

PHLUSH Option #6:

An Artist-Designed Toilet

Vision: Streets filled with bicycles and pedestrians, innovative community-based arts projects, and quality public art distinguish Portland. An interesting one of a kind toilet would fit the environment of Old Town and attract visitors in search of the unexpected.

Physical Facilities: Commercially available, industrial quality urinals and wall hung toilets can be integrated into unique buildings with vibrant artistic interiors that are at once artful, functional, vibrant, and practical. Like Monica Bonvinici's glass cube, public restrooms may stand alone as sculptural elements in the streetscape. Or like Frederich Hundertwasser's Kawakawa Toilets, restrooms may be integrated among other buildings.



Left: Kawakawa Public Toilets, Northland, New Zealand by German artist Frederich Hundertwasser, 1982. The artist collaborated with students at a local art school who incorporated recycled materials into the restroom's distinctive tiled interior.



Right: Mirror cube entitled "Don't Miss a Sec" by Italian artist Monica Bonvinici, London, 2005. Installed opposite the Tate Gallery on a sidewalk near a construction site, the one ways mirrors of the working toilet allow users to see out but not to be seen.

Management: A high degree of community ownership is a pre-requisite for artist-designed toilets. A range of management alternatives is available. Administration by an arts group combined with community-based non-profit management are likely to be viable options here.

How to make it happen:

- PHLUSH has contacted City Repair. They are interested in carrying out a project in Old Town. They work with communities to create comfortable and convivial public spaces with one-of-a-kind street furniture. While they have never done a public toilet, they are interested in doing one.
- Obtain a small grant to sponsor a design competition for a public restroom at specific site or sites in Old Town. Mobilize public interest through an exhibit of entries and selection of the best options.
- The Regional Arts and Culture Council or other groups with expertise in design competitions could manage this. Alternately, an organization specializing in green building techniques or use of recycled materials could sponsor the competition.