

This document is a summary of quotes from Sisters Of The Road's Community Organizing Project.

Dan Newth prepared this document under the advice and direction of Genny Nelson (Co-founder of Sisters Of The Road) and Gina Cadenasso (Community Organizing Project Associate). Newth has more than three years experience living on the streets of Portland, OR. He writes for street roots newspaper and was published by Macmillan Education. As a crossroads volunteer he is active in the city and county's "Ten Year Plan To End Homelessness". He is on the coordinating committee and led the consumer feedback work group.

The intent of the consumer feedback process is to have input from the homeless stakeholders into policy and process on issues of homelessness.

The Community Organizing Project consisted of 600 interviews with homeless people. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded by category and theme. The following analysis is from the category: "Solutions to Homelessness: Programs/Services." and the theme: "Day/24x7 shelter/drop-in center needed". The quotes in this document are copyrighted property of Sisters Of The Road, Inc.

The following quote sums the primary concern:

"And I'm not coming down on anybody. I just want someone to listen, someone to hear and someone to help me so we can do what other organizations aren't doing. That means we start keeping some place open so [the] woman who's wandering the street at midnight, or the man, has somewhere to go. Even if it's just a little service station like window. A 24 hour drop in center. Not a day and night, a 24 hour."

The primary concern is hours of operation followed by services then mode of operation.

Strongly recurring themes are:

- 24/7 operation hours or at a minimum open from 5:30am to early evening
- Meeting basic needs: bathrooms, flexible shower and laundry hours.
- Daytime sleep areas.
- Many felt a day center should facilitate job search by:
 - Having phones and mail service
 - Having a place to store bags while on job search
 - Showers and laundry facilities for appropriate appearance
 - Access to internet job search

Clothes suitable for job search

Bus tickets

- A day labor service paying living wage
- A safe place to be: no drugs, alcohol, violence or harassment and yet not have overbearing rules
- Bartering for services was important to maintain dignity
- Several people suggested remodeling a vacant building using homeless labor
- Staffing the day center with homeless was mentioned with both positive and negative examples
- Social activities, games, TV, tables to meet at, and quiet places to read
- A place to relax and let your guard down
- Counselors and referrals to services
- Classes teaching advocating, reading, writing, ready to rent
- Case managers, both pro and con

While almost all of these services are already provided, the providers are overwhelmed with the numbers of people needing services.

Honoring the Sisters Of The Road philosophy of non-violence, non-humiliation of all, the names of individuals and organizations have been replaced with generic terms.

“...Because all these people get kicked out from under bridges in the early morning. We can’t go to the terminals. We can’t go to the libraries. We can’t go anywhere. Where’s a place where people just have warmth? A warm place. Where no one asks questions. People can play cards. A non-smoking play cards or a drawing or a listen to music and help each other out circle. A talk about on issues and maybe somebody knows an answer for that. It’s like a homeless AA. No one’s done that. We just came up with something. Because no one knows the feeling.”

Briefly summarized are 51 coded quotes, followed by segments of the quotes supporting the summaries.

- 24-Hour Day Center with showers, bathroom, laundry and fewer restrictions on time of use. Rules tend to reinforce institutionalization. Direct quote –

Interviewer: Why scary?

Narrator: ‘Cause it shows just how alone you are. And I think that’s also a thing to I mean. I’m not really what you would call a people person, but the thought of me not having anyone that I could turn to or no where to go, you know, for help or for shelter or whatever and all. I mean, that’s just beyond me. And like I see all, like I say, the individual efforts of the agencies and things here, but, there’s something lacking there. Even though this one over here’s doing this at this time and this one up here’s doing this at this time, well, I think they should do away with the designated times and just like have

a place like you know, if a person wants to come in at 9:00 at night and do their laundry or take a shower or whatever, they should be able to do it. Or have some place to sleep or whatever. I mean, not have these like well, if you're not here before 6:00, you don't get a bed. You don't get a meal or whatever. You can't get this that and all. Uh uh. This is not the military. This is not the military. This you're dealing with human beings. I mean, people, you know. In the military you're pretty much after awhile, you become on 'automo' time.

Interviewer: 'Automo' time? What's that?

Narrator: I mean, you do this because you're programmed to do this at this time, at this designated time. And you can't do that with homeless people. You can't do that. You can't set times and limits and all. 'Cause like I say, homelessness doesn't have a time. It's all the time, yeah."

- **Narrator wants to advocate for homeless. Envisions a day center where people pay or work for goods and services, with some free for those with no money, 24 hours, security guards; someplace out of the rain and away from the drug dealers. Direct quote –**

"... if I got to where I had some cash, I'd become an advocate. I really would. If I could make some changes or talk to the right people about the situation of having like doing what (service provider) does and provide help but with maybe not the religious overtones of having people have to go to a service for a meal, you know. (service provider) is not religious. You have to do chores around there but I don't think they serve meals. That's why (service provider) is good but there's got to be an alternative. I'd advocate to where people would have a place to go during the day. Have like security guards and stuff to watch, make sure no fights would happen. Like a big, I don't know, 400 people room, TV room and stuff and if they would [have] to pay for coffee and then have free coffee... a little bit of free coffee for those who can't afford it. To where they could be off the streets during the rainy time. That's why I ordered this because pretty soon it's gonna start raining. I'm gonna be underneath the Burnside Bridge. I don't like hanging around there. All the dealers come out and say hey, you want some dope."

- **Day center where it is okay to read and watch TV, open early morning to late night. Direct quote –**

"Yeah, they need someplace to where homeless people could go in maybe watch TV. Far as smoking goes, they can do that outside. But someplace where they can go in, stay warm, you know, where it's quiet. Some might want to read. Some might want to watch TV. So, you know, if they had a reading room and a TV room whatever you know, just to come in out the elements."

