

WE SHINE Communities: Welcoming, Empowering, Safe Habitation Initiative with Neighborhood Engagement

Cascadia Clusters constructs infrastructure (tiny houses, platforms, wash pods, hygiene pods, shower pods, , fencing, picnic tables, and more) for alternative shelters, other small footprint communities and private customers. Cascadia Clusters also provides job training and jobs for houseless Portlanders residing in a houseless village or alternative shelter community. Cascadia Clusters has constructed infrastructure, utilizing volunteers, students, and villagers themselves at C3PO, Agape, Hazelnut Grove, RightToDreamToo, Kenton Women's and Dignity villages. Through its partner (shinewithus.org), Cascadia Clusters pioneered the use of solar-powered micro-grids for village communities.

WE SHINE Communities is a program developed in partnership with Cascadia Clusters by a group of committed volunteers from three Portland neighborhoods. The WE SHINE program will develop replicable models of alternative shelter. We will site these communities with the support of neighborhood-based faith groups, volunteers, schools, non-profits, property owners, and businesses. See the WE SHINE website at weshinepdx.org . WE SHINE volunteers will serve in an ongoing advisory and support capacity to Cascadia Clusters. Cascadia Clusters and WE SHINE will develop their formal partnership documentation in the next few weeks.

WE SHINE has identified a number of potential sites, including both publicly and privately-owned properties, within or adjacent to our initial group of participating neighborhoods. We are seeking parcels with available parking lot or unimproved space, easy access to public transit, and access to a commercial area with a variety of stores, services, and food sources. **Sites such as public parks, school grounds, playgrounds, or community centers will not be considered.**

To date, we have initiated talks with 3 faith-based property owners. Cascadia Clusters will be ready to construct the first 3 of 5 total clusters of six platform tents within a few weeks of obtaining control of the sites. We have also offered to anchor a publicly-owned site with two additional clusters.

Cascadia Clusters is prepared to develop any of the following three types of WE SHINE alternative shelters (aka villages), based on the available site(s), the property owner's preference, zoning allowances, and the demographics of the houseless persons to be served at each site: **a)** Clusters of six all-weather 64 sq. ft (or larger) insulated tents secured on 10' x 10' sq. (or larger) platforms that are portable, vermin resistant and can be made ADA accessible. The tents are insulated and have ventilation, multiple windows and two doors () Each unit will be fully-equipped to serve one or two persons with <https://shop.clamoutdoors.com/x-400-thermal-hub-shelter.html> cots, all-weather carpet, sleeping bags, lock box, a solar powered Juicebox (<https://shinewithus.org/juicebox>) to provide light, heat, communication access, and electricity, and a bench; or **b)** clusters of six tiny houses on trailers or piers with similar accoutrements to those provided in the tents; or **c)** clusters of six RV or car campers.

All three types of sites will be very mobile (estimated set up or moving time = 2 weeks) and will utilize green technology and supplies in their operations. Examples include solar and battery power sources, grey water diversion for plantings, and use of organic cleaning and hygiene products. Electrical and water service will be hooked up at each site if possible. Each site will also contain a community gathering structure sufficient in size for communal meals, projects, and community meetings. The community structures may include an ADA accessible field kitchen tiny house with propane stove and grill, a refrigerator, a counter with plug-ins for small

appliances, and lockable cabinets. Each cluster will also feature two porta-potties (one ADA accessible) and garbage/recycling bins on a shared trailer. **A combination shower and laundry trailer will visit each cluster of 6 units once a week. Shower/laundry days will be coordinated by WE SHINE to support scheduling of other support services on site.** Each village pod will include accessible pathways and entries, a provision to receive mail and to have access to the internet, and a wooden perimeter fencing for privacy and security. Villagers will have opportunities to improve the amenities at each site through their own labor and creativity. The social design of each WE SHINE site will help build a sense of community and engagement among the villagers.

Each WE SHINE community will be welcoming and give preference for admission to those who have been living unsheltered in the vicinity of each site and who are members of under-served populations including Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and LGBTQ+ individuals. However, clusters also may be designated by WE SHINE to serve a certain age, gender, type of family or other demographic grouping.

Each village cluster will be low barrier in terms of admission. Village residents will not be required to be in treatment or to maintain sobriety as a criterion for admission. Non-aggressive pets will be welcomed. Villagers will be required to sign an initial agreement that includes a set of core rules. Villagers will contribute to the operation and maintenance of each site with a combination of sweat equity and a minimal (yet meaningful) monthly cash user fee.

Villagers will sign a statement that they understand that this is a transitional village and will not provide permanent housing nor offer tenancy rights. Community members also will be expected to collaborate with their host community to prevent unmanaged tents and vehicles, garbage, needles, and trash from accumulating adjacent to the village. Community members will be encouraged to attend and participate in weekly Community Council meetings. Villagers also will be encouraged to develop a member-driven process for addressing conflicts amongst themselves as well as to problem-solve issues that affect the whole community.

WE SHINE's transitional micro-village model addresses the expressed needs and aspirations of currently unsheltered folks for privacy, safety, security, basic hygiene and sanitation, the opportunity to build community, the opportunity to govern themselves, the opportunity to build job skills and self-sufficiency, and the opportunity to find shelter in their preferred locale.

Our collaborating neighborhood associations and other community-based volunteers will provide additional supportive services, including but not limited to donated funds and supplies, supplemental food, communal meals, community gardening, and community-enhancing services and activities. WE SHINE will aim to develop at least 15% funding in the first year for ongoing operations of the clusters from non-governmental sources. In some cases, volunteers may be available to provide supplemental basic services such as laundry, clothes exchange, supplemental trash or sanitation services, etc.