

Meeting Description: Downtown Public Restroom Work Group (DPRWG) Meeting #2 to discuss draft goals and location criteria.

Client: Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority

Meeting Date: June 12, 2023 **Meeting Time:** 1:00pm

Meeting Location: Virtual

Date Issued: June 14, 2023 **Issued by:** Jon Bixby

Attendees:

Amber Miller, Capital Projects & Planning Manager, Ann Arbor DDA
Maura Thomson, Communications Manager, Interim Executive Director, Ann Arbor DDA
Christopher Wall, PE, PTOE, Vice President, Business Development Lead, Wade Trim
Jon Bixby, Professional Engineer, Wade Trim
Laura Orta, Director of Organizational Equity, City of Ann Arbor
Sandra Andrade, Executive Director, Main Street Area Association
Skye Stewart, Chief of Staff, Public Services Administration
Eli Neiburger, Deputy Director, Ann Arbor District Library
Daniel Kelly, MSW, Executive Director, Shelter Association
Alex Gossage, Executive Director at Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living

State Street, Kerrytown, and South University are not present.

Discussion

Amber starts meeting with introductions and presentation to summarize past meeting and homework assignments. Amber discusses public bathroom visuals and ROW map while Chris writes draft goal and location criteria from attendees. Amber stresses that they can only spend their budget on locations within the DDA boundary and not place within the MDOT rights-of-way.

Chris elaborates on bathroom examples with visuals of public restrooms in a bumpout, sidewalks, at the end of a street, within on-street parking, and set back into a parking lot.

Skye asks about moving a curb line as part of the pilot project. Amber says it's not impossible, but the likely approach is to place the unit temporarily without a curb line change, as shown in the examples, and then modify the curb once the restroom becomes permanent.

Alex asks if the ADA ramps could be widened to account for opening the entrance door and that he'd prefer push buttons. Amber says that it would need to be confirmed with Throne, while Skye mentions that the door slides into the unit such that door swinging space would not be an issue.

Amber reviews some slides from last month about goals and values, then shares a draft criteria table with empty space for the DPRWG to complete today. She stresses that Wade Trim will handle minimum placement requirements.

Amber moves on to the group recording of ideas and discusses how they will evolve into creation of a location map supported by Wade Trim. Chris shares the OneNote notebook on his screen while Amber reads organized, suggested goals submitted by Skye and Laura prior to the meeting (see goal summary page). Chris encourages others to chime in if they hear/see goals that they also had on their list.

Maura starts the conversation about draft goals by reinforcing what others have already shared: the restrooms should be cleaned, maintained, and well-stocked. They should be easy, intuitive, and user-friendly. Also, they should be welcoming and accessible to all.

Laura adds a goal is to ensure solar and other renewable energy sources are utilized.

Eli notes that quantitative goals have not been discussed and recommends quantitative goals such as uptime goals, how often it is broken/unavailable, how often it is used, and the hours of the day they're used. He wonders if utilization correlates to the hours that specific places are open or if they correlate to times when places are closed. He also recommends a goal related to access controls – how the unit is accessed, how to get a card, and if banned, how is access restored. Amber mentions that those who provided their goals in advance did include some quantitative elements, which are noted and will be discussed later.

Laura mentions customer satisfaction, restorative justice practices, and emergency notification.

Daniel reiterates a safe, welcoming option in a good location such as locations where after-hours, existing bathrooms are closed, particularly Liberty/AADL for off hours and the Fleetwood area. He also reiterates card access, emergency response, and harm reduction. Amber suggests using high-use evening areas as a location criterion.

Sandra is satisfied with the current list.

Alex is satisfied with the current list.

Amber asks if anything on the goals list in OneNote gives anyone pause; no concerns raised.

Amber moves on to draft location criteria, starting with past comments from the city and Throne, then those provided by participants prior to the meeting. Amber asks Laura to speak to a specific criterion provided in advance. Laura agrees and explains if we should consider where college students gather versus the elderly, saying that students have access to university restrooms already.

Chris records and Amber acknowledges and finishes with the list provided in advance - including high use evening areas mentioned earlier in the goals discussion and avoiding placing restrooms near existing restrooms and in areas with repeated incidents of vandalism, property damage, or vehicle break-in/theft. Amber opens the floor to the group to provide additional location criteria and discuss.

Sandra wonders about the potential for odors resulting from the public restroom and speculates that locations farther from on-street dining would be more logical. Amber recommends the criterion of avoiding locations directly adjacent to outdoor dining. Sandra also suggests corridors lacking restrooms and between districts.