- **Safe place to hang out with no harassment, showers, clean clothes(laundry) Direct quote –**

"What I mean by a place to secure the homeless is a place for them to go, to hang out, to get off the street, you know, just a place where they feel secure that they can go knowing that they are not going to be harassed or they are not going to, you know, get their stuff stolen, you know, a place for them to go to hang out, you know, for a while, drink coffee,

pastries, whatever to, you know, get them off the street, you know, to try to get some help if they need help mentally, physically, whatever. That is what I feel is lacking through the system, is a place. You know, there is all kinds of abandoned buildings around here in Portland, big, big, big buildings, that are just sitting there with nothing in them for years and years and years in time and I feel that, you know, the state should open places like that for the homeless to where they can go in there, shower, have clean clothes, a secure place to go, instead of just laying out here on the sidewalk somewhere, you know, with nowhere to go..."

- Showers, tutors to learn to read and write, classes led by students and quiet places to study and read. Direct quote –

"Well, that would be like a day center. Showers _____ I do not know, you know, _____ play games, you know, read a book, have tutors there, you know, _____ students that help them when they cannot read, if they to want to read or write, you know, some of them do not know how to do that..."

- Some form of entertainment other than drugs; likes to watch movies at (service provider) on Saturdays. direct quote –

[Narrator is referring to comment by research which was referring to a comment by narrator]"I like it, the day center idea. I mean, and you mentioned, you said people would have things to do there ___ there is nothing to do down here, there is nothing for me to do but take drugs, there is no entertainment... Yeah, or watch a movie or something, you know. Sometime, at the (local agency) up there, you _____ a movie, but on Sundays there is nowhere to go besides walk the streets. _____ you get off the doorway..."*

***This does not make sense...**

- Resources lists and someone to sit down with and talk things out. Ready to rent classes. Direct quote –

"the social workers are there to help you hook up with different programs because there is a lot of women who come to the (Local Agency) that have like just broken up a marriage of so many years, you know, right, and they do not know what to do, where to go or anything, right. If they are in a shelter, you would think that is where their journey would begin. You would think that there would be somebody they could sit down and talk to you and say, okay, here is a resource paper, you know, you can go to this place, this place, this place, this place, it is here, it is there, it is there, right, that.....you would think that would be commonsense if that would be what you would expect. Some shelters are like that, they have that, but it is kind of funny that the one shelter that is right here in the middle of all of it does not, you know. Only if you have been admitted in there, you know, and the social workers are there, and, I mean, really how hard is it to go across the streets, grab a handful of fliers from (local agency) and bring them back to (Local Agency) and to pass them out? : 'Ready-to-rent' classes, where you go to that class and they help you get over all your obstacles so you are able to rent a decent place to live, that.....it gives you a certificate, I think they need to make more of those available, more widely known because they do not...that information is not out there as much as it could be."

- “If the city doesn’t want homeless on the street create a place for them to be.” TV, games, meals, counseling the goal being to lure the homeless in off the streets. Direct quote –

Field Researcher: And, what has your experience been like with the police when sleeping out there? Narrator: _____ hassle, it could have been worse _____ I know how to stay away.....stay out of any place but there has been several _____ this exclusion thing, ___ excludes you from certain areas. I have never been excluded but anyhow, it is a.....they will stop me, shake me down, _____ or whatever, _____ general hassle _____, so I try not to hang out there like _____ it would.....it would be good to have a place, a day facility where a lot of homeless people get out, you know, get off the streets out of.....out of public places, at least, you know, like _____ they have a place that _____ excellent facility. I mean, they have everything there, I mean, you feed them breakfast and lunch and have games, dayroom where you can watch something, watch TV and then every hour it would be different groups and you have.....do a group, ___ groups about 2 a week or something like that, you know. This facility would deal with about 200 people a day, I mean, at any one time, except to feed and you might get about 400 ___ it has a lot of....a facility ___ it is like a central place and everybody _____ get a counseling, have a one-on-one at least once a weekend, get some counseling or get some direction _____ I mean, get them going _____ whole different category but anybody who was homeless or have any kind of a need, you know, could come there, but you have to sign up and you have sign up _____ come there, just take up space without _____ bettering your situation, you know, _____ you still hang out, you know, watch VCRs, watch TV, play ping pong _____, you know, you have to go to programs _____. Anyway.....Should be close to services. Offer landlord tax breaks in exchange for rent.”

- Warm place to sleep during winter days, cool place for the summer. Remodel abandon building. Direct quote –

“...they should stay and be able to sleep if they want and...and stay, you know, and stuff. They need a place where somebody can go if it is 32 degrees outside, they can go into a warm building, now, _____ during the summer time, you know, they need just the opposite of a warm building, they need a cold building and at the time that I was here, they was a place like that, but it is not there, so what happened, why did it go? You know, would it really cost that much money to pay for a good place like that, you know, one has to do what one can, somebody do something about it. There is no sense in not having something like that. I also think that, you know, they should have something to wear, _____ people are sleeping underneath the bridge, may be building, some kind of, not really a camp ground, but something to where people could stay at night, to wear if they could not get any shelter, because of being discarded, they have a place without having to sleep under a bridge or sleep somewhere, where in the morning _____, police officers coming by and telling you to get up and leave, because it is looking bad when they are there, lets say you can take in ___ I mean, I hate to say this, and then I know it is going to sound crazy but in Phoenix, Arizona it has worked out for _____ Ohio down there as far as the prison or as far as the jail could go but he has got to think _____ tent city, it is a big place, people live in tents, if they have been arrested they live in tents, _____ not

what I am saying, they should have something like that for the criminals they should have something like that for the homeless. If you are homeless you ought to be able to go some place where you know you can have a place to stay and that is not so far away from all the services that you have and ____ I do not know of any place like that, they mean something like that, I mean, what would be a problem ____ and some of the area ____ and just putting a wall around it, where people really cannot see what is going on, put a couple of little buildings in there, you know, let people stay there at night, you know, ____ (I mean it is not like that), you know it is amazing that they have all these ____ buildings and everything yet there is nothing for anybody to be able to do, so why not do something, you know, and I do not know ____ buildings at West Bay, ____ owned one of these building, okay, _____, lets do this, make into a, not a shelter, but like, you know, a temporary shelter.”

