

Public Bathroom Access & Management Background

Town Offices/Portalettes: Middlebury Homelessness Task Force with the Town of Middlebury decided to add portalettes as a way of increasing access to public bathrooms in response to an increase in defecation on public and private property pre-covid and noting that town public bathroom access was limited (largely, not open evenings or weekends). It tried for well lit and populous locations where Dundons could get access to service them. One is at Rec Park all year and one in the Ilsley Parking lot seasonally (not in winter). **We should discuss the pros and cons of their locations, continuance, management and expansion.** With COVID, it became important to consider access to water to wash up/shower. MPD moved the hand washing station from their site to the portalette at Ilsley last year as trial. **We should discuss its effectiveness and whether or not to continue it.**

Bathroom/Shower Inventory: The Middlebury Homelessness Task Force did **an inventory of what was available where and when in Middlebury** and produced the pink "Gotta Go" brochure you can find about town. See it for what was learned. Downtown businesses and social service agencies applauded this effort and advised that **improved signage is needed** to direct the public to the bathrooms at the Town Office and Library and perhaps even expand their hours of operation a bit more. Rotary is willing to help cover expense for improved signage and other public bathroom efforts like a dedicated 24/7 public restroom. They do not want to be the project lead on it. No one does.

"Portland Loo" Model: Kelly Hickey (of BMP's Bundle effort) told us about her personal experience with regard to those who are "home insecure" and being a business owner observing shoppers and visitors looking for a bathroom and the success of the [Portland Loo](#) (~\$110K)--a great option for our consideration acclaimed worldwide as "the standard." She has heard it costs about \$1K/m to maintain so need to budget for that annual expense. She has seen the ones on west coast where it originated and in Burlington near where she works. It is used all the time. She reports that Brattleboro is looking into it and thinks it would be ideal for Middlebury, perhaps located in the Marbleworks so those coming off train could access it. The benefits are many which you can see in the link--spacious (can bring your stroller/bike/backpack/wheelchair into it), well lit, open 24/7, designed specifically to address the problems associated with public toilets (easy to install and clean).

Bathroom Management: **We should discuss ways to address the issue of misuse while assuring the public of a needed amenity. Some locations address this by requiring people to pay, giving tokens to those who can't and limiting amount of time a door can stay locked.**