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# PLACES TO GO

## DOWNTOWN PUBLIC RESTROOM STRATEGY

Winnipeg

DRAFT - OCTOBER 4, 2010

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Downtown BIZ, through its Image Committee, approached the Salvation Army to volunteer a temporary location on Henry Avenue near Main Street as a pilot site to provide for the establishment of portable toilets serving predominantly the homeless/street population in that area. The BIZ has been responsible for operating and maintaining the portable facilities, and the reaction of the public and business owners in the area has been positive to date. The pilot project was extended through the summer 2009.

The BIZ is also considering six additional sites for portable facilities in the northern part of downtown and is working with the City to determine the most appropriate locations. A map showing the suggested locations is attached as Figure 1. The City supports the establishment of portable toilets at strategic locations downtown pending development of long term solutions.

The City's Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Downtown Development requested that the Winnipeg Public Service review options for permanent public restrooms at strategic locations in the downtown. Portable toilets remain a concern for the City in the context of downtown urban design principles and the achievement of an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment.

Why Public Urination is a Concern

- Public health ~ Deposits of human waste are unsanitary, a potential health hazard and increase the risk of communicable diseases.
- Human dignity/social equity ~ For those people who do not have a home, there are challenges to their human dignity on a daily basis when they have to resort to using open spaces as a restroom. Public restrooms should be available for all; not just select user groups.
- Livability ~ Facilities designed to accommodate the general enjoyment of the city and its amenities are as important as pipes and pavement. Access to a sufficient supply of clean, safe and accessible public restrooms will contribute to the success



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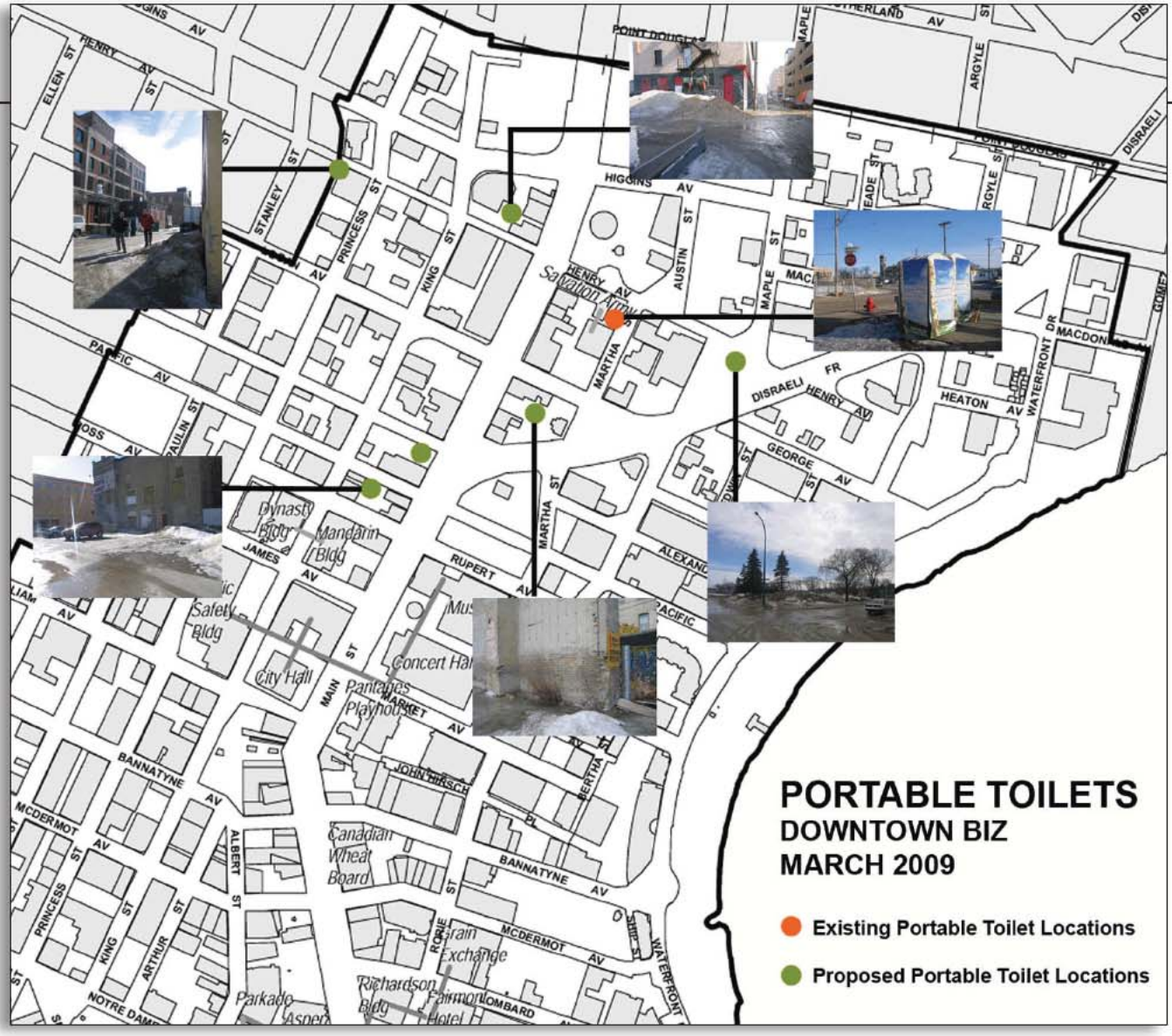



**FIGURE 1:**
**Suggested Locations of 6 additional Portable Toilets**

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of downtown as a place to live, work and play. Lack of public restrooms can restrict trips to downtown and cause fear and avoidance.

- Downtown image ~ Evidence of public urination contributes to an impression that the downtown is unclean, uncared for and unappealing, and discourages consumer activity and private investment in the downtown.
- Economic costs ~ There are tangible costs to the City for clean up and to businesses for operating and maintenance and lost revenue when public restrooms are not available.

## 1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to respond to a motion passed by the SPC on Downtown Development in September 2008 which directed that the Winnipeg Public Service report back with options for the provision of public restrooms at strategic locations in the downtown area, including opportunities for partnering with downtown area stakeholders, including the private sector.

The boundary of the study area is defined by the limits of the downtown zoning area (Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-law 100/2004). In general, this extends from the CPR line on the north, Young Street on the west, the Assiniboine River on the south and the Red River on the east.

This report is the product of work by the Places to Go Advisory Committee formed to provide advice and assistance to the City of Winnipeg on a downtown public restroom strategy. Active members of the Committee included representatives from: Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg, Salvation Army, Main Street Project, Red Road Lodge, Lighthouse Mission, Downtown Winnipeg and Exchange District Business Improvement Zones, Forks North Portage Partnership, Residents of the Exchange District and the City of Winnipeg, but a broader constituency of downtown stakeholders participated in review of the document as well.



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## 1.3 HISTORY OF PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN WINNIPEG

Public restrooms were a fixture in the downtown and at other locations throughout the city since the early 1900s. These "comfort stations" as they were known, were available in city parks and on other city-owned lands (i.e., street rights-of-way). Public records show the presence of facilities in at least three downtown locations: Garry Street near Portage Avenue, Fort Street near Portage Avenue, Logan Avenue near Main Street, and at a few sites outside of downtown (Selkirk Avenue at Main Street, Cornish and Sherbrook). The comfort stations were supervised by paid attendants. They ceased to operate and were removed around the 1970s due to unsanitary conditions, deteriorating infrastructure and budgetary concerns.

The Province of Manitoba built public restrooms in Memorial Park fronting Broadway, across from the Legislative Building in the spring of 1973 amid some controversy. The restrooms were located underground and were not supervised. The facility was closed in 2004 and the building was demolished in 2006 after concerns and complaints about personal safety and security, vandalism, and its use by transients, drug users and possibly prostitutes.

## 1.4 WHY PUBLIC RESTROOMS

Discussion about the need for public restrooms has surfaced recently due to complaints from business and property owners about public urination and increasing concerns about public health and cleanliness in the downtown. The Downtown and Exchange District BIZs are the most frequent recipients of these grievances. Business owners regularly mention the sight and smell of urine and feces on the street, in back lanes and recessed doorways and observe discarded liquor bottles and cans in close proximity. There are also known "hot spots" where the problem seems to be concentrated.

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Issues arise on weekends when bar patrons spill out onto the street after closing and have no where to access a public toilet facility. Intoxicated persons generally have fewer inhibitions about relieving themselves in public, and this can create conflicts especially where nightclubs, bars and restaurants are located in close proximity to downtown residences. The problem is pronounced in areas where there is a concentration of licensed facilities (e.g., entertainment clusters) and offenders can be seen urinating in back lanes, but also in public view at all hours of the day.

