

**smarter homelessness:  
a HUMAN centered  
rethink.**

**JOSHUA JOY**



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**“There are 360 degrees,  
so why stick to one?”  
- Zaha Hadid**

## **THESIS STATEMENT**

**By Joshua Joy**

Homelessness is an issue that is suffered all across the nation. In almost every single city in America, there is some form of unhoused individuals that need to be cared for.

Include information about homelessness. Facts, figures and numbers specific to homelessness in Detroit will add context and help further the point of this topic.

There are government programs and facilities that homeless people can utilize, but even with these resources, relief is often not found. Use but after doing mass amounts of research, those facilities might not be all they are out to be. There needs to be a better answer to helping homeless people than building another shelter or soup kitchen. Companies like The Wave project in Detroit have started to use smart technology and rethink architectural solutions to better care for the everyday needs of homeless people. This thesis revolves around creating a new system of facilities similar to a fire station that could be implemented in other cities to help support their homeless populations. The idea is centered around a fleet of converted city buses that set up pop-up care villages for certain hours during the day to help provide medical, governmental, health, and hygiene support to homeless populations. There would need to be a central “Firehouse” facility to house, repair, and maintain the buses but this would be a system that allows for dignity, humanity, comfort, and compassion that was never felt by unhoused populations.

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SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
ARCH 5100-5200 / 5110-5210 MASTER THESIS STUDIO AND MASTER THESIS  
SUPPLEMENT  
FALL 2021 - WINTER 2022  
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**“No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.”  
- Alfred North Whitehead**



**‘we think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being UNWANTED, UNLOVED and UNCARED for is the greatest poverty.’**

**- Mother Teresa**

## **ABSTRACT**

smarter homelessness: a HUMAN centered rethink.

During the modern era of development in America, nearly 590,000 people nationwide experience some form of homelessness, the reality of the situation is that a certain number of individuals will experience homelessness especially in a city with infrastructure like Detroit.

On the surface, the solution for homeless individuals would simply be to construct a homeless shelter. However, an answer that provides a roof over their head and a bed to sleep in might not seem as simple as it is.

This is a quote from a homeless man - age 51 - who's been homeless in Detroit since 2009. This quote gives an insider's perspective into the true realities of homeless shelters in Detroit.

“The first one that I was in, I was attacked, beaten and robbed, the staff didn't care, people were bringing in drugs, people didn't care about it, the staff were engaging people in sex, and supporting people's habits while they were in there. I didn't feel like just because I had lost everything, I wasn't afraid of hitting rock bottom, because when you don't have anything then the major worry is over with. Now you know you aint got nothing, where do you go from there, go gotta start all over, but then you gotta formula a plan on how you're going to do it. So I decided I was going to be homeless on my own terms, I didn't need to go squeeze between two strangers who I didn't know, didn't know what was going on with them.”

## ABSTRACT

“Don't feel like you have to panic just because you lost everything and you feel like you need some place to be, there are things that are worse than just being outdoors.” This thesis will explore how smart-city infrastructure, technologies, and empathetic design can help mitigate the daily struggles that homeless populations have to battle.

Homeless people suffer from substance abuse, mental health issues, and lack basic day-to-day necessities which can be aided with the assistance of smart-technology and ethically driven design.

The beginning phases of the research process started by introducing the severity and scale of the homeless issue within the city of Detroit by interviewing real people within the city that experience homelessness on a nightly basis. The thesis is built to understand the true needs of real people experiencing homelessness by constructing a new smart city system of mobile renovated city buses that are converted to house showers, clinics, kitchens, and closets to help combat the day-to-day issues faced by the homeless populations in Detroit. The brilliance within the new smart technology is systematically based so as not to criminalize or intensify stresses on homeless populations. The simple goal and foundational premise sit upon developing a system that provides the homeless populations of Detroit with daily necessities.

**“Don't try to drive the homeless into places we find SUITABLE. Help them survive in places they find SUITABLE.”**

**- Daniel Quinn**



FIGURE 0.2 - Detroit Homelessness  
Frank Witsil Detroit Free Press <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2019/02/07/detroit-homeless-outrage-clean/2803019002/>

## THESIS PROPOSAL

Current day norms and ideals look at homeless populations as unwelcome in the public domain. Society tries to sweep away homeless people from the built environment with hostile and unwelcoming architectural design. How can we use smart-technology to flip architectural norms, allowing for a public space that invites the homeless and cares for their well-being? How can current day systematic smart city technologies flip culture norms and bring life saving facilities to the homeless rather than bringing the homeless to the life saving facilities.

