1998). *Bicycle Master Plan*. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=40414>

Portland Department of Transportation. (1998). *Pedestrian Master Plan*. <https://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=90244>

Portland Parks & Recreation. (1995). *Restroom Master Plan*.

Portland Parks & Recreation. (2005). *Three Downtown Parks, Community Questionnaire Results*. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=96619>

Proceedings of the British Toilet Association's 2005 World Toilet Summit. <http://www.britloos.co.uk/activities/2005wtspres.html#speakerpres>

Proceedings from the 2005 World Toilet Summit [http://www.worldtoilet.org/articles/articles\\_expert\\_wts2005.htm](http://www.worldtoilet.org/articles/articles_expert_wts2005.htm)

"Progress Toward Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness" (1988)  
An update on Mayor Bud Clark's 12-point Plan for the Homeless from 1987. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=40976>

Rez, Jonathan. (2002). *Flushing Out the Male Public Restroom: A Study of the Design of Male Public Restrooms and their Effect on the User*. New South Wales, Australia.

Rovere, Vicki. (2001). *Where to Go: A Guide to Manhattan's Toilets, Second Edition*. New York, NY. (ISBN 0963358626)

TriMet. (2005) *Public Restroom Study*.

## Automatic Public Toilet (APT) Companies

Aluline Ltd. <http://www.aluline.co.uk>

Cemusa. <http://www.ptguide.com>

Exeloo Western, Inc. <http://exeloowestern.com>

Hering Bau. <http://www.hering-bau.de>

JCDecaux. <http://www.jcdecaux.com>

Lacock Gollam. <http://www.lacockgollam.co.uk>

Wall AG. <http://www.wall-usa.com>

## Events

City Repair Village Building Convergence. Collaboration with PHLUSH to build toilet kiosk. <http://cityrepair.org/wiki.php/projects/vbc/vbc6/sites/phlush>

World Toilet Expo, Bangkok. November 16-18, 2006.  
<http://www.worldtoiletexpo.com>

World Toilet Summit & Expo. September 6-9, 2006.  
<http://www.worldtoiletsummit.ru>

## Health Resources

American Foundation for Urologic Disease (AFUD). <http://www.afud.org>

Incontact. (United Kingdom) <http://www.incontact.org>

International Paruresis Association. <http://www.paruresis.org>

National Association for Continence (NAFC). <http://www.nafc.org>

Society for Continence (Singapore). <http://www.sfcs.org.sg>

## Other Cities

Denver Parks Restroom Master Plan. (2005)  
[http://www.denvergov.org/Planning\\_Design\\_and\\_Constr/template35708.asp](http://www.denvergov.org/Planning_Design_and_Constr/template35708.asp)

San Francisco Public Toilets. [http://www.sfgov.org/site/sfdpw\\_page.asp?id=32434](http://www.sfgov.org/site/sfdpw_page.asp?id=32434)

Seattle's Urban Rest Stop. <http://www.lihi.org/pages/RestStop.htm>

## Portable Toilet Companies

Honey Bucket. <http://www.honeybucket.com>

Royal Restrooms. <http://www.royalrestrooms.com>

Satellite Industries. <http://www.satelliteindustries.com>

SuperLoo: Affordable Toilet Solutions. (India) <http://www.superlooindia.com>

## Portland Central City Stakeholders

ACCESS Street Intervention Program.  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=35976>

Downtown Clean & Safe. [http://www.portlandalliance.com/downtown\\_services/clean-and-safe-services.html](http://www.portlandalliance.com/downtown_services/clean-and-safe-services.html)

Downtown Public Safety Action Committee (PSAC).  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/mayor/index.cfm?c=40093>

Portland Business Alliance. <http://www.portlandalliance.com>

PHLUSH (Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human), Portland Old Town Chinatown grassroots advocacy group. <http://www.americanrestroom.org/phlush>

## Portland City Links

City Code 14A.40.030 Indecent Exposure  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?&a=15423&c=28512>

City Code 14A.50.110 Misuse of a Public Restroom  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?&a=15434&c=28513>

City Code 20.12.170 Comfort Stations  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/?&c=cigch&a=bhche>

City Code 20.12.180 Public Convenience Station  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?&a=17275&c=28627>