Emergency shelters are generally located in the northern part of the downtown around Main and Higgins and the homeless/street population congregates in this area without a reliable option for public restroom access.

## 1.5 METHODOLOGY

The Downtown BIZ has been proactive through its Image and North Main Street committees in initiating discussions about the need for public restrooms in downtown Winnipeg and how to resolve the issue. Their approach has been to address the problem at the root (people need access to toilet facilities) as opposed to simply treating the symptoms (cleaning urine on the street). Early in the process, the BIZ worked with the City to establish some parameters for a public restroom project and frame the issue.

The portable toilet pilot project had some challenges in the early stages in the North Main area, however, after moving to a new location, all indications are that the project has been a success. Downtown businesses, property owners and users in the vicinity of the facilities are pleased about the availability and location of the toilets, and the appearance of the area has witnessed a marked improvement. The project proceeded without safety or maintenance concerns and the community seemed to be making use of the facilities. Graphics on vinyl were produced and hung from the sides of the toilets to provide for better visual appeal





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and to highlight the presence of the facilities. The structures are supervised by the Downtown BIZ Clean Team and the property owner (Salvation Army) and maintained by a private portable toilet operator. They are locked at midnight each night. A common complaint, however, has been a steady supply of toilet paper. The City's by-laws and codes also require the supply of hand sanitizer where plumbing facilities are not available and the non-alcoholic form comes at a premium.

The City of Winnipeg mobilized the relevant stakeholder groups and agencies to form an Advisory Committee to be involved in the project. A series of meetings was held to discuss the project plan, coordinate background research, review implementation options and develop recommendations. This report contains the results of the Committee's work.

## 1.6 PROJECT PLAN

The scope of work involved conducting a stakeholder consultation program to determine options for the provision of public restrooms at strategic locations in the downtown. Some of the first steps were to identify potential user groups, define the need for public restrooms, and analyze the existing supply and availability of restroom facilities. It was expected that first priority would be given to the Main Street area to accommodate the street population. Siting criteria were identified to select suitable locations for restroom facilities. Options were explored to determine the most cost effective means of supplying restroom facilities including asking downtown businesses whether they would volunteer to open their restrooms to public access, or whether public investment would be required. Following careful review and analysis of the options, an implementation strategy was developed.

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# 2. ASSESSING NEED/DEMAND

It is important to identify the level of demand and the need for public restrooms to ensure that any proposed strategies target high need populations or user groups and that any facilities provided are suitably located and available at the appropriate times. From the outset, the committee believed it was important to gather the necessary facts through a background research process to support their findings. The Committee conducted an environmental scan to identify the data sets relevant to the issue. The City and the Downtown BIZ collaborated to produce the primary background research and data collection with the BIZ performing the majority of the survey and field work.

Quantifying demand for restrooms is a difficult exercise as use is not a characteristic that is commonly surveyed and varies widely across user groups and by human behaviour. However, a set of criteria can be defined to describe common instances why people congregate and where. Following are the key items the Committee highlighted as being the most critical to assessing the need/demand for public restrooms in the downtown.

## 2.1 EXISTING PUBLIC URINATION SITES

One important set of information was the places where public urination has been observed. The Committee thought there might be a strong correlation between areas where public urination was occurring and the need for public restroom facilities. Incidence of public urination could potentially be curbed if adequate facilities were made available at the appropriate time and location.

The Downtown BIZ Watch and Green Team conducted a field survey and plotted the locations of observed public urination sites. The City does not maintain records on the number of complaints or requests received for service to clean up problem urination sites, however, tracking complaints may be improved in the future through the new 311 service.



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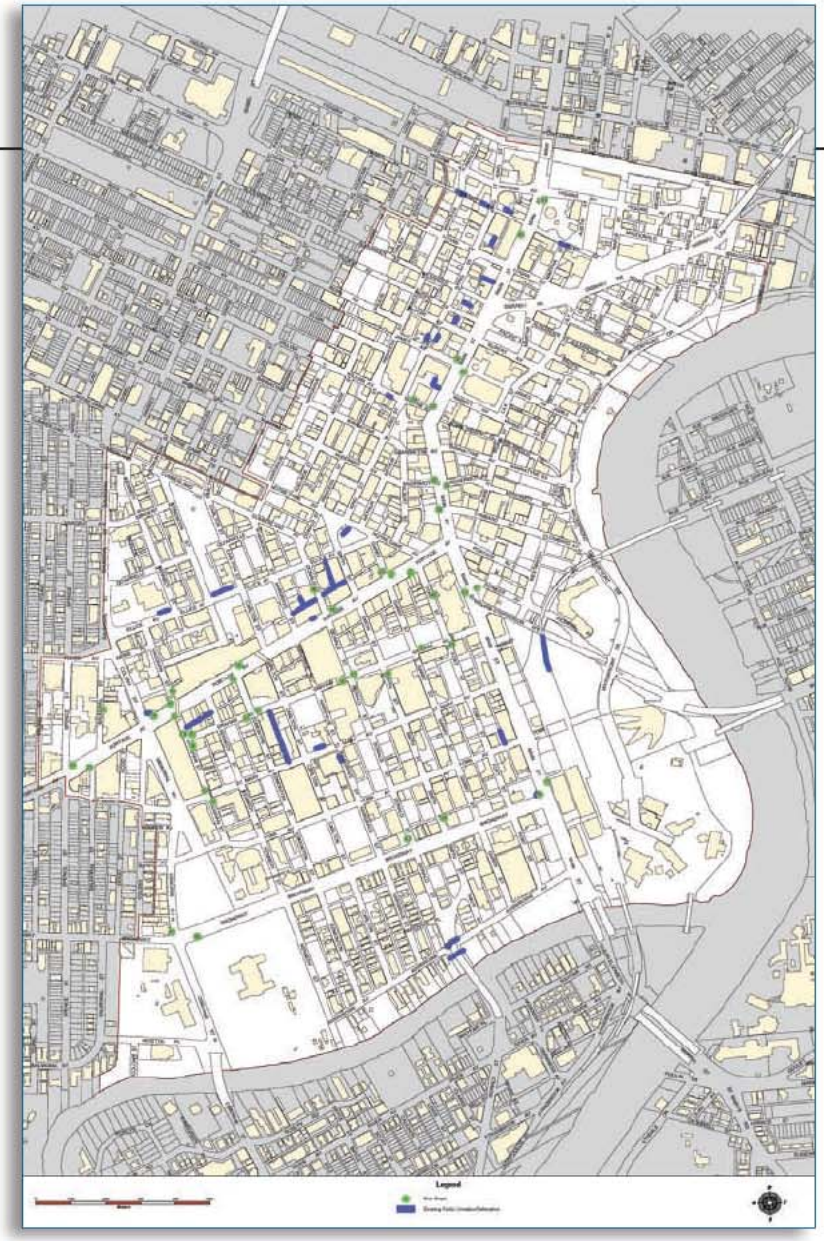



**FIGURE 2:**
**Observed Public Urination Sites**

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Analysis of this information revealed that instances of public urination tend to be found in recessed doorways, under bridges, in back lanes, in parks and green spaces, at bus stops and in parking lots. Some concentrations were noted at Portage and Main and around hotels where liquor can be purchased (i.e., vendors).

Historically, the BIZ has also received complaints from businesses in the Fort and Garry streets area south of Portage and north of York avenues. Problems have been experienced with vandalism, public urination and the accumulation of discarded bottles and cans when patrons exit at closing time from the bars and nightclubs in the area.

## 2.2 ACTIVITY AREAS

The Committee believed that areas where there is lots of activity and periodic concentrations of people, would be desirable places to provide good access to restroom facilities. Activity areas were divided into the following categories:

### 2.21 HIGH VOLUME PEDESTRIAN SITES

Data was collected on the level of pedestrian activity in the downtown including high volume intersections and nodes. Historical pedestrian figures were available for 1993 from the CentrePlan Downtown Handbook, and the Downtown BIZ provided pedestrian counts for 2008.



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**TABLE 1:**

**Daily Pedestrian Counts**

| Location | 2008 | 1993 |
|---|---|---|
| SW Corner Portage and Main | 6,773 | 11,968 |
| NW Corner Portage and Main | 6,724 | 6,622 |
| SE Corner Portage and Main | 4,747 | 3,447 |
| NE Corner Portage and Main | 7,053 | 10,391 |
| Portage Place | 2,955 | |
| Donald at Broadway | | 4,305 |
| St. Mary Avenue at Hargrave | | 13,656 |
| St. Mary Avenue at Edmonton | | 3,596 |
| Graham at Donald | | 13,055 |
| Ellice at Donald | | 6,636 |
| Portage at Garry | | 10,385 |

Surveys showed that the busiest areas in the downtown, where more than 10,000 pedestrians per day were observed, include: Portage and Main Concourse, Portage and Garry, Donald and Graham, and Hargrave and St. Mary. The intersection of Donald and Ellice was also significant with more than 5,000 pedestrians per day. Other notable activity areas include the University of Winnipeg, Red River College, Portage Place, CityPlace, MTS Centre, Millennium Library, Graham Avenue Transit Mall, The Forks, Winnipeg Convention Centre, Canwest Global Park, Broadway and the Manitoba Centennial Centre (Manitoba Museum, Centennial Concert Hall).