- **Open 24/7, especially Sunday. Wants coffee, donuts, TV and Ping-Pong with bathroom! Does not like being preached at. Want drug use in bathroom ignored.** Direct quote –

“Day room with TV living room furniture sit there you can sit there eat coffee and drink dough nut or drink coffee and eat dough nuts rest of your life if that’s what would you want to do, Ok, nobody says, no get out, get out! Get out! Get out! Go! Especially on Sundays they are kicking people out into the streets around here and Sunday ____, what can you do on Sunday around here except to go out and get into trouble you know if you just had some place where they could just hang out and watch TV may be do their own laundry give them some kind of responsibility, you know look I did my own laundry, you know something to there is got to be a building that can be taken over for the homeless they just flocked to and stay there like, like a(service provider) put a ping-pong table or a pool table a color TV, and that would give them some self satisfaction you know instead of listening to God...but yeah get a place that’s open for 24,7 will you..., and keep the bath room open 24,7 and I am speaking to you also get somebody to police the bath room if you are so worried and concerned about the drug usage that’s going on in the bath rooms interrupt it then you are interrupting everything else, I mean I can’t believe that so much empathize is put at drug use in a bath room, it’s what, what, God Almighty, I may be it’s me but I just don’t understand to literally lock somebody out of the bath room because you are worried about I’m sticking a needle in the arm but then let him go somewhere else and do it but no not here not my bath room is that what it is all about... Yeah, have a plate tell ...to give you a place 24,7 she is so worried tell her call in the national guard to police it no problem hey, the National Guard that’s what that they there for you and go from there start from there and I’m ____ I’ll with you if you want coz I’m a prime example I don’t use drugs any more and I am very happy the way I’m living, I don’t even consider my self I’m homeless but I’m I guess I’m, you know I don’t have a roof over my head, I don’t have a shower, I don’t have electricity but I don’t look at my self as a homeless individual any more.”
- **Cooperative, people caring for people, storage, sign up for a bed, showers restrooms. Drop off bags in morning pick-up in evening.** Direct quote –

“My vision for a day center is a place for people who care about people who need help o.k. it’s a place where people can it’s got to be a indoor place or half indoor half outdoor place, nice place to hang out you know to stay, to keep out of the wet weather because it’s more , it rains more out here than it is does out in Southern California, a day shelter center that is open everyday, most of the day and may be even have beds o.k. there is this one place I wouldn’t consider it a day shelter ____ because it’s mostly outdoor type place but it’s a place where you can hang out all day, it’s a place you can hang out all the day and they also have beds that you had to sign up for and you are allowed to have a bed. When you come in the first time for the day you sign in once a day, you can sleep o.k. it’s mostly an outdoor thing, they have a little TV area if you want to and it’s on all the day, they have a storage area where you can store your store your up to 2 bags for up to 24 hours but it has to be up for 24 hours before you could put it back in for 24 hours, you could hang out there all day as long as you don’t cause trouble, they try to keep it peaceful, most of the volunteers are homeless or used to be homeless , the beds again you sign up for bed and when the bed comes available then you can go in and you can have the bed for 8 hour”

- **Showers, bathrooms, chairs, tables, books and newspapers. Direct quote –**

“...people, people, and water and a bathroom or two and showers, tables, chairs, books, newspapers, information, access, just great big room would work one of these old buildings, and that’s in every town , open up one of the buildings put some tables put, have somewhere...”

- **Open an unused building, use homeless labor to remodel, build showers, bathrooms, laundry facilities, classrooms. Teach employable skills. Coffee. –direct quote –**

“...you never know until you have been there ... from people that have been there, (service provider’s), open up these vacant gorgeous buildings open them up have a day center, we need bathe, we need a place to do our laundry, lot of us are more than willing to work, a lot of us, just to have a place to clean up brush our teeth, wash our clothes so we can get out there and do these things , for place to rest our heads”

- **Volunteer driven day center run by homeless volunteers, barter for use of showers and laundry. A place to nap, read or watch TV. Sell low cost Hygiene Items and other needed items. Direct quote –**

“I wish there could be a place where just people can hang out and drink coffee, we need more places like that and bring in some volunteers, contribute little money, 5 cents, 10 cents and so people can just sit down, maybe ____ people to go in and sleep at, just relax, read books and read papers. ...places like people can use their food stamps to get different things, cheaper stuff, you know.”

- **Day center without a lot of hoops to jump. No I.D. required. No paperwork required. With tables and chairs a place to read or**

watch TV. Some kind of big Hall or Gym. Open 24/7 barter for services. Direct Quote –

“... don’t have to have an ID you know because they make you jump through all these loopholes and it’s like. It, it hardly ever pays off, most people give up before anything happens. That is the reason people are, are just starving on the streets, I mean, it took a lot of work for me just to get food stamps... they need to have a little Gym or something you know get us a restroom, we will use it. My friend he is just a drunk, my other friends are drug dealers, my other friends kill people, but we are the ones cleaning the park, you know. It’s like we have done bad things, well we do do bad things and, we still you know, we keep stuff clean, we you know. We don’t want a dirty place, you know, that’s our home, you know you keep your house clean, we keep ours clean but people like, just think we are animals.”

