

**APPENDIX H**  
**ULoo Initial Stakeholder Outreach Results**



## U-Loo Initial Stakeholder Outreach Results

This report represents findings from the initial round of stakeholder interviews conducted July-August 2015. The purpose of these interviews was to gather initial community feedback from a broad representation of community stakeholders. Stakeholder input at this phase of the project will inform the outreach approach, key messaging, siting and location criteria, and best practices or community-informed design of a new public restroom in the U-District.

### Emerging Themes:

1. There is tremendous need for a public restroom with 24-hour access, primarily to serve homeless people. Secondary users include inebriated students, bus drivers, and shoppers/tourists/other visitors to the U-District.
2. Establishments that offer public access to their restrooms have frequent and regular episodes that require extensive additional cleanup of blood, feces, or vandalism in restrooms or on property grounds.
  - Stakeholders with public restroom access have all taken steps to actively monitor, reduce access, or make other changes to try and mitigate the impacts restroom use brings to their establishment.
  - Stakeholders that allow public restroom use all stated that allowing access has led to increased costs related to staffing and products.
3. There is no obvious location for a new public restroom. There is neither publically or privately- owned land, nor right-of-way that could easily serve the core business area of the U-District.
4. While there is an acknowledgement of need, stakeholders themselves would be reluctant to use it personally, citing privacy concerns, cleanliness concerns, and the fact that most live or work nearby. Or they would stop in a store to make a purchase and use the store's restroom rather using a public restroom.
5. Not only does the neighborhood need more than one public restroom just for the sake of demand, a multi-pronged approach would take the potential for negative focus off of one site.
6. People sense a generally liberal attitude in the neighborhood and hope that feeling will allow tolerance and understanding for the need of a public restroom.
  - The stakeholder group with the potential for the strongest opposition is the small businesses: no business will want a loo in front of their store.

7. There cannot be increases in density and transit with out parallel investments in services for all the new residents and visitors. People have reasonable expectations that there is adequate access to restrooms at public places like major transit stops and parks.
8. There is confusion regarding what restrooms are open to the public, when they're open, and where to send people.
9. Familiarity with this project is low, and active leadership will be critical for success.

#### **Key Elements of a Good Public Restroom:**

- Convenient, centrally located, with lots of eyes on the street
  - Highly visible, with good way-finding signs in multiple languages and/or pictures
  - Open 24/7: nighttime access is critical
  - Clean and safe
  - Flushing toilet
  - Hot and cold water
  - Soap and hand sanitizer
  - Water fountains
  - Good lighting that can't be destroyed
  - Use blue fluorescence, which negates the ability for people to see their veins and keeps people from shooting up in the restroom
  - Designed by community contribution and reflect an investment in the community; make it beautiful and people are less inclined to vandalize
  - Cleaning for Health: best practice that prioritizes cleaning approaches that increase/benefit public health
  - Any maintenance contract should be flexible and allow for service more than one time a day, and for rapid response to emergencies
- Locks from the inside
  - Hooks for bags
  - Baby changing station
  - Gender neutral
  - Sinks on the outside
  - Well-ventilated and odor free
  - A mirror above the sink
  - Paper to cover the toilet seat
  - Sharps box for needles, etc.
  - Room for a bike/baby stroller

#### **Community Concerns:**

- Safety, drug activity, using it as a shelter, other illegal activities
- Location focus: one loo will get a lot of attention and deal with a lot of impacts. Having more than one would potentially spread to focus away from just one site.
- The location needs to fit the need. Don't put it where people won't use it.
- Keeping it clean: people will judge a neighborhood/building/business on the cleanliness of their restroom.

### Project Leadership Expectations:

- U-District Partnership/BIA:
  - Understands the issue and knows how important it is to have a public restroom
  - The Ratepayer Board will be the key to success
  - There's a City mandate from Mayor Murray that all BIAs are tasked with prioritizing the Clean & Safe component of BIA plans.
  
- City of Seattle (Parks, HSD, SPU):
  - Has the infrastructure and knows how to do the job.
  - The city is too out-of-touch; they aren't using the restroom.
  - Power dynamic would be off if the City had responsibility. It sets the tone that the city is the big brother telling the community what it needs.
  - Relationship with the city is out-of-balance power-wise and will encourage people to trash it.
  
- Community Groups:
  - Community groups could take turns with clean up responsibilities.
  - ROOTS could sponsor ambassadors like the downtown Metro Improvement District (MID).
  
- Faith Communities:
  - A struggle to know how to serve people with limited staff, infrastructure and resources.
  - Many already offer support services and a new restroom would be a logical extension of their mission.

### Location Suggestions:

Below, in approximate rank order, are stakeholder suggestions for potential locations to site a new public restroom. Included is a brief analysis on each location's potential benefits and challenges.

Location	Benefits	Challenges
New Light Rail Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20,000 trips a day will bring a large number of visitors</li> <li>• Serious expectation that investment in a new light rail systems would include access to (preferably staffed) restrooms</li> <li>• Would alleviate concerns of placing a loo in front of local businesses</li> <li>• Could serve the needs of all potential users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposition from Sound Transit</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>
New park at U-Heights Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High foot traffic, would serve the needs of the farmers market customers</li> <li>• Has the residential/business nexus to draw</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not particularly interested in hosting it</li> <li>• Safety concerns given close</li> </ul>

Location	Benefits	Challenges
	both users and supporters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space and access in a visible location</li> </ul>	proximity to notorious drug activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too close to preschools and kid activities</li> </ul>
SDOT Parklet on 43 <sup>rd</sup> or a new Parklet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centrally located</li> <li>• Unique</li> <li>• Could be mobile and move to match demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would need to tie into utilities, which may not be an option</li> <li>• Having some difficulty maintaining the parklet</li> </ul>
Existing Parking Lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plenty of options for space</li> <li>• Centrally located, with high visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistance from neighboring small businesses/land owners</li> <li>• Although highly visible, not on the foot traffic path</li> </ul>
Churches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some have land/access</li> <li>• Aligns with faith mission</li> <li>• There could be a creative way to involve churches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Churches already struggle with drop-ins</li> <li>• Would need infrastructure upgrade</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>
Urban Rest Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centrally located and would address the primary need</li> <li>• Established and serves a core population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourists and student wouldn't use it</li> <li>• Mechanical equipment could not handle the increased load</li> <li>• Operating agreement does not allow them to be open when other users are active (ROOTS or church activity)</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Serving a broad community does not align with their mission to serve homeless population</li> <li>• Needs a bigger, dedicated space (~2000-2500 SF) in a highly visible area</li> </ul>
University Playground/ Cowen Park/ Park by Agua Verde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access for all users at established locations</li> <li>• Some already have existing restrooms</li> <li>• Meets expectations of having restrooms at public locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not in the core U-District Business area</li> <li>• Not highly visible, limited foot traffic</li> <li>• Most already have restrooms, but limit access (seasonally, and at night)</li> </ul>
Public Library Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established location</li> <li>• Would alleviate pressure on library restrooms</li> <li>• Next door to new LIHI food bank/housing project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not centrally located</li> <li>• Site limitations</li> </ul>
University of Washington Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space and access</li> <li>• School of Social Work allows access to their facilities and showers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Already have 1400 stalls that are open to the public during normal business hours</li> <li>• Not centrally located</li> </ul>