Taking the pedestrian count information into consideration, the Committee participated in a brainstorming exercise to identify high activity sites.

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In addition, information was collected on counts at transit stops in the downtown. Transit stops located in the downtown that made the City's list of the top 100 busiest transit stops in the city were plotted on the activity area map. Portage Place was highlighted as being the busiest bus stop in the city. Portage and Garry was ranked second and the south and north sides of Graham at Vaughan were fourth and fifth respectively.

**TABLE 2:**

**Top 100 Transit Stops in the City – Total Daily Activity**

| Rank | Location | Average Daily Total (on's and off's) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | WB Portage, N/S Opposite Edmonton (Portage Place) | 5,252 |
| 2 | WB Portage, N/S Garry | 4.678 |
| 3 | EB Portage, N/S Donald | 4,494 |
| 4 | NB Vaughan, N/S Graham | 4,404 |
| 5 | WB Graham, N/S Vaughan | 4,320 |
| 6 | WB Dafoe, N/S Routes 60 & 61 | 4,274 |
| 7 | EB Portage, N/S Fort | 4,221 |
| 8 | EB Graham, N/S Donald | 4,168 |
| 9 | EB Portage, N/S Tylehurst | 3,933 |
| 10 | EB Portage, N/S Vaughan | 3,898 |

The Committee noted that known future activity areas include the Canadian Museum for Human Rights site at The Forks.



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**FIGURE 3:**
**Activity Areas**

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### 2.2.2 PATHS, PARKS AND PLAZAS

High use park and recreation areas are also important to recognize as they are areas where people congregate periodically for festivals and events increasing the need for access to restrooms. Popular parks and plaza areas in the downtown include: Stephen Juba Park (Waterfront Drive), Central Park, Air Canada Park, Merchant's Park (Portage Avenue), The Forks, Memorial Park, Legislative Grounds, Bonnycastle Park and Old Market Square.

### 2.2.3 ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS

Clusters of drinking establishments like bars or nightclubs draw large concentrations of people, particularly on weekends and during the evening hours. This can result in highly intoxicated persons spilling out onto the street after closing hours and congregating in the immediate vicinity. The problem becomes more pronounced in the summer and this is also the season for the operation of sidewalk patios. There is a tendency for highly intoxicated persons to need to urinate frequently.

The Committee questioned whether there might be any correlation between the location of public urination sites and drinking establishments. (See Figure 4 for locations of beverage rooms, cabarets and retail sales outlets). Based on the analysis conducted there are specific cases where there is a direct relationship between the location of drinking establishments and observed public urination sites. Many of the public urination sites were found where the street population is known to congregate and there are few reliable restroom alternatives available, for example, under bridges, in back lanes and in parks. There are several examples of where public urination is commonly found in the immediate vicinity of a beverage room or cabaret (e.g., Vendome, St. Regis, McLaren, Windsor, Winnipeg, Woodbine, Manwin hotels, and Quest Inn) and these have been identified as some of the more problematic sites requiring further attention.





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<Insert Figure 4>

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### 2.2.4 SOCIAL SERVICE CLUSTERS

Social service clusters are defined by a high concentration of meal and emergency shelters and temporary help (job finding) agencies. These services are typically associated with user queues and are a locational focus for the street/homeless population.

## 2.3 USER GROUPS

A diverse array of user groups assists in defining the need, nature and location of public restrooms. The Advisory Committee concluded that the following user groups make up the universe of target populations:

The three key user groups generating the greatest need for restroom facilities in the downtown are: people who work, shop and visit the downtown; bar patrons and the high risk/street population ('homeless').




**FIGURE 5: User Groups**

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# 3. SUPPLY

The existing supply of restrooms across the downtown is varied ranging from facilities designated for public use, for example in shopping centres and food courts, to those in publicly owned buildings like government offices and libraries to restrooms in privately owned premises normally reserved exclusively for patrons, customers or employees. Due to the costs of operating and maintenance and increased concerns about personal safety and security in recent years, a lot of restrooms are being closed to use by the general public and require special access privileges.

People need access to a restroom when they are away from their home. Lack of access is a particular problem for several user groups (e.g., homeless/street population) and those with special needs. Families with children, the disabled, elderly and those on certain medications are generally referred to as "restroom challenged". These people typically require access to a restroom more than once an hour.

Measuring the level of restroom availability is the first step in determining whether the demand or "need" for public restrooms is being met in the downtown. The purpose of this section is to comment on the supply of public restrooms available downtown and match the high need/demand areas and user groups with the existing supply to identify "gaps" or areas deficient in public restroom facilities.

## 3.1 RESTROOM AVAILABILITY/GAPS

The Committee compiled an inventory of restrooms in the downtown by dividing them into those in public and private buildings. The types of restrooms available are defined as follows:

- **Public restroom** means a facility that provides at least one toilet for use by the general public without a fee (includes portable toilets). For example, parks, libraries, government offices.

- **Semi-public restroom** means a privately-owned facility where payment of a fee or customer status may or may not be a prerequisite for restroom use. Public use is generally not restricted,

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however, individual facility managers may prohibit the public from using restrooms. For example, large festival events, fast food restaurants, shopping malls, grocery stores.

- **Restricted access restroom** means a restroom facility where tenant or customer status is required for restroom use. The facility is only accessible to paying customers or employees or those with a key or code. For example, workplace, schools, retail stores, movies, sit down restaurants, paid sporting events.

The Committee did not have the time or resources to complete a detailed assessment of each facility or categorize the inventory into the above types. This could be an item identified for a future workplan as required for implementation of this Strategy. A proper facility assessment should include the following characteristics of each restroom: public or semi-public building, hours of operation, location/address, number of restrooms available (total stalls and/or urinals by gender), handicap accessibility, security measures, context (compatibility with adjacent land uses, level of pedestrian activity, proximity to transit, parking, etc), photograph.

**Partnership Opportunities**

The Downtown BIZ conducted a survey of downtown business owners to determine the owner's willingness to provide public access to what are essentially private restroom facilities. The initial focus of the survey was on those businesses located along the Portage Avenue and Main Street spines of the downtown. The response to this request was surprisingly positive. This has led the BIZ to expand its request to property owners in the downtown at large.

**Restroom Separation Criteria**

The Committee reviewed criteria for the standard separation distance between public restrooms in other cities and from National Restroom Associations:

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- Australia and China recommend that public washrooms be placed every 500 m (1640') apart or approximately every 2 blocks in areas of high pedestrian activity.
- Denver recommends that there be a toilet "where 150 or more people gather per day in a 4-6 hour period at a particular location at least 3 times per week during the summer months".
- The American Restroom Association also uses the 500 m criteria or where there are locations with 50 persons per hour or 2,000 people per day congregating.
- Portland recommends that restrooms should be available within 4 blocks, or no more than 1,000 feet from major transit junctions. They also state that social service clusters (where there is a concentration of homeless shelters) should include a clearly signed restroom open continuously. Clusters of nightlife activity should include a clearly marked restroom open until at least 3 am.

A made in Winnipeg solution was desired. In Winnipeg's case, a 500 m separation distance would mean that restrooms would be located approximately 5 short blocks or 3 long blocks apart, 400 m would be 4 short blocks or 2.5 - 3 long blocks apart, and 200 m would be 2 short blocks or 1.5 – 2 long blocks apart. The Committee recommended that a separation criteria of 200 – 400 m be used for further analysis. The separation distance may range depending on specific user groups or the time of day. (The Committee explored whether there are accepted standards for the distance recommended between restrooms for the disabled, but was not able to confirm this data prior to the submission of this report).

Circles with a 400m radius centred on each known public or semi-public restroom were plotted. The result was a series of overlapping circles showing the area of the downtown well served by public restrooms, at least during regular business hours. Analysis of the information indicated that there are a few large gaps in coverage in the Central Park and Legislative precincts. However, both of these areas contain several public buildings with the potential for public access. Social service providers also indicated that the emergency shelters are open during the day to provide public access to restrooms.