- **Need a place to rest.** Direct quote –

“...sleep like a dead person because you are so tired from walking around just to keep someone from kicking you out of some place because they will not let you stand still, they will not let you stand still somewhere. So, that is...that is the biggest thing, the sleeping is, there is no place to rest.”

- **Need a place to rest and recoup. A place with dignity.** Direct quote –
“I know we need more comfortable places where people could rest and read, regroup, ... we all have...have wisdom and the ability to say, heal, and (to be) back on track, it just...we need...we need _____ to recharge our batteries _____, you know, like hamsters running on a wheel, it is not going to happen. Give...give people places where they can have their dignity, you know. You know, everything/anything is possible.”

- **Certain (service provider’s) do a good job. They have coffee, pastries and someone to talk to if you have a problem.** Direct quote –
“...(Local volunteer run agency) is a good operation too, ...I am pretty impressed with what they do, you come in in the morning, you would get coffee, pastry, you know, you got a problem, somebody will sit there and talk to, you know, when night ...some of us...some of us people out there are almost as helpless as little kids...”

- **Sense of entitlement a stumbling block.** Direct Quote –
“I have basically already told you, the ungratefulness of people, you know what I mean. I am talking about, the people that expect, you know what I mean, I said, you expect without getting, you expect without trying, you expect without caring. You expect everything for basically doing nothing.”

- **Have security guard that is sensitive to people and have list of the rules clearly posted.** Direct quote –
“you gonna have to hire a security guard, at least one, I mean it’s just, it’s just the way it is, or you gonna have a chaos and a lot of problems. You got to have some kind of security there. I’m sure that, I’m not the first person to think of that. ..., let people know that you don’t tolerate certain type of behavior, make it real clear to them before, before

they even come into the, come in the door. Which you know (service provider) does that, they do a great job at that, they got signs pasted all over the place what kind of behavior they won't tolerate, as far as not just violence but you know racial...

- Counselors and funding for education or needed programs, don't just keep referring people to programs that are overloaded and pretend you've done something. Direct quote –

"There should be a place... That would allow you an opportunity, give you a period of time to get yourself together and...and...and they should have social workers here, you know, based on everybody, you know, education or whatever, ___ need education they should create that so you can go get your, you know, GED, ___ diploma or whatever, you know, so you can better yourself, they do not have any here, you know, I mean,... (local service provider)... over here, they have a little program over here, you know, but the program, they...they cannot, I mean, you know, they did do nothing ____, you know."

- Day center could train homeless people to do outreach to other homeless people and learn to become advocates. A cooperative would be good, network with local cooperatives. Referrals that met shelter needs first then worry about other disability issues. Direct quote –

"...they are getting very proactive about outreach to veterans and word spreads that they are...they are doing this and more veterans are being serviced through this program. As far as other programs where people do outreach, any individual can do an outreach, I told a lot of people I have met selling paper while I am selling...while I am selling papers that I...if they want...they talked about (Local cooperative), and that if they really want to help (local cooperative) they can go out and talk to the people and find out what their needs are and maybe you could provide some of their needs, so the individuals, that is where it all starts out, and then maybe these people can get together as a collective or other service agencies can get an outreach program going... yeah, in some cities now a lot of homeless people are not able to go like to the libraries or to the malls anymore, a lot of places now do not want that type of image, I know a lot of homeless people who used to go to libraries and sleep in some of the chairs and library staff did not want that because...because some of these...because some of the customers would complain, the patrons would complain and they felt like they were just...they have no other place to go and it is no fun sitting around McDonalds all day long, trying to stay out of the cold. Summer is usually no problem when the weather is nice where they can go out and sit in a park, or they can sit on a street corner or sit somewhere, there is always plenty of places for people to go outside in the fair weather but in the wintertime it is really hard on homeless people, lot of them die and perish in the elements in the winter and there was more day...there was more day shelters around where people...homeless people could probably feel like they were more protected from the...from the elements and from the winter and possibly even some outreach programs where a lot of the homeless people were felt like they were being productive in community, I know one organization in Vancouver, (service provider) and what they do is they hold woodworking events where they make little cordage crafts and the homeless people out of the shelter in Vancouver,

(service provider), they are invited to come over and to participate in the basement of the church in these little craft making activities and they provide them with a place to go and something to do and they...after that is over they provide them with bus tickets, phone cards or other things that they may want to...to fulfill their need, so that in itself is a major outreach to homeless people to where they feel like they are...they are needed, loved, and provides some usefulness for their...for their time, a lot of homeless people just do not know what to do with their time other than to sit around and then...and when they have a lot of time on their hands, that creates time for mischief so, you know, a lot of people are thinking in the...in the realm of finding ways to keep homeless people occupied and busy because a lot of them have just given up on trying to find a/the job, where they go so long with their job search, too much rejection and they just throw in the towel and they never look again, they just accept that they will be a part of the underclass and that they will have to make a living out on the streets however they can, they are homeless and that is life for them until they perish or die and it is a sad thing for a human to go through, no human should have to live like that, I think all humans want something and I think their basic needs are not being met and that is why they have chosen to do what they do and why a lot of them have drifted into abuse situations.”