Community Vision Project. Office of Mayor Tom Potter.  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/mayor/index.cfm?c=39149>

Portland Parks History.  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/parks/index.cfm?c=39473>

Portland Transportation System Plan.  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=38838>

## Portland News

Anderson, J. (2006, May 23). Streets meet; so can people. Portland Tribune. <http://www.portlandtribune.com/archview.cgi?id=35416>

Editorial. (2006, January 13). 'Let My People Go!'. Street Roots. [http://www.streetroots.org/past\\_issues/2006/01\\_02/editorial.html](http://www.streetroots.org/past_issues/2006/01_02/editorial.html)

Johns, A. (2006, February 7). Advocates: No restroom for the weary. Portland Tribune. <http://www.portlandtribune.com/archview.cgi?id=33809>

Sanders, J. Q. (2005, October 11). City could get more flush with toilets. Portland Tribune. <http://www.portlandtribune.com/archview.cgi?id=32083>

Zuhl, J. (2006, January 13). Signs of relief? Street Roots. [http://www.streetroots.org/past\\_issues/2006/01\\_02/cover.html](http://www.streetroots.org/past_issues/2006/01_02/cover.html)

## Public Policy

The Belfast Protocol. Issued at the 2005 World Toilet Summit, this ten-point protocol encourages governments to adopt public policy relating to "away from home" facilities. [http://www.britloos.co.uk/belfast\\_protocol.html](http://www.britloos.co.uk/belfast_protocol.html)

## Public Safety

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. <http://www.cpted.net>

## Public Urinal Manufacturers

Bidetoo. <http://www.bidetoo.com>

Danfo. Butterfly urinal pissiors. <http://www.danfo.com>

Patent 7000. Kros Mobil Urinal Units. <http://www.patent7000.com/index.php?lang=en>

## Restroom Advocacy Organizations

American Restroom Association. <http://www.americanrestroom.org>

British Toilet Organization. <http://www.britloos.co.uk>

Hong Kong Toilet Association, 9/F Bank of Communication Bldg, 368 Hennessy Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Contact: Michael Siu, Associate Professor of Hong Kong Polytechnic University's School of Design.

The Privy Council (New York City). <http://www.theprivycouncil.com>

World Toilet Organization. <http://www.worldtoilet.org/links/links-2.htm>

## Restroom Locators & Reviews

Australian Toilet Organization. National Toilet Map. <http://www.toiletmap.gov.au>

PublicLoos: A Google Maps Mash-up of Public Restrooms in San Francisco. <http://paul.kedrosky.com/publicloos>

Restroom Ratings. Public restroom reviews from around the world. <http://www.restroomratings.com>

Wicked Good Guide to Public Restrooms. Boston, MA. <http://www.boston-online.com/restrooms>

## Miscellaneous Websites

The Bathroom Diaries: toilets...bathrooms...dignity. <http://www.thebathroomdiaries.com>

CleanScapes, Streetscape Management & Enhancement. <http://www.cleanscapes.com>

Google Answers: Whatever happened to pay toilets? <http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=511929>

Great Moments in Science: Bathroom Blues Part 1. <http://www.abc.net.au/science/k2/moments/s105028.htm>

McClellan Group: A Clean Concept for Public Toilets and Hygiene Centres. <http://www.mcclellan-group.com>

Plumbing World: History of Public Toilets <http://www.plumbingworld.com/toilethistoryindia.html>

Restrooms of the Future: Solutions to Common Restroom & Personal Hygiene Problems. <http://www.restrooms.org>

Wikipedia: Pay toilet [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pay\\_toilet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pay_toilet)

Wikipedia: Public toilets [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toilet#Public\\_toilets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toilet#Public_toilets)

## **APPENDIX**

### **STAKEHOLDER QUOTES: WHAT PORTLANDERS ARE SAYING ABOUT PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

The following quotes help to tell the story of Portland's public restroom needs from a diverse perspective of restroom users and stakeholders. Each point presents a public concern that should be considered while planning restroom strategies for the Central City. We feel that comments from all stakeholders are equally valid, and to respect the people we've talked with, most quotes are anonymous.

