CONCEPT STATEMENT

Flow is a basic needs center that provides comfort, refreshment, and safety to those in need with the intent of improving quality of life, self-esteem, and mental health. Offering services centered around hygiene and job readiness, this facility equips occupants with the necessary resources to build independence. Human-centered design informs a sustainable, enjoyable, and healthy environment for both employees and guests.

RESEARCH

The limited access to public sanitation infrastructure is hindering the ability to maintain proper hygiene among the homeless, deteriorating both their physical and mental health. Designing a non-stigmatizing, safe, and clean basic needs shelter that promotes proper hygienic practices can improve the general health of people living in sheltered settings and lessen the psychological damage of being homeless to guide them on a path to self-sufficiency.

We interviewed a previously homeless person who made use of basic needs programs in Denton where he was able to get meals, showers, and a mailing address. Even with programs available to him, his hygiene was greatly affected by his homelessness which in turn “caused his sense of self and his mental health” to decline. This is partly due to the unwelcoming feeling of these basic needs shelters that made him feel “sad and anxious.” His mental health began to decline as his homelessness made him feel lesser and described it as “feeling like you’ve done something wrong.” This inferiority complex among the homeless is common in the United States as there is a social stigma attached to homelessness as it is seen as “a result of personal failure” (Biswas-Diener, 2006).

We were also able to visit Cumberland’s foster care for children who need a temporary living space. The Cumberland Presbyterian home for children is very aware of the psychological effects of homelessness and is very thorough with their mental services providing assessments of the children’s mental and emotional needs to provide them with the necessary counseling and psychological services.

Our design will be guided by both the physical and mental well-being of homeless individuals, to allow us to create a thoughtful space for them to feel safe and welcomed so they can become autonomous and lead a healthy lifestyle. The main goals of this basic needs shelter are to improve guest’s mental health and enrich the community. This design achieves that by using visual elements such as gentle colors and curvilinear structure to soften the environment and the path that one takes through the space. This, along with an atmosphere of equality in every way possible, will aid in reducing anxiety of the guests. Everyone should enter and leave this shelter feeling more secure and cleaner, and like a valuable member of society.

REFERENCES


CONCEPT SKETCHES
PROGRAM GOALS

IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH
• Spa Like Atmosphere
• Soft and Soothing Colors
• Curving Special Form
• Enhanced connection with nature
• Separation of public and spaces
• Treating them like valuable members of society

ENRICHING THE COMMUNITY
• Fruit and Vegetable Garden
• Lowering the spread of diseases
• Helping with job readiness
• Using sustainable materials
• Accessibility and UD Design
• Health Promotion

WALKING AREA & FURNITURE

VARIED SEATING CONVEYS NON-INSTITUTIONAL, COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT AND SENSE OF CHOICE FOR GUESTS

CUSTOMIZED BENCH FEATURES UNDER-SEAT STORAGE FOR SMALL ITEMS GIVING GUESTS A SENSE OF SAFETY

MATERIALS

WOOD PORCELAIN TILE
• REDUCED BACTERIA
• EASY TO BWDWASH, CLEAN
• LOW ALLERGENIC REACTION
• DOES NOT ATTRACTION DUSTS
• DIRT AND STAIN RESISTANT
• SLIP AND SKID RESISTANT

RECYCLED GLASS
• 100% RECYCLED
• 0% WASTE
• MADE WITH RECYCLED MATERIALS
• CAN SUBSTITUTE FOR 95% OF RAW MATERIALS

RAMMED EARTH
• LONG LASTING
• NON-TOXIC
• FIRE RESISTANT

BAMBOO FLOORING
• RENEWABLE
• HIGH FORM STRENGTH
• HIGH COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH
• LIGHTWEIGHT
• SELF-REGENERATING
• DURABLE

SENSUDE FABRIC
• 100% RECYCLED
• FIRE RESISTANT
• RIBE OF COLUMBIA
• HYPOALLERGENIC
• 33-50% LESS ENERGY TO PRODUCE
• REDUCED SODIUM CONTENT

CORKBOARD
• FAST GROWING
• MADE FROM LIVING TREE
• FIRE RESISTANT
• NO MOLD GROWING
• NON-TOXIC
• THERMAL INSULATOR

FLOOR PLAN

PROGRAM & AREAS

01. RECEPTION
02. BREAK ROOM
03. DIRECTOR’S OFFICE
04. EMPLOYEE RESTROOM
05. WAITING/LIVING ROOM
06. SECONDARY WAITING
07. PET WASHING AREA
08. LAUNDRY ROOM
09. INDIVIDUAL RESTROOMS
10. INDIVIDUAL SHOWER ROOMS
11. JANITORIAL CLOSET
12. SHOWER SUPPORT DESK
13. HYGIENE SUPPLY STORAGE
14. COMMUNITY GARDEN
15. ALL RELIGION MEDITATION SPACE
16. OUTDOOR SEATING AREA
17. DOG PARK