- Activities in day center could be alternative to drug and alcohol use. Provide showers, clothing, telephone, messages and mail. Caseworkers specialized in issues such as mental health. Direct quote –

“out there at 5:30 in the morning there is a lot of guys standing out ____ for the _____. But they can't sleep together, they wouldn't be inside and then they are out at 5:30 in the morning and you are out until 8:30 at night and all you have to do is wander the streets. There is no, one thing they do need here is that they don't have a __ day center. Place where people can go during the day and not be under the bridge and not have to go out and __ around drinking and having drugs. ...maybe have a shower and have access to telephones so they can job hunt and. ...take messages you can get your mail there, they have clothing available, so you can go in and get cleaned up look for a job. ...It would help a lot of people to get on their feet... have to have counsels in there that could, direct you where you needed to go. They have different case workers, __ they have case workers, that deal with different things. And they got one of them is just for the mental health.”

- 24 hour day center needed so people are not continuously told to move along. Direct quote -

“when it rains or snows or anything like that ____ not very hard but when it is raining where are you going to go? Under a bridge, that is what you got to do and the cops will drive us ____, ‘Get off the bridge.’”

- Need to educate the general public. Clothes handed out often appear goofy. People forget where they came from, some of the most oppressive people toward the homeless are former homeless. Direct quote –

“Maybe that is what we need, educate some of these people more than we need a day shelter or anything, you know, just let people know that ___ people just like you, they just do not look like you now because they are wearing crazy-looking clothes they got from the (service provider), you know ___ just like you ___ dope fiends _____ we _____, the people that work there you never see them wear the same clothes twice or the same shoes, I mean, it is...and you go in there, they give you a T-shirt and a pair of pants and _____ and they look like something off a comedy show... ___ I mean, they have forgotten that they were homeless I believe, you know, those people, every one of them that works there were homeless at one time but within a couple of weeks of getting that job they forgot where they had been and I just _____ and get another chance to not be homeless, I will never forget this, as long as I live I will never treat a homeless person the same _____ but they did and gave us some sorry/soiled clothes and keep the good for them, there is no way...”

- **Day center could get people off the street.** Direct quote –
“...this is police and this is the city, this is the way they are thinking, but if you give these people somewhere to go, you will not have to look at them on the street...”
- **Local agency has a nice environment and feels safe. Need day center open early in the morning and on weekends.** Need storage
“ it is just the environment, I do not know, it is like when everybody goes to (Local agency) it is like you do not have to have like the armors on, you know, we can relax, we can bullshit, you know what I am saying? Yeah, you will have somebody to talk to, you know, they make us feel part of...Do something like for Saturdays and Sundays or 5 o’clock in the morning when they kick you up out of shelters or off the street. What are you going to do? Where are you going to go, you know? Some place for people to keep their stuff, may not be a whole lot to some people, but it is a whole life to others, you know, we need something like that”
- **Employment service for day labor. (Like Day labor agency in Seattle) Day center should serve as a social center. Some of the elderly homeless as well as people living in SRO’s need the social activity to maintain mental health.** Direct quote –
“They need places where they can go and have access to...to employment, to daily employment for day labor and get paid that day, to sit around and keep warm on cold days, to sit around and keep cool on hot days, just to sit around and socialize, to have the brain functioning, you know. Social contact is very, very, very important to human beings, we need it in our life every day, we are very social people regardless, I do not care who you are or how much you talk, you know, you may go sit in a room and sit there and watch TV and not talk to no one but yet there is people around you and you are ___ you are hearing other people talk. When I was a youth for my youth church group, we/I used to go to a retired folks, old folks home and I would spend 30 minutes once a week and the stories that they could tell ___ is something I think elderly people do not get enough of, the contact. I do not care what elderly people say, they may...they may scream, they love young people around them, I do not care how wealthy and better they

are, you know. If a young person can get someone talking about their past they start remembering the good times, you know, they may not [remember] you 2 seconds after you leave or remember that it even happened, you know, but it helps, it really, really does, and they have done studies on it, they are doing studies on it with the animals and the elderly, they may not remember their pet being there 2 seconds after they take the/that animal away but ___ are staring [starting to] see results and they will ___ brain function, they are getting brain function, they are getting activity in their brain, you do not...do not use it you lose it, you know, people need it.”

- **Need day center open early morning and weekends.** Direct Quote – *“Filling the gaps of, you know, of...of times that they have to live on the streets, like morning times, weekend times...”*
- **Day center is important in winter time. Barter system helps people feel they are contributing.** Direct quote – *“...they have a lot of overnight shelters and stuff, but if they had more places where you could go in during the day but, you...you know, maybe even in the wintertime because summertime it is not such a big deal but when it is cold out, if they had more...more of a shelter where you could go, stay in there during the day if you wanted, you know, offered to help around the place. ... they do not need to just sit there and sit on their ass and then they would be wondering they could have something to do in there, you know, help clean up ...it would make them feel good about themselves”*
- **Day shelter is needed for people working nights so they can sleep during the day. Storage, phones and mail would also be useful.**
Direct quote – *“Portland needs a “day” shelter where if you’re working you can lock your stuff up in a cubby hole and it’s safe. You know, if you work nights you can go and sleep during the day. Or if you’re physically impaired, like I am, a place where you can just get out of the rain, out of the weather. And get help that you need, you know, access to a phone, access to mail, just the common things.”*
- **Day shelter could be a renovated empty building.** Direct Quote – *“Fund more money for shelters. Even a day shelter, a place, a shelter period. They’ve got all these old buildings that they sitting and trying to sell. Why don’t the city buy one and go OK, this is going to be a day shelter? Or the first floor is day shelter, the second floor is this, the third floor is this. Instead of tearing down the old historical buildings and historic blocks to make improve stuff, to make the city more pretty and stuff, I believe we need to open up the old buildings to the homeless.”*
- **Need a day center open 24hrs.** Direct quote – *“And I’m not coming down on anybody. I just want someone to listen, someone to hear and someone to help me so we can do what other organizations aren’t doing. That means we start keeping some place open so that woman who’s wandering the street at 12*

o'clock, or the man, has somewhere to go. Even if it's just a little service station like window. A 24 hours drop in center. Not a day and night, a 24 hour."

