

## **Individual Shelter Unit Clusters (Tiny House Communities for the Homeless)**

### **Recommendations for Standards and Procedures City Of Portland Oregon (unsolicited)**

#### **Michael Withey-Micro Community Concepts-12/20/2016**

Over the past three years I have been invited to panel, present & lecture on the Tiny House Movement and its many facets as a way of creating much needed affordable housing and emergency shelter space by organizations such as The Georgia Alliance to End Homelessness Savannah, Georgia- Contra Costa County Alliance to end Homelessness Contra Costa, California, Google Inc. Mt. View California-University of Oregon Eugene. OR-Antioch University Seattle, WA-Airbnb Portland, OR- Portland Human Rights Commission-New Generations Rotary-Architects Without Borders, La casa San Jose, California- Portland Film Festival-Lents & St. Johns Neighborhood associations to name a few.

#### **The past three years of study and involvement into the Tiny House Movement have made apparent several facets of this movement to me and they are as follows:**

1. "Tiny Houses" are built on wheeled trailers. Built with conventional building material and construction standards. Typically built to or beyond state residential building code. Forced into existence by the outlawing of backyard "Cottage Homes".
2. "Accessory Dwelling Units" Fixed to the ground and includes all amenities including kitchen and bath. Could also be converted space such as basement or garage. ADU's are rentable which "Detached Bedrooms" are not.
3. "Micro Housing Movement" Micro apartments & Micro Communities that are conventionally built but less expensive to build and should therefore make it less expensive to rent or purchase. Micro housing works best in high density areas.
4. "Intentional Communities" Communal in nature. Generally consists of small individual living structures with communal amenities and activities. Most of these communities are purpose focused such as spiritual or agricultural.
5. "Individual Shelter Units & Clusters" In response to the homeless emergency these very small structures very rarely feature plumbing or electricity. These emergency shelter units are designed to be transported easily by flatbed truck or build directly on existing trailers for easy transport. ISU's can be placed in areas with adjoining bath/kitchen facilities such as backyards or church parking lots. Clusters must have a common area that consists of bathroom, shower, kitchen & laundry facilities either existing, easily built or completely mobile.

Our focus today will be on suggesting guidelines in which the city may adopt based upon best practices of several successful tiny house clusters throughout the country as well as lessons learned through Portland's own 12 year old tiny house project "Dignity Village" as well as Quixote Village Olympia, Washington, Cove at Dundee Savannah, Georgia- The New Nickelsville Seattle, Washington and several other tiny house communities as well as including input from several neighborhood associations, business leaders, government officials, homeless individuals, homeless & affordable housing advocates, homeowners and many nonprofit corporations.

**Individual Shelter Unit Clusters are:**

1. A national movement towards getting more people off the street for less money.
2. A temporary solution to the lack of shelter space within the city limits of Portland, Ore.
3. Mobile. All ISU's & accompanying infrastructure should be ready to move within hours.
4. All ISU Clusters come from successful collaboration between local government, neighborhood associations, business leaders, homeless individuals and advocates.
5. Individual Shelter Units should not exceed twenty five per cluster.
6. Drug Free. All successful communities of this type and for the purpose of helping one achieve independence must demand an illicit drug free community through testing.
7. Inclusive of Caseworkers. Everybody residing in the community must have an authorized caseworker and remain consistently active in achieving set goals and objectives.
8. Active in the neighboring community by participating in a good neighbor policy.

**Individual Shelter Units are not:**

1. Permanent Housing. Initial six months of housing with the possibility of another six months depending on their progress and ability to get along with the community.
2. Administered by the homeless themselves. Residents will help self manage within the guidelines set forth by the administering body and the City of Portland.
3. A place for complacency. Community members not working or attending school full time are required to volunteer in the community.

**Some guidelines:**

1. A volunteer committee should be formed by the city to write standards and procedures that can be easily replicated in other cities in the region and around the country.
2. All ISU Clusters must be administered by an authorized entity with proper capital and experience. These entities should have a history of working well with their neighbors.
3. These communities work best when the government produces land and some infrastructure while the public provides the construction of the housing units.
4. Residents of these communities must not be put into a position of administering their own community when their focus should be on their own rehabilitation. However the residents may manage the community based upon the guidelines set forth by their administrators and the City of Portland.
5. Residents are guaranteed six months of housing and can get extensions as long as they are producing positive results and are working well with their neighbors.
6. ISU's should be built or placed in a cluster without inspection of qualified personnel with experience in the construction industry.
7. All property options should be considered including federal, state, county, city, TriMet, Portland Public Schools, church parking lots and even backyards.
8. Individual Shelter Units must remain small and light for immediate transport and therefore it's suggested that unless the shelter unit is built upon a trailer the ISU's come in 8X10 & 10X10 with a 9' tall flat roof.

**PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION REQUEST  
Wednesday Council Meeting 9:30 AM**

Council Meeting Date: 11-21-16

Today's Date 11-12-16


Name Michael Withney

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Telephone 503-381-6019 Email MichaelWithneyJR@gmail.com

Reason for the request:

Homelessness

  
(signed)

- Give your request in writing to the Council Clerk's office to schedule a date for your Communication. Use this form or email the information to the Council Clerk at the email address below.
- You will be placed on the Wednesday official Council Agenda as a "Communication." Communications are the first item on the Agenda and are taken at 9:30 a.m. A total of five Communications may be scheduled. Individuals must schedule their own Communication.
- You will have 3 minutes to speak and may also submit written testimony before or at the meeting. Communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.

**Thank you for being an active participant in your City government.**

**Contact Information:**

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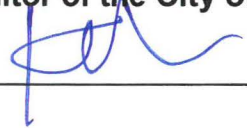
Request of Michael Withey to address Council regarding homelessness  
(Communication)

DEC 21 2016

PLACED ON FILE

Filed DEC 13 2016

**MARY HULL CABALLERO**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		