Alex says we should be cognizant of access during bad weather days and physical obstacles for those waiting to use the unit/queue constraints.

Laura agrees with placement farther from existing restrooms but is concerned about the punitive nature of not putting them in areas of higher crimes. Skye says that potential vandalism could affect

the uptime of the unit and the potential for goals to overlap/conflict with each other. Amber acknowledges that most of downtown experiences these types of crimes and says that this goal comes directly from Throne because they're concerned about damage to the units – focused on areas with the highest and repeat density of these crime types.

Maura adds a criterion of locations that can be made permanent. Skye supports this.

Eli wonders about parking space placement on higher speed streets, such as Division, leading to a car accident. Amber suggests achieving this by not placing the unit on streets over 25mph. Chris suggests bumper blocks to protect a potential parking location if we do choose a street with higher speeds.

Maura suggests the location criteria of ideal solar access locations.

Amber asks if any location criteria might be in conflict with each other. Eli says that the solar criterion may be in conflict with others; the best location may be shaded, particularly due to the need to plug in regardless of location.

Amber encourages prioritization of the location criteria. Maura says well-lit and active should be number one and that low proximity to on-street dining should also be high. Maura also says proximity to other public restrooms should be a lower priority while physical constraints should be a higher one.

Laura looked closely at the DDA border and suggests locations that accommodate those parking outside the boundary. Skye notes the high usage goal and that we haven't discussed how active areas will be determined. Amber responds by mentioning cell phone data (Strava) to determine highly congregated areas and confirms that high usage was supported as a goal. Skye says that high-foot traffic areas should be a high priority. If this is the goal and only 1-2 units are being installed downtown, placing them where they may not be highly used is counter to that goal.

Other location criteria mentioned by multiple people include physical obstacles that may interfere with queues of users and the potential for a location to be seen as permanent.

Eli supports the importance of visible locations with lots of foot traffic to ensure eyes on the unit. Some people will not use a public restroom, even in high traffic areas, due to perception as a porta potty, but that activity of walking by and seeing the unit will improve safety.

Daniel stresses the importance of accommodating people without phones.

Skye brings up the 80 feet needed for maintenance access and that blocking of a bike lane would be bad, even if for 2 minutes.

Daniel brings up off-hours in the Liberty Plaza area again.

Amber gives a final opportunity for people to speak and add location criteria/feedback before the team begins studying locations and ends the meeting.

Action Items

Organized final goals and location criteria	Wade Trim	Next meeting
Location mapping exercise	Wade Trim	Next meeting

Attachments

2023-06-12 OneNote Draft Goals and Locations	Wade Trim
Summary of Location Criteria and Data Sources	Wade Trim

The above notes represent the writer's understanding of the items discussed and conclusions reached at the meeting. Please notify the writer immediately if your understanding is different. A clarification or correction will be issued to all parties. This document will be considered accurate if no corrections or clarifications are received within one week of issuance.

Minutes by,


Wade Trim Associates, Inc.

Jon Bixby
Professional Engineer


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Path/file

cc: All Attendees


DDA Values




Safe, comfortable downtown streets




Equitable, just access for all people




Affordable and inclusive community




Resilient, energy responsible downtown



Vibrant and thriving local economy



Responsible design and implementation



Connected community with streets as civic space

VALUES USED...
 ...during planning/design to guide decision making.
 ...after implementation to measure outcomes and inform adjustments

Purpose of Project Goals

INFORMS:



1. A location that advances adopted goals



2. The pilot project evaluation



3. Permanent public restrooms

GOALS

*denote a goal shared more than once

- Easy to use card access; access to cards; understanding of how to use and access
- Emergency response measures
- Harm reduction; how to do it thoughtfully
- Near existing places that are closed during off-hours
- Safe, welcoming, clean, good locations
- Customer satisfaction goals
- Restorative justice practices
- Emergency notification - both inside and outside of unit
- Uptime goal; how often available vs not.
- Utilization goal; when they get used; during day (businesses open) or during night (businesses closed)
- Access controls - how to access? How to get card? If banned how to correct that issue.
- Frequency of cards; usage
- Clean and reliable public restroom that people would be happy to use more than once. * Well stocked
- Well-designed exterior “wrap” that is a welcome, integrated addition to the streetscape/amenity space (contributes to vibrancy, seems like it was meant to be there)
- Bring general awareness to the Throne existence/location and promote usage*