- **Current services in Portland do not provide enough showers to meet the need. There is a need for a day center.** Direct quote –

"The rehab centers, I went to a couple of them and due to my medical problems they said, you know, it's limited to what we can do, you know. And they never talk about housing. They want to cross train you or they'll find you inadequate to really participate in the program. Believe me, they'll shut the door. If you come in there and you're smelling a little bit, they'll shut the door on you instead of saying well, hey, we need a community center that where people would have access to showers, washing machines, you know, a good hot meal. That got (local agencies), all those are places where you can go get a meal. And it's where you can go take a shower but it's a certain number of people they can take in, you know, and everybody don't get the same benefit from it."
- **Need someplace warm to be early mornings and weekends. A place where people sit down with each other and talk out their problems. Like a homeless AA. It could be a place where homeless brainstorm together about issues of homelessness. Present shelters have oppressive rules and many are religiously focused.** Direct quote –

"...what about the week-ends? Where's the place in the day? Because all these people get kicked out from under bridges in the early morning. We can't go to the terminals. We can't go to the libraries. We can't go anywhere. Where's a place where people just have warmth? A warm place. Where no one asks questions. People can play cards. A non-smoking play cards or a drawing or a listen to music and help each other out circle. A talk about on issues and maybe somebody knows an answer for that. It's like a homeless AA. No one's done that. We just came up with something. Because no one knows the feeling. So nobody cares or gives a shit so we gotta do something. Yeah. But we don't pay attention to it when we don't have a place because we're cold. So all I want to do is be warm. So we can't care or think about anybody else. Just I'm cold. So if we had a warm place we could like the solutions rise for other issues. We don't have like a place of gathering. Seriously like in the door we'll screen the people that way that no bringing any drugs in or personal issues. No loud swearing or talking or certain things that we'd just be there to warm up and really enjoy the tranquility of that space and we can relate, you know. And there's no place anywhere where we can...ahh...it's cold out there so well let's just... we can sit down in the evening. Be closing at 8 o'clock you can go to your shelter and then we open at 6 or 7 in the morning with a cup of coffee and we can play chess and tell stories and, you know, do sewing patches or whatever. I don't go any other places in Portland but the (service provider). I checked all of them. I remember you gave me a sheet. I checked most of them out. I didn't enjoy. Other than that to have a quick meal and get out of there real quick for some reason. Because they didn't have the emotional support group going. Just a quick fix and then get out. And then OK, fine. I might go to the Starbucks and lift a sandwich and I don't have to go thru

your rules and everything and religious read the bible first kind of thing and then have a meal.”

- **On cold rainy days it would be nice to have somewhere to go.**

Direct Quote –

“I’d like to see something where, especially on a cold and rainy day, where a person can come in and sit... because we are on the streets from 6:00 in the morning until 8:00 at night.”

- **Need day center showers and laundry.** Direct quote –

“We very much need a day shelter because there ain’t no place to go in the daytime. And you need some place to go where you can take a shower. Especially guys on the street. They don’t have no place to go to take showers except (service provider) and that’s only once or twice a week. And no place to do your laundry. Otherwise the cops move you around every five minutes. They see a homeless person sitting on the street or something, they come up and move you. Can’t sit more than ten minutes in one spot before a cop will tell you that you have to move on.”

- **Need access to bathrooms 24/7. Day center that is not primarily focused on making money off the poor.** Direct quote –

“...bathrooms, public bathrooms like this one. There is no reason in hell _____ that bathroom should be open, other than The(local Service provider) owns it and it so damn cheap. I am still betting on them, I cannot believe it, they are just rotten. They will beg and bum your money out in front of a store and then charge the homeless \$8 a night to stay there. No, it is not good, that is wrong, they are wrong, and they are going to pay for it I am sure, one day when it is time to add up the bills, (Service provider) is going to pay for it and as far as the other people, I do not know, I really do not, I cannot understand the idea behind the (service provider) or the places that I know, I think they are trying, but they are dealing with humans and humans are going to fail more than they do not fail, I mean, when there is any dollars around somebody is going to be after them, even if it is a about “You go get me a pack of smokes I’ll make sure you get a bed tonight,” you know, if you do not, I have seen it _____. They would never admit to it, but I have seen it and I am not the only one. So, housing is tough, a bed is tough, a place to go in a daytime is very tough. There is one place here ... 2 hours a day and then there is a little bit down here ___ Burnside _____ between 9:30 and 11:30, you can go downstairs and drink coffee, but they are very limited and you got to get on a list and wait and I know there are some things outside of this area, well, I am not from Portland and I do not know ___ places, I have not had to resort to those other than trying to find clothes,

- **Day center open early in the morning. A place for people that are ill or exhausted.** Direct Quote –

“Well, I think so. I think so. They need like a drop in center or like a place to...that can open from the morning. I don’t know, maybe the (service provider) they open from the morning. I don’t know, they do that? The(service provider) They have chair like these but bigger. They serve coffee and those people can be inside. That’s right. They can lay down

in the chair because sometime they are feeling so sick. They need to lay down some place. You know, they don't have it. They gotta do it on the street. Maybe, I don't know."