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**Gap Analysis**

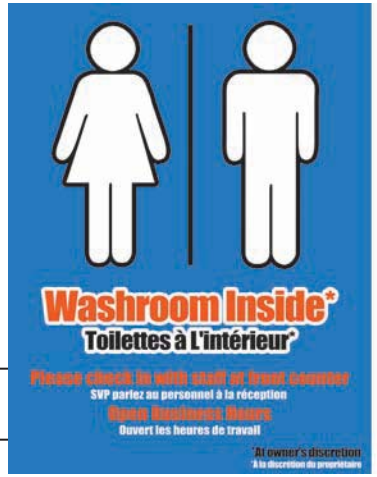
For another layer in the analysis, the Activity Areas information was combined with the 'need criteria' circles to see where gaps exist. Some of the activity areas which do not have ready access to public or semi public washrooms include: Waterfront Drive, Assiniboine Riverwalk, Central Park.

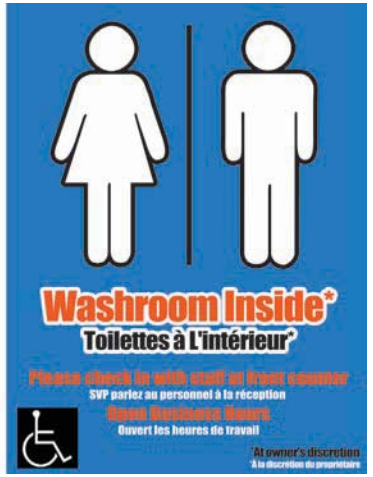
The 'need criteria' information was also cross-referenced with the public urination sites to see if there was a correlation. Some of the observed public urination sites not adequately served by washrooms include: the Donald Street Bridge and Central Park.

While downtown public restroom coverage at approximately 400 m apart is quite good, this varies depending on the time of day and for the needs of specific user groups. During standard daytime operating hours, offices, government buildings, restaurants and stores provide ready access to restrooms for most people. However, when these buildings close, supply of restrooms quickly diminishes. This is repeated later in the day when other sets of facilities (e.g., bars, nightclubs, emergency shelters, portable toilets, etc) lock their doors. Therefore changes in availability throughout the day must be taken into consideration when developing and implementing various strategies for public access.

## 3.2 DOWNTOWN BIZ PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

Flowing from the results of its survey of downtown business owners, the Downtown BIZ initiated a public information program to alert the public to the availability and location of restrooms in private businesses. The BIZ is in the process of distributing sticky decals to be posted on the storefront. The window decal has been translated in both official languages. The availability of restrooms for the disabled will also be



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highlighted through use of the universal disabled symbol on the decal or a specially designed decal. Locations could also be published in BIZ brochures and maps (e.g., downtown dining and parking guides).

## 3.3 SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

One of the most important factors contributing to the success of any public restroom program is the strategic location of the facilities. Policies and practices in other cities were reviewed to identify a common set of site selection criteria. If new capital investments in infrastructure are to be made, the Committee suggests that the following guidelines for site selection be utilized:

- Proximity to activity areas
- Good sight lines – approaches to the facility should be highly visible
- Brightly lit
- Facilitates passive surveillance by adjacent traffic and pedestrians; "eyes on the street"; not isolated
- Entrance facing outward toward a busy road, sidewalk or path
- On existing police patrol routes
- No entrapment areas (not located within recessed areas, tall fences, berms, high vegetation)
- Good visibility around corners
- Ease of maintenance, cleaning, delivery and removal
- Not in locations that are trying to reduce trespassing (e.g., privately operated surface parking lots)
- Convenient locations for highest need
- Sufficient space in roadway right-of-way
- Not blocking anything/anyone
- Sensitive to context, cultural and symbolic sites
- Accessible for people with differing abilities and appropriately signed for same
- Units should have emergency assistance information clearly posted
- Telephone numbers to report vandalism or maintenance problems should be clearly posted (e.g., call 311)

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## 3.4 FUTURE PUBLIC RESTROOM INFRASTRUCTURE

The supply of public restrooms operated and maintained by the City is minimal in the downtown. Currently, restrooms are only provided on a seasonal basis in association with the wading pools at McFadyen Playground and Central Park. There are no plans to add to the existing public restroom infrastructure.

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# 4. BEST PRACTICES

Research on public restroom approaches in other cities revealed that public urination is an issue of increasing concern across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and the world. Many cities in Europe, for example, have been active in providing public restroom facilities for many years as a standard public service. In addition, the Committee was surprised to learn of the multitude of resources available through national restroom associations particularly in the USA and UK (e.g., American Restroom Association, British Toilet Association).

In Canada, several cities have recently embarked on public restroom projects or are currently considering capital investments in this infrastructure. The table in Appendix 1, prepared by the City of Calgary in 2008, provides a summary of initiatives currently being undertaken in other municipal jurisdictions and highlights some of the key findings of their programs (e.g., opportunities, constraints, pros/cons, trends).

The comparative table shows that there is no one, universal solution and that approaches vary by context.

Several of the cities reviewed employ innovative financing tools to support the provision of restroom facilities. A popular approach is to contract with an advertising agency to supply street furniture, including automated public restrooms (APTs) in exchange for advertising space. The furniture and restroom facilities are provided at no cost to the city and the city gets a portion of the advertising revenue above a certain threshold. Toronto, Vancouver, Boston, Pittsburgh and San Francisco currently contract with various advertising agencies to supply this public amenity. In some cases, the city shares a portion of the capital costs.

Seattle opted to pay for the lease of APT units from utility revenues rather than encourage a proliferation of advertising. However, since then the public toilet program has been cancelled and the City is selling off the public toilet units. In Denver, municipal community improvement program bonds are issued

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to raise capital and the municipality pays the operating costs. In London, public restroom facilities are funded partly through user fees.

In most of the examples reviewed, cities are utilizing an APT facility which is self-contained and self cleaning. APTs are available in fully accessible models. One style retracts into the ground. Edmonton and Victoria use a specific brand of mobile urinal unit while Portland has developed its own prototype. (A full description of the various facilities available is provided in Appendix 2).

Best practices reveal that the success of a public restroom strategy is enhanced where local leaders commit to a program of regular maintenance and establish both passive (e.g., visibility from the street) and active (e.g., paid supervision) surveillance of the site. Joint ventures, sponsorships or partnerships can be explored with the private sector, social service agencies or business associations to address these factors and enable various facility options.



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# 5. ALTERNATIVES

## 5.1 FACILITY TYPES

There are several options for the form of public restroom infrastructure if capital investments are to be made. Choosing the appropriate solution to meet the particular demand or need is the key to the success of a public restroom program. Some of the options will meet the criteria for a short term solution, while others are more applicable to a long term strategy. The City of Calgary has prepared a table summarizing the advantages and disadvantages of some of these options in Appendix 2.

There are generally 2 categories of delivery options: automated public toilets and conventional restrooms. The experience of many cities with automated toilets has been problematic. They have been subject to vandalism and abuse, lack the opportunity for informal surveillance from passers-by, may have restricted operating hours, and are sometimes not used for their intended purpose.

Conventional restrooms may present more options for use of current technology and the ability to test environmental and universal access solutions.

Temporary facilities may be used to measure demand in a particular area or to serve a short term need, for example, events. They are attractive in these cases due to their low capital and operating costs. However, they are not appropriate when the target user group is the street community especially for the use of enclosed structures (versus open air urinals). In those cases, closer supervision is required to ensure safe use and to prevent vandalism and unsavoury activities.

The following provides a brief description of each of the facility types (much of this information was extracted from the report Going Public!, prepared by ReliefWorks for the Mayor of the City of Portland).





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### 5.1.1 AUTOMATIC PUBLIC TOILETS (APTS)

Freestanding, gender neutral, single or double self-cleaning restroom units. They are permanently affixed to the ground and require sewer, water and electrical hookups. Push button doors open automatically after a set time period, usually 10-15 minutes. After each use, the unit sprays itself with disinfectant, rinses and dries with high power jets. Costs range from $275-290,000 including site preparation and utility hook-ups (but excluding any land purchase required). Maintenance and operating costs average $35,000 per year and utility costs are approximately $400/month (2008).

A specific type of APT manufactured by Urilift is a stainless steel self cleaning urinal that retracts into the ground when not in use. Some models allow up to 3 men to use it at one time. The cost of 1 unit is approximately $50,000 (2005).

### 5.1.2 CONVENTIONAL RESTROOMS

Conventional restrooms may take several forms including public or semi-public access.

Public restrooms are typically located inside buildings owned by government or a public agency. Most are open to the public during regular business hours and contain separate men's and women's facilities, each with multiple stalls.