This thesis employs smart-technology and empathetic design to implement interventions in the public domain to help counter the struggles felt by homeless populations in Detroit.

# INTRODUCTION



FIGURE 1.1 - Detroit Michigan - 2008  
Street off Woodward Ave. downtown Detroit 2008  
Shapiro, Sandra. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/469007748665287759/>



FIGURE 1.2 - Michigan's COVID-19  
Kristen Jordan Shamus - Christina Hall - John Wisely <https://www.freep.com/story/news/health/2021/03/25/michigan-covid-19-case-rate-second-worst-in-nation/6986599002/>

## HISTORY

The median household income in Detroit is \$27,838 per year which is roughly half of the statewide median income. The poverty rate in the city is twice the state poverty rate.

Compounding the struggle for many households, the average rent in Detroit increased by 26% from 2005 to 2016.

With so few financial resources at their disposal, Detroit families have a higher housing-cost burden than families in many other Michigan communities.

This results in many families, households and people ending up homeless and on the streets of Detroit." (MLPP)

Detroit has seen trying times during the economic downturn in 2008 when the housing, car, and banking markets all crashed, and more recently during the outbreak of the 2020 Corona Virus pandemic. Unemployment, lack of infrastructure, and housing, and a lack of social structure has brought this city to its knees and blighted the homeless populations within the city.

# HISTORY

“There has been a lot of discussion recently about the bankruptcy proceeding that Detroit is going through.

There is the story about globalization and foreign competition in the automobile market.

There is the story about right-to-work rules and the eroding competitiveness of union employment in northern states.

There is even the story about how the elimination of the gold standard killed Detroit.” (DOG)

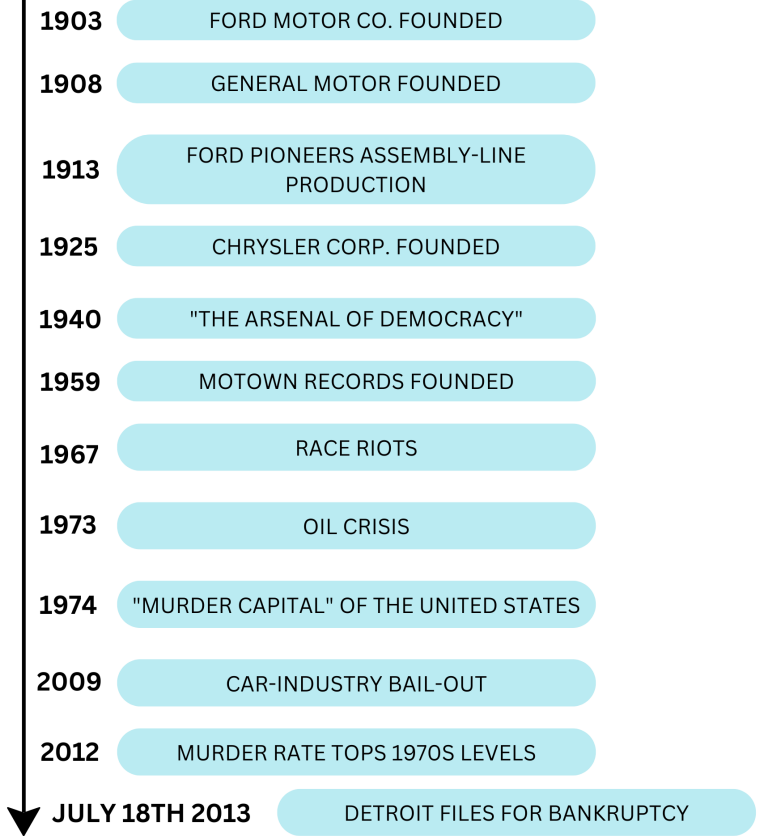


FIGURE 1.3 - JOHN SHARP - DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
 “The Scale of Detroit’s Problem.” John Sharp, <https://faculty.newpaltz.edu/johnsharp/index.php/2013/09/the-scale-of-detroits-problem/>.