- **Day center as alternative to wandering the streets.** Direct quote – *"Instead of roaming the streets like they do, you know? They sit out there and get put out there in the morning. That's all they do just walk around kinda roam the streets. So it would be nice where they could sit down, somewhere to play cards or play the table games, dominos"*
- **Need someplace to get out of the rain.** Direct quote – *"It's really hard when you're homeless, even if you have a rain coat. Or if you have to stand in line to eat and it's pouring down rain. I have done that before. I have stood at (Local service provider) waiting to get in while it was pouring down rain for like two hours. That's kinda frustrating, but you know you have to stay in line so you can get a bed to sleep in."*
- **Storage important, Some service providers make you stand in the rain until 10pm to get a place to sleep, then you get kicked out (service provider) at 5am. Showers and work programs are needed.** Direct Quote - *"Well, in Oklahoma they just opened this new mission up and they had big lockers, you know. And at night when you took your shower, they'd let you put your stuff in the locker and lock it up and then when you leave in the morning they'd give it back to you. Here, you know, you just got to lay it beside you or whatever when you go to sleep. Well, there's people wandering in and out of those places all night and just pick your stuff up and head out the door. They don't check your baggage when you're leaving the mission. They don't even check it when you're coming in. So you could basically just pick up anybody's bag and just walk out in the middle of the night. Not me, I sleep with my stuff. I use my backpack as a pillow. It got cold. And when it's raining, there's no place for the homeless to go when it's raining. They don't let us in (service provider) until ten o'clock even if it's pouring down rain, you've got to stand out in front (service provider) until ten o'clock to get all the people inside or in there dry. Well, how come we can't come in out of the rain like they're out of the rain? You know, by the time you get in there at ten o'clock or eleven o'clock is the real time but they've been letting us in at ten because of the rain, well why don't they just let us in? In any other city I've ever been to all over the United States, if you ain't got no place to go during the day, they'll let you hang out there. Not in Portland, you know. You're out at 5:30. Build a dayroom for the older people, maybe, or the disabled people that don't have no place to go during the day. Have showers for people to use when they need to take a shower. Not when they say you have to take a shower. You know, they have a shower line down there (service provider) in the mornings from 7-8. Well, if you can't make it there from 7 to 8, then you just don't get a shower, you know. And that's the only place that I know where you can take a shower during the day. Start some kind of work program for the guys that don't want to join a drug program. You know? Put these guys to work, including myself. You know, I want off the streets but I need to work for it, you know. I hold onto money a little better*

when I work for it. You know, it means a little more to you when you've worked for it and earned it. You know, money is pretty easy to get rid of when it's somebody else's money."

- **Day center with showers, sleeping section and referrals to social services, education opportunities and a barter program.** Direct Quote

"Well, a place to go take a shower and crash out without having to be on the street, you know. Be in a safe place with walls around you and the ability to have a little help through that agency hopefully, you know, like if you want to go back to school and learn something, reinforce something. How to get to a treatment program if you really feel like you need a treatment program at the time, you know, or something like that. And just how to get access to things every person needs every day, you know. Or if they can't get them or how to at least work for them, you know. Give your time away from them. Like (service provider), you know, work there for a while, you know, you get a free meal and stuff. It's no big deal to barter like that, I don't think, you know."

- **Day center should be close to services. By volunteering at day center you can earn a nap on a bunk, a shower or do laundry. Some people do not want to be a part of a program or religious organization.** Direct quote –

"You know some folks don't want to travel all that way across the water to get there, on this side of the water. It'd be nice to have something like they had in Seattle, (service provider), which was a place that was open like 8:00 in the morning. (service provider) they also have beds in there. And if folks volunteered, they could take a shower and sleep up in the same place. Yeah, for at night. And then again, it's just what folks want. They want a place you understand where they can go inside, come and go as they please. I mean, all these programs. I mean some people, they really don't want to be committed to a program, Christian program, or what have you. Some of them just want to be left alone and do whatever they want. That's the way a lot of people see it today."

- **Most women's shelters require domestic violence, Many women on the street do not have a history of domestic violence. Need a day center with showers.** Direct quote –

"Women's shelters because not everybody...There's a lot of women's shelters out there but they are all for domestic violence. Not all women on the streets are in a domestic violence situation. So, we need more women's shelters that aren't domestic violence, the first night I was here(slept at a woman's shelter). But, then I never used it again, I didn't like it....if you don't do this or that...it's like, you're not supposed to eat in there and some people haven't eaten all day and just got food and so then they can't eat it, they have to wait till morning to eat, that's not right.... There needs to be more women's shelters. And more places for women to take showers. (service provider) takes nine women a day and that's it. I'm sorry, there is more than nine women that need to take showers everyday. There's no other place for women to take showers. If you're under age you can go to (service provider) and take a shower. The other thing we were

thinking of the other day was drop-in centers for adults. Just somewhere to get out of the cold or rain, instead of walking around or sitting under a bridge and freeze. Even if it was just winter drop-in centers. There are people that need to fill paperwork out but it's too wet outside to fill it out. By the time you get to the shelter it's light's out, so they have no way to fill out paperwork to get help. One or two drop-in centers would help people, somewhere to get out of rain and cold. There are some places but not after 11:30, you need some place after 11:30."