Hygiene centres (comfort station) are a staffed, storefront space that contains restrooms, showers and laundry facilities. Model hygiene centres have private rooms containing toilets, sinks and showers. Trained staff members may take appointments, clean the shower rooms and provide assistance. The facility would normally be managed by a social service agency. It can serve as a focal point of the





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community and may contain a variety of other retail or personal service uses. Costs and revenues would be borne by the social service agency. City support may be provided via grant, tax credits, donation of land, loan, development bonuses, mortgage assistance, etc.

Public restrooms may also be paired with retail kiosks as a business opportunity. They can be architect or artist designed and built into or located adjacent to new or existing restroom facilities. Kiosks could be used as coffee stands, tourist information centres, food stands or craft vendors. They should be designed so vendors can view the restroom entrance to provide surveillance of activities. The vendor would enter into a contractual arrangement to operate and maintain the public restrooms.

Single or multi stall facilities may also be located within a parking structure or transit station. These facilities function best where there is formal supervision and unrestricted access.

Semi-public restrooms are located inside privately owned buildings and are intended for use by employees and customers. Businesses are not required to open their restrooms to non-customers, but may choose to do so at their discretion.

These restrooms may be supervised or unsupervised. Supervision can cost upwards of $100,000 per year for 2 staff (i.e., Vancouver, 2005$). This type of facility may also be provided in partnership with a social service agency or an employment program.





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### 5.1.3 PORTABLE TOILETS

Portable toilets or "porta potties" are freestanding, single stall, gender neutral toilets. They are typically implemented as a short term, temporary solution and are most commonly used for special events, construction sites and parks. The enclosed units do not require water, sewer or electric hookup.

Another style of portable toilet is the KROS open air male only urinal. It is a freestanding unit that looks like a porta potty "turned inside out". It is usually configured with 3 stalls. It is designed to provide modesty without total enclosure to prohibit improper use and minimize the amount of space required.

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ has estimated the cost for a pair of portable toilets to be approximately $22,000 per year based on an evaluation of the pilot program conducted at the Salvation Army site. Hard costs for toilet rental and supplies equals approximately $12,000 (per pair) and the remainder of costs relate to BIZ staff time for cleaning and surveillance.





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## 5.2 COSTS

The following table provides a summary of the estimated costs for each of the alternatives:

| Unit Type | Capital Cost | Daily Ops Cost/Unit | Annual Ops Cost | Maintenance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| APT | $250,000 | $205 | $74,825 | $2,500 |
| Portable | $1,200 | $450 | $70,200 | $500 |
| KROS Urinal | $75,000 | $40 | $14,285 | $1,000 |

Note 1: Cost per Urinal based on cleaning 3 urinals. Portable cost based on 1-4 urinals deployed.
Note 2: Costs for Portable only provide for service during late nights (5 hours), three days a week.
Source: Public Urinal Pilot Project Review Report, City of Victoria, July 2010.

Section 4 of the report discussed some of the creative solutions to finance the units. Several cities rely on advertising revenue generated from a street furniture contract which includes automated public toilets. In the UK, user fees are common where a critical mass of population can support it. Others tap into sewer revenues while American cities commonly issue municipal bonds to raise the necessary capital. In some cases the City may cost share by funding the operation and maintenance costs of the units.

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# 6. RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

Everyone would like to preserve their human dignity and have access to clean, safe facilities. Yet, no single group or agency is responsible for the provision of public restrooms. A solution rests in sharing responsibility among a number of parties ~ business, government and social service providers. The strategies and recommendations that follow speak to the issues that need to be resolved and identifies parties that should participate and lead various initiatives. A proposed implementation strategy is recommended and an action plan can be developed in later phases that would outline specific target dates and a timeline for implementation for each component of the strategy.

While the purpose of this initiative is to curb the problem of public urination, the ultimate goal is to ensure there is a network of restroom facilities available throughout the downtown to satisfy demand for each user group. Full achievement of this goal cannot be reached in the immediate term. It will take some time for complete fulfillment through the joint effort of multiple stakeholders.

Goals:

- To have public restrooms at strategic locations in the downtown area that are safe, clean, well designed and accessible.
- To identify partnership opportunities with downtown area stakeholders, including the private sector, on the provision of public restrooms.

## 6.1 SHORT TERM STRATEGIES

***Strategy 1:***

*That "need" areas be addressed where there are gaps in:*

*(a) the location of public restrooms near observed public urination sites;*
*(b) the availability of public restrooms during particular time periods (e.g., overnight)*
*(c) the establishment of public restroom facilities in response to the needs of various user groups (e.g., bar patrons).*

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**Action 1:**
That a portable toilet program continue to be implemented by the Downtown BIZ with support from the City of Winnipeg as a temporary solution with priority given to locations in the North Main area.

The Committee concluded that if portable toilets continue to be in operation as a temporary, short term measure, that the following criteria should be utilized to select priority sites at strategic locations in the downtown:

- Within 400m of chronic public urination sites
- Near high activity areas like major bus stops and downtown activity nodes, for example, the MTS Centre, Portage and Main, Portage Place transit stop
- Where the probability of intoxicated persons is potentially high, for example, near drinking establishments.

Local social service agencies and businesses in the immediate area of the proposed locations should be consulted as locations for new facilities are identified.

**Action 2:**
That the City of Winnipeg work with the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs to explore the feasibility of making portable toilets available to the public during peak hours at strategic locations in the summer patio season on a trial basis.

Weekend portable toilet programs could also be implemented independently by the local BIZs to combat public urination incidences during the summer peak season at bars, nightclubs and patios as patrons exit at closing time. Victoria has been operating a similar program for some time.

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***Strategy 2:***
*That a public information strategy be pursued to inform specific user groups about the existing availability, location and access to public and semi-public restrooms throughout the downtown at private businesses and in public buildings.*

**Action 1:**
That the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs work with their members to have signage and/or decals posted on businesses volunteering to participate in the public restroom program.

The Committee recommended that the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs continue to approach downtown businesses to request voluntary public access to their restroom facilities, and implement a signage and/or decal program to identify locations and availability of restrooms. Decals would be posted in private businesses which have volunteered to provide public access to their restroom facilities. As part of this public information program, a special sign/decal be designed to identify universally accessible restrooms.

As time and resources allow, the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs should create an inventory (database) of public and semi-public restrooms in the downtown and identify the characteristics of each facility or site (e.g., number of stalls by gender, hours of operation, security measures, location/address, etc).

**Action 2:**
That the City of Winnipeg work with the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs to initiate a public information campaign to promote greater awareness of the locations of public and semi-public restrooms in the downtown (e.g., maps, websites, posters, app's, social media, etc).



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Information about the location and availability of public restrooms should also be published on the City of Winnipeg, Downtown and Exchange District BIZ's websites and in tourism and promotional materials produced by the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs and other tourism, economic development and public agencies (e.g., Economic Development/Tourism Winnipeg, Take Pride, Winnipeg Transit, Winnipeg Parking Authority), for example, restaurant guide, parking map, downtown shuttle bus service schedule, etc.

**Action 3:**
That the City of Winnipeg identify funding to update the Downtown Wayfinding System kiosks to add the locations of public and semi-public restrooms.

Information about the location and availability of public restroom facilities could be added on the Downtown Wayfinding System signage kiosks.

**Action 4:**
That the Downtown and Exchange District BIZs work with member restaurant and bar owners to promote an anti-public urination campaign through the use of signage or advertising (e.g., drink coasters, PSAs, etc).

The Committee recommended that options could be explored to partner with health and liquor control agencies to educate various user groups and promote behavioural change regarding public urination. For example, "Don't Pee on the Streets – Pee Before You Leave" similar to the Don't Drink and Drive and Be With Child, Be Without Alcohol campaigns.

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## 6.2 LONG TERM STRATEGIES

***Strategy 3:***
*That the City of Winnipeg implement policies to provide for the establishment of permanent public restroom facilities in high priority areas and for high need user groups.*

**Action 1:**
That the City of Winnipeg work with downtown partners (e.g., CentreVenture, Economic Development/Tourism Winnipeg, BIZs, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) and other levels of government to:

(a) Accommodate the inclusion of public restroom facilities in new public facilities (buildings, open spaces, parks, etc) in the downtown as public amenities targeted to areas where there is a gap in supply.
(b) Encourage the private sector to do the same, wherever possible.
(c) Make public restrooms in existing public facilities (buildings, open spaces, parks, etc) open and accessible to the public at a minimum during regular business hours in underserved areas (i.e., Central Park, Legislative precinct).
(d) Assess the opportunity for private provision of public restroom facilities through financial support to existing facilities or contract with a separate service provider (grant, loan, land, density bonus, etc).

The Committee recommended that the City should adopt policies requiring that:

- All new publicly-owned buildings must provide a minimum number of publicly accessible restroom facilities;



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- All new non publicly-owned buildings receiving public money must provide a minimum number of publicly-accessible restroom facilities;
- All new non publicly-owned buildings be encouraged to provide a minimum number of publicly-accessible restroom facilities;
- All existing publicly-owned buildings provide publicly-accessible restroom facilities, where feasible.