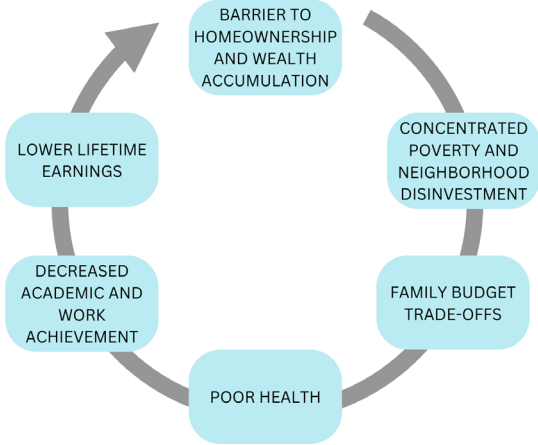


FIGURE 1.4 - MICHIGAN LEAGUE FOR PUBLIC POLICY  
 Cassidy, Julie. “Detroit: The Evolution of a Housing Crisis.” MLPP, MLPP, 3 June 2020, <https://mlpp.org/detroit-the-evolution-of-a-housing-crisis/>.



# BACKGROUND



FIGURE 2.1 - 2D2X3G9A makeshift homeless persons structure Limited, Alamy. "Detroit Homeless Hi-Res Stock Photography and Images." Alamy, <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/detroit-homeless.html?sort-By=relevant>.

## WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

This is what the state of michigan defines homelessness as.

"The state of Michigan defines homeless as an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and. adequate night-time residence.

This is an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings." (SOM)

For the process of this thesis, the definition that will be used to define homelessness is, a state or stage in one's life in which they lack the physical neccesities for daily function.

"Homeless." SOM - State of Michigan, <https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/homeless>.



FIGURE 2.2 - By William Brangham, Dorothy Hastings  
"Homelessness." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/tag/homelessness>.

## CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF HOMELESSNESS

Some of the most common causes of homelessness include,

- Breakdown of families
- Veterans with disability
- Unemployment
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Mental health illness

All of these can result in an individual experiencing,

- Mental, physical, emotional damage
- Suffering large scale long term diseases
- Low self-esteem
- Behavioral issues
- Care for themselves
- Lack of human decency

"Community Impacts of Homelessness." DRC Solutions, 14 Sept. 2021, <https://drc-solutions.org/community-impacts-of-homelessness/#:~:text=Homelessness%20puts%20people%20a%20higher,a%20host%20of%20other%20issues>.



# TOPIC AND SCOPE



Image of Hidden Homelessness. 62% of homelessness is hidden.

FIGURE 3.1 - By LaunchPad  
"Types of Homelessness." Launchpad, 16 Sept. 2020, <https://launchpadreading.org.uk/homelessness/types-of-homelessness/>.

## TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS

There are four main types of homelessness.

The first of which is **TRANSITIONAL** homelessness. This is a state of homelessness that results from a major life change or catastrophic event

The second type of homelessness is **EPISODIC** homelessness. This is when a person is currently unhoused or has experienced at least three periods of homelessness within the last 12 months

There is also **CHRONIC** homelessness. This is an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been homeless for more than one year

The final type of homelessness is **HIDDEN** homelessness. These are individuals who live with others temporarily without a permanent home

"What Are the Four Types of Homelessness?" Red Nose Day USA, <https://rednoseday.org/news/what-are-four-types-homelessness>.



FIGURE 3.2 & 3.3 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

Images shows the progression of homelessness between Sept. 2009 and Oct. 2021 at the 8 Mile and Woodward overpass.

# METHODS AND PROCESS

## HOMELESSNESS IN DETROIT

As of 2022, there were 1,691 homeless people living in Detroit, 351 of which are under the age of 18.