"Providing public restrooms for the homeless would save so much humiliation"

"I'm restroom challenged being a bit older. I often take my 3 year old twin grandkids out and it's a challenge to find a restroom even with them."

"The largest issue I see is that the transient community utilizes public restroom for bathing and other personal hygiene not meant for restrooms."

"Public restrooms have been brought to the Pearl District Neighborhood Association's attention, but there was a "negative vibe" about it. They think transients will be attracted to them."

"Many in the Pearl District would probably worry about attracting more homeless to the neighborhood."

"Downtown, OTCT lack a day center, a safe place where the homeless can clean themselves up."

"Three evenly spaced bands that run north-south through downtown would be obvious places to provide new public restrooms: Waterfront Park, the Transit Mall, and the Park Blocks."

"Portland must have more public restrooms. The restrooms must be monitored to keep them safe and clean."

"More and more businesses are restricting their restrooms to customers only. No public restrooms anywhere – only portable potties on Eastside. There is nowhere for homeless to wash themselves."

"I would like to see restrooms included in the Burnside Bridgehead redevelopment. Where do skatepark folks use the restroom?"

"I plan my bike trips around the availability of rest-

rooms. This keeps my routes close to parks."

"I am shocked at the total disregard of public officials regarding public restrooms."

"The problem is not public restrooms. The issues are drug addiction and crime."

"It is criminal to spend millions to renovate the transit mall and not put in a single sewer line for public restrooms."

"There ought to be a rule of minimum civility in this city."

"Public restrooms have been an issue for the community since at least 1984."

"It's important for government to respond to community. In Portland, we have a strong 'community-based culture.' Portland needs to be responsive to communities."

"I think that there are a lot of doorways that shop owners have to hose out first thing in the morning. Restrooms are a place where people can go and lock the door and they can engage in sex, drug deals, and drug use, so public restrooms are a problem. I've seen the plusses and minuses going both ways."

"Homeless neighbors and shelter residents as well as tourists and visitors to our neighborhood cannot find adequate (clean, safe, open) public restroom facilities"

"Promoting walking as form of transportation also includes helping people deal with their daily needs, like using the bathroom."

"Public toilets are a necessary part of a pedestrian network."

"Everyone needs to feel like they can find a bathroom that is legitimately theirs to use when they are without a car."

"The lack of public restrooms can be a barrier to getting people to walk more."

"Biggest issues associated with restrooms are safety, cleanliness and perception that they are unhygienic."

"Maintenance is the problem. Not actually building the restrooms."

"You gotta convince businesses that people won't come downtown without clean and safe public restrooms. It's about the Tigard moms, downtown business patrons."

"You gotta brand these things [restrooms] like the Smart Parks. People know what to expect. They're well-managed. They're well maintained. There's signage. It's a brand."

"Yes, I do see a need for more public restrooms in the city. But, I have concerns that they will become abused like the old restrooms across downtown and be shut down."

"Using restrooms in businesses is much safer for the elderly. There are more people around and less transients."

"We get calls each year regarding lack of public restrooms, many calls from males after midnight."

"Jameson Square is becoming a "pee pool" because there are no restrooms for all the families and kids that use the fountain."

"We power wash the parking lots every Friday night with spot cleaning Saturday and Sunday mornings to remove human waste and other debris."



"The fact that the homeless have nowhere to bathe is a big issue."

"The Burnside Waterfront Park restroom was the worst. It was closed more than it was open. At the first sign of trouble it would simply shut down."

"Annually Clean & Safe receives 6,000 special emergency clean up calls. 3,000 of those calls are for human waste cleanup. 75% of those calls are from within Old Town Chinatown."

"Old Town Chinatown is ground zero."

"The businesses within the BID already pay the equivalent of a self-imposed tax. They would not be willing to pay an additional fee for new restrooms. However, businesses would support public restroom improvements."

"The neighborhood strongly feels that homeless need facilities, in addition to tourists and transit riders."

"Drug use and other illicit activities will be less of a problem than people fear. These things are already happening and public restrooms will not attract more of it. I see this as more of an excuse not to implement a public restroom plan."

"No one wants more public restrooms than unless there is a maintenance plan."

"It should be clear that a public restroom task force is meant to implement a public restroom network, rather than do more research. This has been talked about for too many years; it's time to do it."