- **Safe, comfortable downtown streets** – Easily accessible to restaurant areas (see placement criteria)
- **Equitable, just access for all people/connected community with streets as civic spaces**- Provide a spacious environment with all needs considered
- Easy, accessible
- **Affordable and Inclusive Community**
 Living wage paid to contractors who handle restock and cleaning.
 Reasonable use time for individuals with diverse abilities, and those who are diversely housed/unhoused to use as a wash space
 Multi-lingual signage

 Welcoming to all people
- **Resilient, energy responsible downtown** - Environmentally friendly toilet paper, large trash can inside
- Solar and sustainable preferred
- **Vibrant and thriving local economy**
 Exterior water fountain, bottle refill, animal bowl, hand wash/sanitize station
 Map to the next available Throne and public restroom
 Interior and exterior emergency buttons
- **Responsible design and implementation**
 QR code access or pass access needs to be highly inclusive.
- **Connected community with streets as civic space** - Increase awareness and use of public restrooms*

Area locations discussed - capture

Draft Location Criteria

Monday, June 12, 2023 7:38 AM

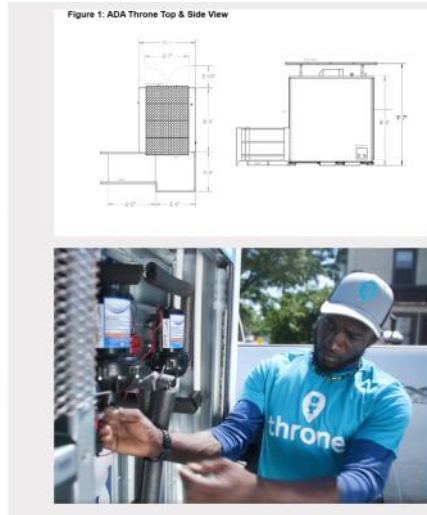
Minimum Placement Requirements

Locations must:

1. Have space for the 15 ft x 11 ft footprint + service access buffer
2. Enable throne's portable sanitation truck to park within 80 feet of the unit
3. Enable solar panels to get full sun or have the ability to plug-in (120V) without creating trip hazards
4. Be located within the City right-of-way (City-owned street & sidewalk area). Not on private property, a public park or UM property, or state-owned street.)

The following have been moved from recommended criteria to a placement detail.

1. Place the unit so that the door is visible to passersby and no hiding places/nooks are created
2. Avoid conflicts with utility, fire hydrant access, and cross-walk site distances.
3. Place in areas with ADA access or create ADA access.



Location considerations (Kelly):

- Liberty Plaza/AAATA transit area
- Washington/First area

Suggested DDA Edge Locations

- Near the Ann street parking structure by Ashley
- Ashley and E William
- Catherine and Detroit ST
- Washington and S State
- E William and Liberty
- Washington and Main
- W William st and State Street

Notes: Confirm below, add new, then highlight most important*

Refined location criteria list for the notebook:

Recommend

- Place in active, well-lit, highly used areas.**
- Place in areas with electrical access
- Placement in a highly visible, high foot-trafficked area. This will help to bring general awareness to its existence/location and promote usage. (could measure with overall usage data)**
- Within 2 blocks of restaurant areas for individuals with IBS and other health concerns, as well as for young and older people on the age spectrum
- Near the edges of the DDA District to capture people who park outside the borders or at the parking garages, and the diversely housed
- Consider staggering placement via demographics, i.e. closer to the University consider possible lighter concentrations, farmers market and higher elderly and young folks usage possibly higher; student access to U-M buildings; access for elderly, medical needs, young - emphasis
- High-use evening areas
- Aware of possible smell of unit and proximity to businesses/outdoor dining *
- Corridors where there lacks restrooms*; between districts
- Intentional on placement during bad weather days (snow, rain)
- Physical obstacles for those waiting to use unit and constraints of queues*
- Consider location that might be a possible permanent location*
- Location to promote solar (min obstructions)
- Process for someone that does not have a cellphone to have access

Avoid

- Locating near another public restroom option (e.g. Library)*
- Locating in areas that have repeated incidents of vandalism, property damage, or vehicle break-in/theft.*
- Consideration for locations for incidents maybe useful
- Locations of incidents may impact uptime
- Location where car might impact unit; protection
- Service vehicle and related hoses do not impact bikeway/sidewalks