The Committee further recommended that options be explored to provide incentives to business owners to keep their premises open for public use and to keep them clean and in good working order. Social service or employment programs could be tapped as a toilet clean-up squad or as permanent monitors of the facility.

The City's new 311 system could be mobilized to receive requests for service from the public as problems areas are identified and could become a source of public information about the location of public restroom facilities.

**Action 2:**
That partnership opportunities with downtown social service agencies be explored for the inclusion of public restrooms, showers, laundry facilities, temporary overnight accommodation and other ancillary amenities, particularly in the North Main area.

The Committee recommended that the City explore the possibility of entering into a partnership agreement with the Salvation Army, Chez Nous, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Lighthouse Mission or other social service agency to establish, manage and maintain a permanent public restroom facility in the North Main area to serve the homeless/street population on a 24 hour basis. This arrangement would

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allow for the facility to have permanent supervision and monitoring (i.e., eyes on it all day). This facility could also include showers and possibly laundry facilities (i.e., comfort station).

Funding to implement these options (or to offset capital costs) could be linked to utility revenues or a street furniture/advertising program. The City could realize some savings for street and sidewalk cleaning as more permanent, long term solutions are found.

The Committee recommended that the City of Winnipeg continue to support and commit funds to the establishment, operation and maintenance of permanent public restrooms in strategic locations. The Committee felt that the City of Winnipeg in cooperation with the BIZs, should commit to phasing out portable toilet facilities in the downtown by 2012, to be replaced, where feasible, by permanent facilities.

## 6.3 NEXT STEPS

The Places to Go Advisory Committee presents this report to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development for its review and disposition.

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**Places to Go Advisory Committee**

The City of Winnipeg would like to thank the following members of the Places to Go Advisory Committee for their assistance in preparing and reviewing this Discussion Paper:

- Stefano Grande, Downtown BIZ
- Stephanie Voyce, Downtown BIZ
- Brian Bechtel, Main Street Project
- John Giavedoni/Barbara Scheuneman, Residents of the Exchange District
- Karen Hoeft, Salvation Army
- Damon Johnston, Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg
- Kerry LeBlanc, Forks North Portage Partnership
- Brian Timmerman, Exchange District BIZ
- Tony Topnik, Lighthouse Mission
- Richard Walls, Red Road Lodge
- Lee Caldwell, City of Winnipeg
- Kurtis Kowalke, City of Winnipeg
- Valdene Buckley, City of Winnipeg

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# APPENDIX 1:
# Other Municipal Approaches

| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| Vancouver, Canada | • 20 year contract with CBS Outdoor/JC Decaux (2005-2025) - Coordinated Street Furniture Program<br>• Contract: 8 APT's to be installed to assist the situation in the Downtown Eastside and Granville Mall entertainment area<br>• 3 APT's currently in place ( well received by public), 5 APT's coming (6 of 8 will be small (5x3 feet) and 2 will be large (12x7 feet)<br>• Installation costs for 8 APT's $520K; City contribution $180K<br>• 17 more APT's to be added over next 10 years<br>• APT's will be open 24/7 | Opportunities:<br>• Enhanced amenity to existing public toilet facilities<br>• Revenue sharing - 20% of the gross revenue generated by the street furniture advertising sold by CBS outdoor/JC Decaux<br>• City responsible for 35% of installation costs<br>• CBS Outdoor/JC Decaux is responsible for all maintenance and servicing of the toilets, including internal and external cleaning, and removal of graffiti etc. (Opportunity to install Sharps needle boxes within the units if needed)<br>• Enhanced public image (site of 2010 Winter Olympics)<br>Constraints:<br>• Under Provincial law, public toilets must be available for use free of charge<br>• Location challenges - sidewalk width; sewer, water and electrical connections; units are not transparent like bus shelters and can block views; objections by adjacent businesses<br>• Perceptions of increased illegal activities with APT's near businesses<br>• APT's will not address the needs of the transit system (Translink) - supply will not meet demand |
| Victoria, Canada | • 4 sets of Kros Mobile Urinal Units (3 stalls each) were installed throughout the downtown, particularly at Bastion Square and at Douglas and View Streets (were used as a pre-test to installing an in the ground | Opportunities:<br>• Mobility allows for placement where there is the greatest need<br>Constraints:<br>• Available Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 10:30 PM to 4 AM |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| | Urilift system)<br>• 2 additional Urilifts in place now<br>• $16-17 K (CND)/unit<br>• Maintenance done by city staff<br>• Would like to add 2 more Urilifts in future | • Requires regular drop off and pick-up; storage for when not is use<br>• Willingness of people to use this new open air system<br>• Reluctance of businesses to have units in front of their premises<br>• No close suppliers in Canada<br>• Issues with certification and insurance<br>• Centennial Square - Needle bins needed, bright yellow lights used to keep out drug users are not welcoming to tourists |
| Edmonton, Canada | • 3 Kros Urinals in Whyte Ave. entertainment district in 2007<br>• Cost was $20,000 for urinals, but pick up and drop off was $800 per weekend<br>• Report prepared for Edmonton City Council on need for public toilets in Jasper Avenue area<br>• Also have portable toilets in river valleys and 2-3 in transit stations | Opportunities:<br>▪ Handed out "P for Free" cards in bars, showing location of urinals and reminding patrons of the fine for public urination<br>▪ Urinals mistaken for public art by some!<br>▪ Would like to explore opportunities for joint purchasing with Calgary and perhaps Winnipeg<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Does not meet needs of women<br>▪ Businesses are asking for real toilets (don't like the look)<br>▪ Looking at Urilift but there are cold weather difficulties with it<br>▪ Urinals are not accessible for disabled<br>▪ Put out standard portable toilets previously but weren't well used - too dark.<br>▪ Suggest cooling off period in bars after last call, so bar toilets can be used |
| Toronto, Canada | • 0 APT's currently, but 20 APT's to be installed as part of a new Street Furniture Program starting in 2008<br>• Will charge $1 to use<br>• Hering Bau custom built APT to meet Toronto requirements | Opportunities:<br>▪ Part of Street Furniture Program (20 year contract (ASTRAL MEDIA)<br>▪ Contract will be worth "nearly $1 billion over 20 years, City will get a portion of the ad revenue<br>▪ 8-10 touch screen maps "infotogo" with toilet location info<br>▪ Business Initiative Association provided location choices<br>▪ Councillors also provided location options |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| | | Constraints:<br>▪ Some existing public toilets in a poor state (e.g. Islington Subway Station - many homeless, very dirty |