"Public restrooms should be included in the pedestrian wayfinding signs so restrooms are never more than a certain distance from key locations in the city."

"Transit Mall Revitalization Project money should pay for toilets. It should be in the budget. This is not just Trimet's issue. It may be too late to put into the budget because the Project Team doesn't want to or have the time to deal with another budget addition."

"POVA has been concerned about public restrooms for the past 18 years that I've worked here. About every 5 years the issue gains some momentum, but doesn't go anywhere."

"Funding for construction & maintenance is the greatest barrier to improving public restrooms."

*About the restrooms at the Info Center:* "We get a few complaints each day about activities going on in there. They have to be closed fairly regularly for emergency cleaning. People line up in the morning with towels and personal cleaning items, waiting for the Info Center to open. People get upset when they're closed temporarily, so then go pee in the fountain."

"The tourism information council of Oregon did a survey recently on top priorities for info center amenities. Clean, safe public restrooms were the #1 response, followed by good coffee."

"Salmon Springs is another location lacking public restroom facilities. People often use the fountain for bathing."

"[Parks has] a backlog of maintenance issues."

"Money to build new facilities is easy to come by. Funds for ongoing maintenance are most difficult to come across."

"We used to have staff in parks all day."

"The cleanliness issue is the biggest problem for the public. One bad restroom experience colors your perception of all public restrooms."

"Study showed most people are afraid of communicable diseases on door handles."

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"I'm particularly interested in solutions that will get to the root of the problem of street disorder by focusing on community-driven prevention and intervention efforts such as neighborhood action plans, partnerships with the police, and basic amenities like public restrooms."

> Mayor Tom Potter  
Street Access for Everyone (SAFE) Initiative

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Posted by: Laura - May 21, 2006 12:53 PM

One of the major problems, I see, is the lack of bathrooms. This may seem like a silly issue, but consider the alternative. We have to use the lavatory somewhere, and we really don't want to do it in the parks but it takes a few hours to travel to a bathroom. And in the early morning hours, there is no other option. I would really like to see public bathrooms. It's not just a comfort thing, it is also a health issue for the community. Port-a-potties would be a temporary solution, but the few that are in the parks are often locked or gated off. Also most permanent public restrooms close down around 5pm. I see no reason they can't be open all night. If the problem is patrolling perhaps we could get some volunteers to make sure the bathrooms stay safe. I would volunteer for this position.

I love this community and I have great respect for it, but I have basic needs as well. We can't merely disappear the way many people wish we would and we need bathrooms to use. Contrary to some folk's opinion we do have dignity whether we're allowed to or not. Again, I will gladly help work or try to raise funds for any implements that might be made for my community.

Thank you for your time,  
Laura

> Feedback on Mayor's Blog  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/mayor/blog>

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Posted by: Rex Bosse - May 26, 2006 09:37 PM

And do we need public bathrooms? Of course! But we need to build them so that they are simple and easily cleaned and actively discourage homesteading - spray wash cycles every 2 hours with a three minute mist warning beforehand? Uncomfortably sized rooms that discourage horizontal occupancy? A budget for ongoing cleaning and repair? Bathroom patrols? And please, no NamedForAFormerMayorArtisticArchitecturalStatements, just lots of simple, clean toilets and sinks. Let's do this one at budget, please, without fabricated guesstimates! If we build permanent structures, make some of them pay-per-use with an attendant on-site to control bad behavior. I'd rather pay than enter a restroom such as I have experienced in some parks and public places!

As an alternate to permanent public restrooms (overpriced instant problems), dress up the port-a-potties, disperse them, and contract for service. They are seen as adequate for public events, maybe we don't need to build anything. No more money need be spent tapping into the crumbling sewer system, which might not be up to the additional load. No land need be permanently dedicated to smelly structures requiring expensive maintenance.

Thanks for reading,  
Rex

> Feedback on Mayor's Blog  
<http://www.portlandonline.com/mayor/blog>

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**PUBLIC RESTROOM**

**in 3 blocks at:**

**North Park Blocks  
(SW 8th & Ankeny)**

**WARNING!**  
**ALARM SYSTEM**  
INSTALLED BY



**relief**  
**WORKS**