



PHLUSH Design Principles for Public Restrooms

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Working Goal Cost effective public restrooms that provide maximum function in minimum space and are safe, accessible, available, attractive and easy to maintain.

Cost Effectiveness

- The high cost of not having public toilets can balance the cost of providing good ones.

Maximum Function in Minimum Space

- Save space with single door direct entry stalls rather than “gang toilets”.
- Increase capacity and solve gender parity issues by making stalls unisex.
- Think public comfort station is a place the public feels comfortable making short stops rather than an interior room for rest.

Safety

- Site restrooms to benefit from natural surveillance by the community.
- Apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) in location, layout, lighting, surface, materials, fixtures and hardware.
- Protect users, especially children, from inappropriate contact with strangers in “gang toilets” by providing individual direct entry stalls.
- Design doors to ensure privacy with safety: full length with a 1.5 – 2” gap at the bottom and a lock that authorities can open from the outside in an emergency.

- Activate surrounding area with retail, information kiosks, food carts, street performers, bus stops, or parking pay stations.

Accessibility

- Adhere to standards of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Choose unisex stalls to accommodate families and opposite sex caregivers.

Availability

- Place sinks outside of stalls so users do not tie up toilets while hand washing.
- Make the flow of users more efficient by using unisex stalls.
- Plan for restrooms that can function year round and 24/7.
- Use directional signage to restrooms, signs on facility listing hours, number to call for maintenance, etc. and print and web-based information to complement signs.

Attractiveness

- Focus on restrooms as positive attractors, incorporating historical artifacts, artwork, and text in design.
- Involve users in restroom design and aesthetics as well as function.
- Give the community opportunity to take pride in and responsibility for restrooms.

Ease of Maintenance

- Use unisex stalls so individual toilets can be cleaned or repaired without closing facility.
- Choose vandal-resistant hardware and make surfaces graffiti resistant.
- Lower risk of in-stall vandalism by putting sink and trash bin outside in the open.
- Install tap for power washing and utility cupboard for supplies.
- Establish monitoring and evaluation plan for maintenance.

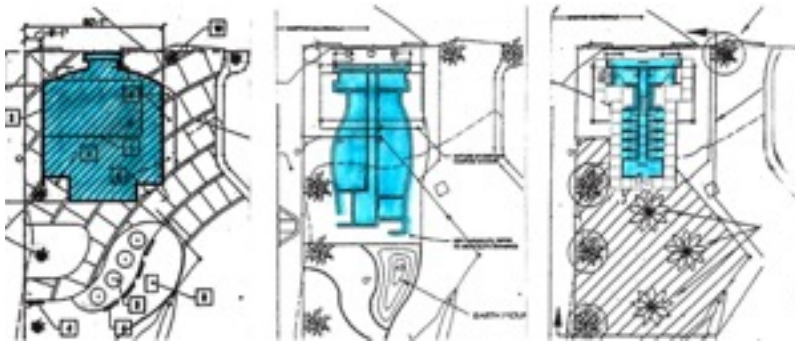
The PHLUSH Design Principles for Public Restrooms were approved by the Portland, Oregon Old Town Chinatown Visions Committee on May 14, 2008 and approved with amendment by Portland's Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association on June 3, 2008. San Diego-based restroom designer Mary Coakley assisted PHLUSH in developing these principles.

Along with other La Jolla Shores park activists, Mary had fought for a replacement for their aging comfort station but was alarmed when the city showed plans for a 2,000 sq. ft. structure surrounded by 5,000 sq. ft. of concrete. She led the community in redesigning the structure to a third of the size, or 650 sq. ft.

Built in 2007, the award-winning Kellogg Park South Comfort Station offers maximum function in minimum space to serve the park's 2 to 3 million visitors a year with toilets, showers, drinking fountains and a hand washing area. A key innovation are the small stalls with floor to ceiling walls that are paired with larger family restrooms and entered directly from outdoor public areas. These anticipate the direct access all-gender and family restrooms that cities such as Seattle have recently mandated for all facilities.



After this photo of the South Kellogg Park Comfort Station was taken, a colorful 2,300 sq. ft. plaza was installed to show the marine features of the La Jolla Underwater Park and Ecological Reserves. The public art is embedded with 52 life-sized bronze species, positioned in the locations where they can most often be found offshore.



The final design for the Kellogg Park South Comfort Station was reduced from 2000 to 650 sq ft with the introduction of private, direct entry stalls and common washing areas.

Key Documents and Related Design Resources

American Public Works Association. Nomination document for Project of the Year Award 2006. La Jolla Shores South Kellogg Park Comfort Station. <http://www.americanrestroom.org/us/lajolla/index.htm>. Accessed October 10, 2015.

Greed, Clara. *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets*. Oxford: Architectural Press, 2003.

PHLUSH. [Public Toilets for Old Town Chinatown: A Report to the Community](#). 2006

Relief Works, "Going Public: Strategies for Meeting Public Restroom Need in Portland's Central City," Prepared for the Office of Mayor Tom Potter, June, 2006, http://www.americanrestroom.org/us/portland/psu_gopubliccvr3.pdf. accessed October 10, 2015.