*Other Approaches - International*

| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| New York City, USA | • 1 APT in January 2008, 20 more to follow<br>• Open 8 am to 8 pm<br>• Costs 25 cents to use | Opportunities:<br>▪ NYC public toilet map available for purchase (shows location of 250 toilets available in Manhattan, including those in private businesses, etc.)<br>Constraints:<br>▪ A legal challenge was launched in NYC due to lack of public toilet availability |
| Atlanta - 5 Point Station (Transit Hub), USA | • Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) has 38 self cleaning toilets at all their railway stations | Opportunities:<br>• No user fee; have the ability to add a pay box as needed<br>• Stainless Steel looks good<br>• Each unit is 8' height so not over powering visually<br>• Approximately $100K (USD) in maintenance savings/year<br>• City of Atlanta in the process of installing 5 APT's in other city spaces (funds will come from Atlanta Development Authority's Homeless Opportunity Fund - 5 APT's plus 2 years maintenance will cost $1.5 million)<br>Constraints:<br>• Enter/exit buttons are lit up therefore a visually challenged person has difficulty knowing when the doors are open/closed<br>• Ceramic floor in one unit style creates safety issues with water on the floor |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| | | • People are still able to vandalize the units<br>• People do not listen to/read instructions<br>• Number of units too small and Transit advertising policy prohibits advertising contract at stations; (600 new bus shelters will have advertising contract) |
| Boston, USA | • 8 APT's by summer 2007<br>• $250,000 USD each<br>• Wall USA supplier<br>• Part of a street furniture program - ads used to pay for the toilets cost free to City<br>• Charge 25 cents to use | Opportunities:<br>• Advertisement used to pay for APT's (profit sharing with Wall USA - fixed rate and revenue share)<br>• Token system is provided by Shelter Commission for those without financial means to access the APT's<br>• APT's an amenity addition to restrooms throughout the city<br>• In 2004 voted among the top 5 public toilets in USA online survey (bestrestoom.com)<br>Constraints:<br>• Issues involving APT's due to homelessness and drug use continue to occur<br>• Hours of operation restricted to 7 am - 7 pm; 8 pm during summer season |
| Pittsburg, USA | • 1 APT currently - 1 more coming<br>• Stand-alone ATP located on a corner of the parking lot, inside what might be called a parklet.<br>• It is surrounded by brick pillars, ornamental iron fence and landscaping to make it attractive<br>• $250,000 USD cost<br>• Open 24/7<br>• Costs 25 cents to use | Opportunities:<br>• Advertising revenue from Pittsburg Adshel bus shelters support the APT costs - expect to raise $2M/year by end of 10 year contract<br>• Well received by community<br>• Wheelchair accessible<br>Constraints:<br>• Site selected to curb the bar scene after hours public urination<br>• A closed-circuit TV camera and security lighting are mounted on a pole<br>• Having hard time finding a location for new APT |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| San Francisco, USA | • 25 APT's supplied by CBS Decaux as part of a Street Furniture Program<br>• Operated 24/7<br>• User pay - $.25, with 40,000 tokens distributed to homeless serving organizations<br>• Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) has toilets in all of its 43 rail stations<br>• Also have 114 toilets in parks, public buildings and parking garages. | Opportunities:<br>• Address tourists, public and families (all units accessible)<br>• No cost to City - JC Decaux gets 90 public service/advertising kiosks in exchange for providing and maintaining toilets. City gets 5% of advertising revenue, above a certain threshold<br>Constraints:<br>• Issues with vandalism and prostitution where 8 of the 25 units are installed; these 8 require daily inspection by police<br>• Now have legislation allowing only 1 user, unless assistance is required, and banning loitering within 20' of a toilet. Fines are $100-500$ for violation.<br>• 20 minute time limit requested by disabled community - limits number of uses per hour and may allow for more criminal activity |
| Seattle, USA | ▪ 5 APT's have been permanently removed from problem areas.<br>▪ APT's were being leased to own over 11 years (cost is $57,530 per unit per month)<br>▪ Originally open 24/7, 4 of the 5 were closed at 9pm in 2007 - to discourage troublemakers<br>▪ Also have 13 portable toilets provided by Northwest Cascade (cost per unit per month is $1800) | Opportunities:<br>▪ Herring Bau - Manufacturer<br>▪ Paid for by sewer revenues<br>▪ Against the law to advertise outdoors in Seattle<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Ending contract early to get rid of APT's in 2008, plan to expand use of existing toilets in public buildings, transit stations, etc.<br>▪ Daily issues: Vandalism, garbage, high number of drug users and prostitution.<br>▪ People pry doors open to save 25cents<br>No exact siting criteria were established. Used general criteria of high pedestrian use and close to areas frequented by homeless<br>▪ Originally set maximum time for APT's at 15 minutes, reduced to 10 minutes<br>▪ Accumulation of human waste in the downtown has still increased by 30% since installation of the APT's |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| Portland, USA | ▪ 22 existing public restrooms, located in parks, public buildings, etc.<br>▪ No APT's currently in Portland, none planned<br>▪ Budget for two eco-friendly facilities approved for 2007-2009.<br>• Portland City Commissioner (Head of the Water Bureau) created a prototype, which will be in place by fall 2008.<br>▪ Will cost $200K US to build, and another $200 K US to operate<br>▪ Two facilities will be open from 7am to 9 pm daily<br>▪ A urinal instead the "lighthouse-like" decorative tower will be open all night<br>▪ Two facilities will have attendants working at small attached businesses i.e. newsstands | Opportunities:<br>▪ Major report done on public restrooms in 2006 (by "PHLUSH" citizen advocacy group. Requested 10 new public restrooms (5 high priority, 2 medium priority and 3 low priority)<br>▪ Developed location criteria, model toilet policy, explored several funding options<br>▪ Restroom Implementation Team established in 2007 (comprised of City, community and business representatives). To date has been able to reactivate or upgrade several restrooms, build a new one, develop signage, extend hours of Parks restrooms from 8 to 11 pm and develop performance measures to track usage, service calls, maintenance and public satisfaction.<br>▪ New toilet prototype cost $250,000 to develop, but can now be built for $10,000. Cylinder shape with sink on the outside, and louvers on the top and bottom so police can see how many people are in the toilet. Components are durable and modular, so can be replaced easily.<br>▪ Anticipate major savings - "Every year there are 6,000 calls for clean-up of human waste in downtown Portland" to Portland Business Alliance's Clean and Safe Program<br>Constraints:<br>▪ There are no APT's currently in Portland. Major issues:<br>o Cost<br>o Efficiency/availability. Under regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), users needing time in the toilet must be allotted a significant amount - about 15 minutes. The ADA also requires a wheelchair turning radius which makes a single or isolated toilet in the US rather large.<br>o Capacity for abuse: combine with point 2 and APT's become "mini-hotel rooms"<br>o Environmental arguments: Frequent cleaning uses a lot of water and energy. |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| | | ▪ However, cleaning of new prototype is not automatic - can be sprayed out with a hose, but water from cleaning will presumably go onto the street. |
| Denver, USA | ▪ 38 functioning restrooms in 2005, use 40 to 140 portable toilets<br>▪ Build public toilets<br>▪ New toilets will be paid for by Capital Improvement Program bond - $360,000 per year for 12 years | Opportunities:<br>▪ Created Restroom Master Plan for Parks in 2005, determined that 10 additional toilets were needed. Other toilets will be upgraded.<br>▪ Developed location criteria based on intensity of land use (only 27 of previous toilets met location criteria)<br>▪ A minimum of 150 people per day, over a 4-6 hour period, at least 3 times weekly are required to justify a new toilet. Toilets should also be placed at key junctions between pathways, etc.<br>▪ Developed design guidelines for public toilets<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Bond issued to cover cost of toilets (estimated total cost in 2004 was $4.6 million, $2.6 million for new toilets, and $1.46 million for upgrading of existing toilets |
| London, UK | • 400 public toilets (40% drop since 1999, when there were 701. A variety of types, e.g. in undergrounds (35% have toilets), in buildings, also urinals. Also have RADAR key system to allow disabled access to public toilets.<br>• Most are built into existing buildings/tube stations, but are aging and inaccessible.<br>• Most are provided free of charge and financed by the local government. Westminster operates 25 public toilets at a cost of 2.5 million pounds. | Opportunities:<br>▪ Major review of State of London's toilets in 2006 (conducted by London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee)<br>▪ Borough of Westminster has made an extraordinary effort to improve its public toilets (won British toilet Association award). Have been able to charge 20p for toilets by contracting out (British Public Health Act does not allow charging) Found that charging reduced usage by 30% however.<br>▪ Satlav system introduced in Westminster - can find nearest public toilet on cell phone.<br>▪ Borough of Richmond introduced a "Community Toilet Scheme" in 2005, which reimburses local businesses £600 annually, and provides signage and insurance, to make their toilets available to the public. The borough sets maintenance standards and inspects the toilets regularly. 65 businesses have signed up, and a map is provided showing locations.<br>▪ British Toilet Association gives "Loo of the Year" awards annually, to encourage better public toilet provision. |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | • Receives 45,000 pounds from charging for toilets. | Constraints:<br>• Consistent geographic coverage is difficult to achieve in the Community Toilet Scheme, given that sign up is voluntary.<br>• Urinals are not stopping male urination - attitude of acceptability must change.<br>• Also a concern about lack of Muslim toilet facilities |
| Brighton-Hove, UK | • 1994, 8 APT's installed as replacement to traditional restrooms that were subject to heavy vandalism and accessible by steps to underground sites: 5 City Centre; 1 Seafront walkway; 2 Park setting<br>• Some are stand alone units while others are installed in to existing buildings<br>• All new toilets being built are now unisex and fully disabled accessible; older versions are being upgraded to meet new accessibility legislation | Opportunities:<br>• Service agreement with Healthmatic provides all maintenance needs<br>• "You're Welcome Scheme" - a program that encourages businesses to join by pointing out the benefits of potential customers coming in to their businesses who may not have otherwise - eight local businesses are involved; mainly large department stores, supermarkets and coffee shop chains<br>Constraints:<br>• Don't receive the same level of vandalism as the traditional sites, but also don't achieve the service intended to the public<br>• Issues of misuse - non-genuine people have managed to gain access to RADAR keys (enabling access for persons with disabilities) and as a result access the units for the purposes of sleeping (the key system over rides both time and weight sensors) and drug use, i.e. improper disposal of needles (disregard of sharps box access within the unit); service/cleaning staff were being abused each day, therefore the hours of operation have been restricted from 24 hours to 07:00 - 22:00 hours each day.<br>• Incidences of people being inside when the doors open, when the cleaning cycle begins and people feeling trapped inside because they did not read the signage about opening or see the big red buttons (door release)<br>• Are considering removing the APT's and working to improve the traditional sites to provide a friendly and inviting public toilet, including being family friendly |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| Paris, France | • 420 self cleaning sanisettes (of which 20 are near homeless hostels, 24 are in metro stations, 40 are in parks and gardens). Also 24 public lavatories, with attendants, located near major tourist destinations and public buildings.<br>• Sanisettes are open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., other public toilets are open 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.<br>• Manufacturer is Semup (subsidiary of J. C. Decaux) | Opportunities:<br>▪ Toilets not in transport stations made free of charge in 2006 (used to cost 40 centimes). Sanisettes used to be inaccessible but are upgrading them and adding drinking water fountains on the side.<br>▪ Pause-Pipi guide available showing locations, accessibility (but must be purchased for a nominal free (under 3 euros)<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Fine of 183 euros for public urination/defecation (450 euros for repeat offenders)<br>▪ Cleaning costs are 6 million euros a year, but new contract has been signed which could substantially reduce cost |
| Zurich, Switzerland | • 93 public toilets - 4 staffed, 71 cleaned manually, 10 APT's, 4 urinals, 4 "joint ventures"<br>• Metro area the same size as Calgary (approx. 1 million pop'n)<br>• Costs approx. $4 million US to run and maintain, $1.5 million US to construct and renovate | Opportunities:<br>• Originally, Zurich toilets were somewhat neglected - under funded and poorly maintained, which led to vandalism, graffiti, abuse, garbage, prostitution, etc.<br>• Under new management, created a "Master plan Zurich" in 2004<br>• Created interactive online plan of all public toilet locations<br>• Significantly cleaned up public toilets - more attractive to users<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Immediate removal of graffiti, repainted/renovated to improve appearance<br>▪ Pulled down some older toilets in poor locations<br>▪ Added takeaway food/restaurants or other forms of activity where possible, to create more supervision of some toilets |

