

“Respite Park” Homeless Shelter

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Large Social Problems

- Poverty, income inequality
- Racism
- Cycle of incarceration
- Single parents
- Reduced opportunity, ostracism
- Childhood trauma → troubled adults, mental illness
- Addiction, connecting to drugs, not people
- Homelessness, hopelessness

Visible Problems

- Crime in Whittier neighborhood
- Bad for business
- Shirtless wandering men
- Homeless sleeping on sidewalks
- Hypothermia, death
- Unconscious alcoholics
- Fights in public, trash, needles, feces

Existing Shelters

- Bishop Dudley House
- Union Gospel Mission
- Saint Francis House
- Minnehaha County “Safe Home” – for chronic alcoholics
- Glory House – mostly for ex convicts
- Call to Freedom – for sex traffic victims
- See also https://www.shelterlistings.org/city/sioux_falls-sd.html

Current Deficiencies

- Sometimes shelters are full
- Severely troubled or unruly often not welcome
- No place to go, nothing to do → trouble
- Some “street dwellers” want their freedom
- We move problems from one area to another
- Police calls are expensive
- Ambulance, ER costly
- Prison \$100/day

My Solution

- “Respite Park” homeless community
- “Alternative” homeless shelter
- Not “Drifters Place” – too transient
- Not “Home Square” – too permanent
- Respite – rest, recover, grow, go
- Accept and heal troubled homeless

Housing

- Effective, economical, but not overly comfy
- Tents in summer
- Insulated igloos in winter
- Something I would do for fun
- Start in “motel” while prepping tent/igloo
- City provides tent, clothing, training
- House signs for pride, mailing address
- A place to live, day and night

Minimal Buildings

- “Motel” only while getting settled
- Picnic shelter for socializing
- Small office, clinic
- Library for study, not chatting

Amazing Support

- Paid work as in Albuquerque's “There's a better way” program
- Running club like BackOnMyFeet.org
- Full time case worker, counselor, tutor, security
- Visiting clergy, nurse, doctor, dentist, musician
- Access to city's triage center
- Body: gardening, exercise, games, ...
- Mind: learning, teaching, ...
- Spirit: meditation, prayer, ...

Helping People Discuss

- Counselor for talking
- A space for screaming
- Take your fights to the ring
- Accommodate and resolve troubles

Food

- Basic healthy individual rations
- Whole grains, no white bread
- Promote self-reliance, no communal kitchen
- Occasional group picnics for community

Alcohol & Drugs

- Discouraged but accepted
- In private only, like county alcoholic shelter
- Marijuana safest drug
- On site addiction treatment
- Treatment more cost effective than jail
- Accept and heal problems

Summary

- Compassion
- Saving city money
- “Respite Park” costs much less than ER, jail, neighborhood crime, hopelessness
- Clean up our city
- Invest in troubled, marginalized people
- Promote re-integration

Addendum

- Another issue, not presented to Council
- Sometimes poor people sleep in their cars
- Unpopular with government, neighbors
- Welcome the practice at Respite Park