- **Need place to sleep during the day. Narrator enjoys bartering for meals.** Direct quote –

"Well, yeah, if during the day I could get somewhere that would let me lay down for a little bit or something like that. Because with my body hurting and everything I get weak. And I get tired very fast. If they could have places to let people lay down during the day that would be great. They have (Local agency) and stuff but they are so crowded, half the time you can't even sit down in them, because there are so many people trying to get out of the weather. And, when I go to (local agency), I just in there all day. If I don't have nowhere else to go, I will be in (Local Agency) all day. Yesterday we were there all day and I worked yesterday afternoon after closing, I did the bathrooms because I like doing them, I know how to get them clean. A lot of people don't know how to clean them right. I'm probably going to do it again tonight to put more money on my books. Right now I've got four fifty or five fifty on my books."

- **Narrator finds lack of storage and day services are primary stumbling blocks.** Direct quote -

"... I think the day services would be the best one and definitely some place to store your stuff. Those are the two biggest I can think of because I have been dealing with that for going on four years, off and on, you know, and that's the hardest to overcome is where do I put my stuff if I want to go job hunting, you know. That's the biggest."

- **Need day center open early hours with lockers, showers, laundry and help filling out complicated forms. Lockers for storage very important.** Direct quote -

"Well, as progressive as Portland is, they don't have a homeless day shelter. Amarillo, Texas has one. Are they more progressive than Portland? (laughs) You know, it's a question that people need to ask themselves. You know, in Amarillo, Texas a person can come in off the street, take a shower anytime, not wait in line at one o'clock in the afternoon and take a shower over at (service provider), if you're a man, or eleven o'clock if you're a woman. And in Portland there is no place for a woman to take a shower on the weekends. So Saturday and Sunday it is impossible for a woman in the city of Portland to get a shower. There are places for men, but not for women who are homeless. And that to me is really sad. And the way that the Medicaid system here works, you need someone to guide you through it. If I wasn't of strong mind and will and possessed of some native intelligence, I would not be able to get through it here. There needs to be somebody to help you fill out forms for the Oregon Health Plan when you go into the office. The way they have the offices set up here, if you're disabled you go to one

office, if you're not you go to another. Even if you live someplace, you might have to go to another office clear across town. You have to get bus tickets to go there. There are few places to get bus tickets. It's horrible. You have a good public transportation system here and that's a good thing, but helping the homeless to negotiate it, you know, that's something that needs to be looked into. A lot of people here that are homeless do day labor because that's the only thing they can get without an address, go into something like Labor Ready and work, go out and work that day to get a little money in their pocket where they can start to take care of themselves. But where are they going to put what's basically their home; all their clothes, where they lay down at night and, if they're lucky enough to have a tent, their roof over their head. Where are they going to leave that while they go off and work? The only place in Portland that has lockers opens at 9 and closes, I can't remember is it 2 or 3? What time does (local agency) close? Two or three. If you're going to work labor, you need to be at the labor hall at 5 in the morning if you plan to get out at all. It's a hard life out on the street. I've been to cities where you had to walk 6 miles between where you ate lunch and where you ate supper. And you talk about that with maybe, well I carried a big pack. I carried about 80 pounds. But between 40 and 80 pounds on your back and just walking in between them to try to get a meal. And then people scream and yell at you, "Why don't you get a job?" You know? There's no way for you to get a job. In Tulsa, Oklahoma they have a good day shelter there and they allow women to sleep on the floor at night. You can get four free tokens. You can wash two loads of clothes, I can't remember whether it's a day or a week there, but you get the idea. And there are people that stay there all day that are either disabled or unemployable and they can make money from the people that go out and work by washing their clothes, you know, for them. You know, they'll give them their tokens and they'll give them a dollar or two to sit there and actually put their clothes through the washing machine while they're at work. And it's a semi-stable environment there, you know. But there aren't any lockers there. There's no place for anyone to store gear. They have a good (Service agency) next door and I think they offer that there. But the thing is, don't give out charity for the sake of charity. Give out a hand and help somebody get back up on their feet because it's easy to fall down. Easy. And it's a whole lot harder to get back up."

- **24 hour, shelter drug and alcohol free, stay as long as you like if you are working and contributing rent. If not working you get 30 days to get a job. Homey atmosphere with few rules.** Direct quote - *"You know, if I had the money, you know, and it was possible, I'd like to take and get a hold of one of these buildings and turn it into a type of place that a person wouldn't have to do anything at all accept abstain from alcohol and drugs. He could stay there for a month and get himself back up on his own two feet. And, you know, if he didn't find a job in those 30 days, well sorry, maybe you can come back in a year if things are still the same. You know, but if he finds a job, then he could stay for, you know, an undetermined amount of time and pay the rent until he decides he wants to move somewhere else. There wouldn't be any obligation on his part, you know? As long as he was looking for work, you know, then that's all he'd have to do. Not like this program to where you have to do this and you have to do that. You know, you come and go as you please. But I'm*

sure the city would have something to say about it. There would be guidelines that have to be followed and all whatnot.”

- **Narrator wants to have a place to pee, and break cycle of spending day waiting in one food line after another. He finds little else to do.** Direct quote -

“That’s serious because I’m going to end up getting a peeing in public ticket because I mean, you can go to the waterfront and there’s no place to pee. I mean it’s ridiculous. You gotta carry your own toilet paper around with you anyways. I don’t know. It seems like you’re locked in to this food line to food line to food line. That’s the only thing that you can do because there’s nowhere else to go. And clothes. I mean, you know, that’s all they do is just go around. All these people, you know, they just go from place to place eating, trying to find a new pair of whatever, you know. I mean they fight over it.”

- **Weekend day center open early in the day.** Direct quote -

“...like I say, it doesn’t open up till 9:00 on Saturday, but through the week, its open up at 8:30. If you’re there, you can do your laundry. Or you can sit and talk, you know, talk with other people, you know. Things like that, you know, you have phone calls or maybe someone...you need to find out about a job. Things like that. Give me something to do.”