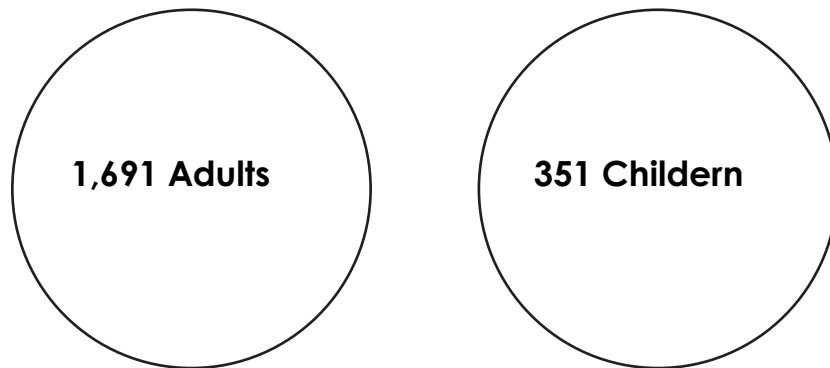


Figure 3.4 - Hand Detroit  
"Reports." Homeless Action Network of Detroit, <https://www.handetroit.org/reports>.

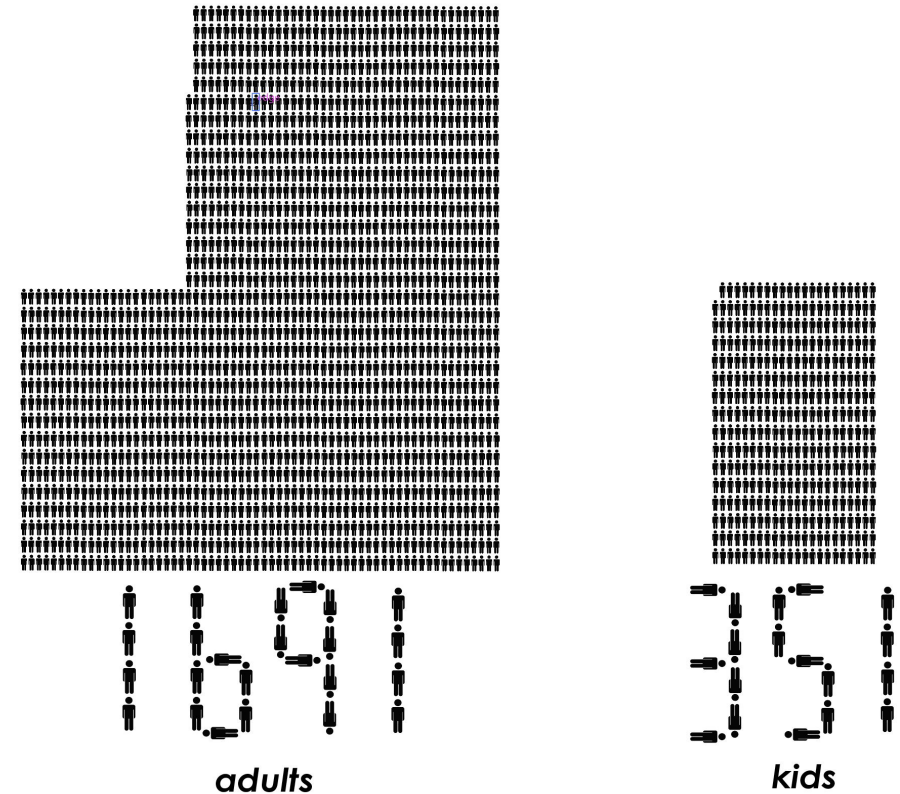


FIGURE 3.5 - Adults and Kids Diagram

The diagram above shows the scale and size of the homeless situation that currently exists within the city.

## SOUP KITCHENS AND HOMELESS SHELTERS

Being that this thesis revolves around investigating multiple types of homelessness, it would be a very helpful resource to reach out to homeless shelters in the surrounding Metro Detroit area.

Another place of interest that is a great source of information during the course of these thesis investigations is soup kitchens in the surrounding area. Not only are soup kitchens a place for homeless people to take refuge but it also focuses on a holistic form of helping the homeless as most soup kitchens in the Metro Detroit Area are housed within churches.

According to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen Meal Program, there is no eligibility criteria to receive a meal and meals are served in spacious, clean settings. There are also social workers and chaplains available.

