

A Low Cost Upgrade for Our Homeless Camp Tent Cities

From: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/homeless-upgrade.html>

Many of our cities have people sleeping in parks and in small tents in various locations in our cities. Often neighbors complain about them blocking sidewalks, leaving trash and not having toilet facilities.

There are proposals to increase low income housing at costs of \$50,000-300,000 per unit in Portland. But we do not have enough money to quickly house 2000 people at those costs. But we could move those people from tents to extreme low Income housing (ELIH) at a cost of well under \$2,000 per home in quantity.



Such housing was used for about 16,000 people in San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake. They were amazingly similar to today's *Tiny House* movement.

They built 5600 of these tiny homes that housed 16,000 people. One report says the size was 10 X 14 feet, consisting of two or three rooms, and a gas connection. A second larger unit was reported at 14' wide and 18' deep

Although these units did not have plumbing or electricity, they would be a big step up for the homeless currently living in tents and improvised tents. Similar units are available off the shelf from several manufacturers, frequently sold as garden sheds for about \$1500 for 10 x 14 feet. The cost of land would be the largest single cost.



Time after time, we do nothing because of the cost - here is a low cost solution that could be implemented today! The ONLY obstacle is government regulations. And those who want to make millions building grand accommodations instead of something economical to get people into low cost permanent housing. Remember their current tents DO NOT have running water, electric hookups or sewer, so just a better shelter with minimal electricity for a light, TV, hot plate and refrigerator would be a huge improvement (one 15a circuit or extension cord). Using port-a-potties would also be a step up from their current situation.

Assuming 12 x 20 footprint which would include walk ways, that would be 180 units/acre or about 360 people/acre, a density that Metro should support. (A second larger unit was reported at 14' wide and 18' deep which would be only 87 units/acre or, perhaps, 170 people/acre.)

(Pictures from: <http://richmondsblog.com/2011/02/01/property-containing-1906-earthquake-shack-approved-for-demolition/>)