Urban Care Stations

Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative

Portland State University

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URBAN CARE STATIONS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Hygiene, waste, and sanitation in the Portland metropolitan region are a broad and complex topic that relates to homelessness as a primary field, but extends to other scenarios. The need for improving and increasing access to restrooms, showers, and laundry facilities in Portland has been documented and proven through interviews and research. Due to its complex nature, multiple potential solutions to address accessibility have been explored (and some are already in place). These solutions vary at different scales (from neighborhood level to region level), include different hygiene services (from toilets to showers), and involve different stakeholders for their creation and management from grassroots organizations to governments.

THE SCALE: Oregon, tri-county level

THE CATEGORIES of research & analysis
- Design & Amenities
- Energy & Infrastructure
- Creation & Management
- Operation
- Programming
- Replicability
- Monitoring & Evaluating

WHERE & WHAT IS THE NEED?

POST-DISASTER
When the Cascadia earthquake occurs, it will be a pandemic event that will devastate Oregon’s water systems and infrastructures. It is evident that Oregon is not prepared to support after disaster water and sanitation needs.

HOMELINESS
Perhaps no other population was the urgent need for sanitation facilities more than those experiencing homelessness. Existing facilities do not meet their needs; they have limited hours, are in distant locations, and have long wait times.

RECREATION
Public restrooms also fill a need and serve in public urban spaces such as streets, schools, and parks. The need and use of public restrooms is a matter that cuts across class, gender, and race, and that benefits everyone.

HOW TO SOLVE THE NEED?

POST-DISASTER
5 Case Studies
- Nickles, New Zealand
- Tiny Loo, Portland, OR
- Emergency Loo Project, Portland (OR)
- MobileLoo, Eugene (OR)
- Mobile Loo, Portland (OR)

HOMELINESS
12 Case Studies
- Urban Rest Stop, Seattle (WA)
- Tito Stop, Queens, NY (NY)
- LooMobile, LA (CA)
- Pros, Elk Grove, CA (CA)
- Urban Recess, Newcastle, WA (WA)
- Nature’s Circular, Los Angeles (CA)
- Nature’s Circular, Portland (OR)
- Portland Loo, Portland (OR)
- The Bin, Los Angeles (CA)
- Off Grid Toilets, Portland (OR)

RECREATION
10 Case Studies
- Portland Loo, Portland (OR)
- Starbucks on Wharf, San Francisco (CA)
- Open Washrooms Program, Vancouver (Canada)
- Transit Stop, Seattle, WA (WA)
- Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY (NY)
- Chinatown, San Francisco (CA)
- Vancouver (Canada)
- Tito Stop, Queens, NY (NY)
- Riverside Restrooms, Riverside, CA (CA)
- The Bin, Los Angeles (CA)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS & RESEARCH

We suggest a model in which all 7 defined needs and related solutions/features can live together. Here are three Urban Care Stations in principle and their research through which the model could become tangible and operable.

A. MOBILE
- "On-Pod"
- "Portable"
- Individual trailers
- Off-grid power supply capability
- City permission

B. IN VILLAGE
- "On-Pod"
- "Plug-in"
- "Existing maintenance & management model"
- "Potential cost savings"

C. STATIONARY
- "Off grid (and composting)"
- "New REEDC’s site"
- "Flexible design, programming & image"

[Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative]

Student: Sarah Mercurio
Researcher: Anita Parker