To the left are the homeless shelters and locations within the city and on the next page is a deep analysis of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

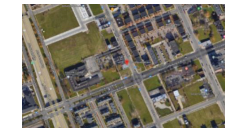
313-309-5900  
GENUINE HOUSE 2  
FAMILY SHELTER  
12900 W Chicago, Detroit, MI  
48227



COTS  
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
26 Peterboro St Suite 100, Detroit,  
MI 48201



313-993-4700  
DETROIT RESCUE MISSION  
MR. FEILDS AND MR. RICHARDSON  
3535 3rd Ave, Detroit, MI 48201



313-463-2000  
COVENANT HOUSE  
CYNTHIA ADAMS  
2959 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd,  
Detroit, MI 48208

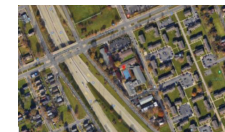


FIGURE 4.1 - 4.2 - 4.3 & 4.4 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>



## SOUP KITCHENS AND HOMELESS SHELTERS



"Our two meal program sites are open to all, free of charge, serving full-course, nutritious meals to men, women, and children each day. There is no eligibility criteria, and meals."

"Capuchin Soup Kitchen." Capuchin Soup Kitchen -, <https://www.cskdetroit.org/>.

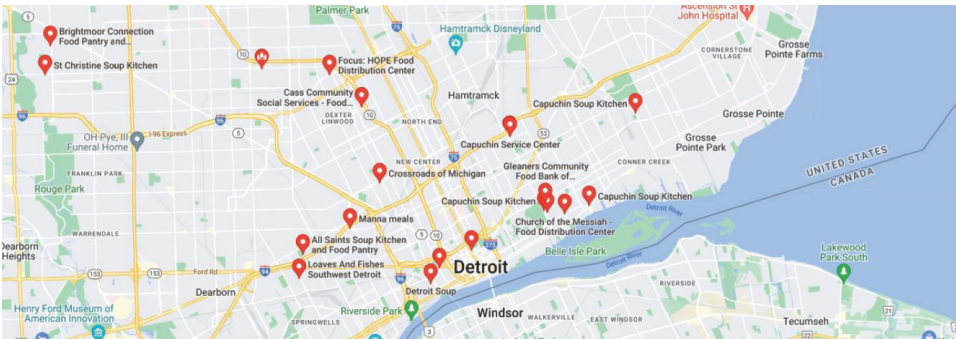


FIGURE 4.5 & 4.6 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

MELDRUM  
Breakfast  
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Monday through Friday

313-579-2100  
CAPUCHIN SOUP KITCHEN  
MELDRUM MEAL PROGRAM SITE  
1264 Meldrum St Detroit, MI 48207

Lunch  
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

CONNER  
Breakfast  
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Monday through Saturday

313-822-8606  
CAPUCHIN SOUP KITCHEN  
CONNER MEAL PROGRAM SITE  
4390 Conner St Detroit, MI 48215

Lunch  
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Monday through Saturday

Dinner  
4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (carry-out only)  
Monday through Friday  
(no dinner on Saturdays)

Social workers and chaplain are available

"Capuchin Soup Kitchen." Capuchin Soup Kitchen -, <https://www.cskdetroit.org/>.

# INTERVIEWS FROM 2017

## INTERVIEWS WITH REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCING REAL HOMELESSNESS

Facts and statistics are a great place to start but with a problem so complex as homelessness, facts and statistics only go so far. If the goal of this thesis is to find the true solution to homelessness, the next step would be to hear about what homelessness is like from the source.

Jay Lange is a YouTuber that create a series of interviews with real people who experience homelessness in the city of Detroit on a day-to-day basis.

These videos are a collection of 3 interviews with 3 different people in Detroit. Everyone knows the Woodward overpass over 8 mile, all three of these gentleman lived under that over pass for sometime. Each interview offers a different point of view into the truth behind the homeless situation in Detroit. What follows is a series of questions and answers from those interviews.

**YOUTUBE - JAY LANGE**

## Episode 1

# Dale



FIGURE 5.1 - Jay Lange  
"Interviewing the Homeless of Detroit | Episode 1 Dale." YouTube, YouTube, 6 Oct. 2016,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qf1PXqNa7M>.

## INTERVIEWS WITH REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCING REAL HOMELESSNESS

The first interview was with a man named Dale and an important quote that stood out during his interview read,

Q: How did you find this spot.