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| City | Facilities | Opportunities/Constraints |
|---|---|---|
| Melbourne, Australia | • Draft Toilet Strategy prepared for 2008-2013<br>• 53 public toilets managed by City as of Oct. 2007, 15 more proposed over next 5 years (total cost of $3.35 million)<br>• Compares well to Sydney, with 26 public toilets and Brisbane with 10 public toilets.<br>• Of current toilets, 10 are automated, 7 are urinals, 14 attached to other buildings<br>▪ Investigating ways of making automatic toilets more environmentally sustainable (e.g. dual flush technology, recycled toilet paper, solar panel in roof) | Opportunities:<br>▪ As a result of its National Continence Management Strategy, the Australian Department of Health and Ageing has developed a National Toilet Map, which is available on-line and in paper form. It lists over 13,000 public toilets in various centres, as well as key information about them - hours of operation, facilities available, accessibility, etc.<br>▪ Australia also has a MLAK (Master Locksmith Access Key) scheme, which allows disabled people 24 hour access to toilets.<br>▪ Propose 500 m (2 blocks) as a standard maximum distance between toilets in areas of high pedestrian activity<br>Constraints:<br>▪ Underground toilets are old, poorly lit and ventilated and damp, so difficult to modernize and make accessible. Would like to close, but of historical significance.<br>▪ Council has had difficulty finding sites for new toilets (businesses don't want sight lines in front of t hem obstructed)<br>▪ Syringe disposal bins installed at all City of Melbourne public toilets. |
| Singapore | • 29,000 public toilets island wide<br>• Of these, 750 are automatic toilets<br>• World Toilet Association started here and hosted first World Toilet Summit | Opportunities:<br>▪ Requires new developments to provide minimum number of public toilets.<br>▪ May be fined for failure to keep toilet in proper working order.<br>▪ National Environment Agency inspects public toilets<br>▪ As part of national Toilet Upgrading Scheme, NEA will pay half of upgrading costs (up to US$3100) incurred by private establishments to upgrade and open usage to the general public.<br>▪ A star rating system ("Singapore's OK") implemented for all public toilets in 2003 - rating to be posted at toilet<br>Constraints:<br>To offset expenses from public usage, owners may charge a small user fee (e.g. 10-20 cents) |

*From: Public Toilets in the CentreCity,* City of Calgary, 2008 October

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# APPENDIX 2:
# Summary Table of Public Toilet Alternatives

## 6.0 Summary Table of Public Toilet Alternatives

| Type of Approach (time range of approach) | Cases | Context | Issues (Advantages and Disadvantages) | Strategies (Costs) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Street Cleaning (short term) | Seattle, Vancouver | Street cleaning involves the flushing / removal and disposal of human waste followed by high pressure washing of streets afterwards. | • Efficient<br>• Cost-effective if incidents of public defecation and urination are low<br>• Potential for community economic development projects<br>• Does not solve problem of not having a proper toilet | • *Seattle:* $29.68 CAD for basic hand crews and $101.67 CAD for hazardous materials clean-up crews |
| Portable Toilets (short term) | San Antonio, Vancouver | Portable toilets use chemicals to control odor and disinfect. Separate hand washing stations are available to rent as well. Often require supervision. | • Quick and mobile solution<br>• Presents job creation opportunities<br>• Can become hot spot for drug injection and prostitution<br>• If no hand-washing facility, there is risk of increased disease transmission<br>• Daily supervision, cleaning, and trucking can be costly | • *Vancouver:* Supervisors were paid $8 an hour<br>• *Vancouver:* To rent, supervise, clean, and transport the porta-potties cost $8200 CAD per month |
| Hotel Facilities (mid term) | Vancouver, San Antonio | Hotel toilet facilities can be used as public toilets at night. Other facilities such as train stations and government buildings could also be used. | • No additional cost of building public toilet and hiring additional supervisors<br>• Gives several location alternatives for washroom use<br>• High number of these toilets needed makes it expensive solution | • *Vancouver:* Each hotel-toilet operation would cost ~$4000 CAD per month for supervision costs<br>• Cities can offer rate and tax allowances, direct payment, and grants to businesses and organizations for the use of public toilets in their buildings |
| Supervised Public Toilets (long term) | Cambridge, UK<br><br>Perth, Australia<br><br>Vancouver | Supervised toilets are usually supervised by male and female toilet attendants in order to deter various forms of crime. | • Can be fairly secure<br>• Increase local employment<br>• Good public toilet architecture helps spur urban redevelopment<br>• Works with issues at hand<br>• Not open 24 hours a day - Possible occurrence of: drug activity and sales, loitering, sleeping, vandalism, prostitution, and other sexual activity around toilet | • *Cambridge:* $563,339 CAD for four-year program<br>• *Vancouver:* Supervision cost is $100,000 CAD per year |

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hygiene Centers/Toilet Palaces (long term) | Seattle | Hygiene centers and toilet palaces provide not only toilet services but are large enough to contain a diversification of other services (i.e. coffee kiosk) and can serve as a focal point of a community. | • Create economic opportunities<br>• Multiple uses<br>• Users have more time to attend to needs<br>• Can become community amenities in the long term<br>• Not open 24 hours a day, leaving no toilet alternatives after certain time in the day | • *Seattle*: Purchasing and operational costs for 2000 was $1,280,922 CAD<br>• *Seattle*: The Department of Housing and Urban Development of Seattle funds its hygiene centers in addition to private donors |
| Automatic Public Toilets (APTs) (long term) | San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh | Automatic Public Toilets (or APTs) are self-contained units that usually contain an automatic sink and self-cleaning toilets and floors. | • Can restore civic pride<br>• Can be used at nighttime<br>• Suitable for use by wheelchair users and parents with small children<br>• Problems of drug dealing, prostitution, people sleeping in APTs, and vandalism<br>• High initial costs<br>• Pay APTs raise concerns about discriminating against women and disabled<br>• May be insufficient for high-volume usage | • Costs range anywhere from $200,000 CAD (Viacom Decaux) to $300,000 CAD<br>• Some cities have agreements for free APTs in exchange for advertising |
| The UriLift (long term) | Amsterdam,<br>Rotterdam,<br>The Hague,<br>London, UK | The UriLift is a stainless steel retractable urinal that comes above ground during peak times. Up to three men can use it at once and it is self-cleaning. | • Nighttime<br>• Out of sight when not needed during daytime<br>• Difficult to cause damage to<br>• Quick installation time (two hours)<br>• Compact and does not require a large land area<br>• Does not solve problem of street defecation<br>• Is not an alternative suitable for women users | • The cost of one unit is $50,000 CAD<br>• Units have been sold as part of contracts between cities and outdoor advertising companies |

From: *Urban Revitalization: Public Toilet Alternatives for the East Village and the Downtown*, City of Calgary, 2005 12 31.

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