**A: "I was just walking by one day, saw a bunch of homeless people. I started talking to a homeless guy n he says go get a poster n stand on 8 mile so I did. I think I made like \$15 in 7 hours that day, and I was like ight that's cool's so I just kept doing it and doing it. I've been able to make it without doing nothing wrong, I haven't had to steal nothing, I haven't had to do nothing bad. I just get what I need to get by."**



## Episode 2

# Jacob



FIGURE 5.2 - Jay Lange  
"Interviewing the Homeless of Detroit | Episode 2 William." YouTube, YouTube, 1 Nov. 2016,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRs02YefT4M>.

## INTERVIEWS WITH REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCING REAL HOMELESSNESS

The second interview was with a man named William and an important quote that stood out during his interview read,

Q: What do homeless people need the most?  
(William)

**A: "Compassion and understanding and consideration. Cuz there is gonna be all types of people that you're going to find in the homeless population. From the educated all the way to the uneducated. From someone on drugs to someone who lost everything in the stock market. The homeless population is representative of all people."**

## Episode 3

# Jessie



FIGURE 5.3 - Jay Lange  
"Interviewing the Homeless of Detroit Episode 3 | Jessie." YouTube, YouTube, 25 Nov. 2016,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrJKOJ8yI5M>.

## INTERVIEWS WITH REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCING REAL HOMELESSNESS

The third interview was with a man named Jessie and an important quote that stood out during his interview read,

q: Where do you live? (Jessie)

**A: "I've been homeless quite a while now. I used to say up there under the bridge right there. I stayed in three, four of these empty houses over here. I've been frostbite up here, I've had my eye put out up here, car jumped the curb and run me over. I lost an inch and a half of my leg up here."**

# INTERVIEWS FROM 2023

## INTERVIEWS WITH REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCING REAL HOMELESSNESS

The videos provided by Jay Lange on youtube are great sources of information, but they are all range from 5-7 years old. This was all before the outbreak of COVID-19. and the goal of this thesis was to get a first hand look at the **CURRENT** homeless situation in Detroit. The next course of action was, after viewing the videos on youtube, to set out with a camera and a questionnaire to hopefully gain insight into the truth behind the homeless situation in Detroit from my own lense.

A very interesting point in the analysis is that Jay Lange did his interviews in 2017 and while conducting the interviews from this thesis, a person who was interviewed then was actually interviewed again, 5 years later. All the these interviews were conducted along 8 Mile. Some were conducted at 8 Mile and Woodward and some were at 8 Mile and Interstate 75.

**INTERVIEWS  
CONDUCTED DURING THE  
RESEARCH PROCESS OF  
THIS THESIS**

# **METHODS AND PROCESS**

**CONTEXT AND ENVIROMENTAL  
CONDITIONS**

*Hi, My name is Josh Joy and this is my co-worker Jahlil Stockard. We attend the University of Detroit Mercy as architecture students. We are currently doing our graduate thesis on helping homeless people and would love to conduct an interview with you. The interview asks you personal questions about your situation and we would be more than happy to pay you \$5 for your time. We can do it anonymously but if you don't mind, I would love to share your uncut, unedited story as real as it possibly could be. Would you be interested? No, well thank you so much and have a wonderful day and God bless.*

1. What is your first name, how old are you, and where are you from?
2. How long have you been homeless in Detroit?
3. Do you suffer from any health problems? (Would you consider yourself in good health?)
4. Do you have any form of personal I.D?
5. Do you have a permanent mailing address?
6. Do you have a cell phone or any other form of technology? If not, do you think a cell phone would be useful to you to make your life easier?
  - a. Do you have social media accounts?
  - b. Do you have a digital profile?
  - c. Do you use your cell phone to find out things or do you use it to communicate with people?
7. Where do you typically get your food from? How did you get there and Why did you choose that location?
8. (Can you get drinking water?)(Do you have access to fresh clean drinking water?)  
Where do you typically get your drinking water from? How and Why?
9. Where do you typically rest at night? How and Why?
10. Where do you poop, pee, shower and conduct your everyday hygiene? How and Why is that location?
11. Where do you get your clothes from? How and Why?
12. What does your daily schedule consist of on an average day?
13. Where do you spend most of your time? Why?
14. Do you ever go to homeless shelters? And if so in what situations would you go to a homeless shelter or stay on the streets?
15. Do you feel safe? What do you think would help you feel more safe on the streets?
16. What is the hardest everyday struggle you face?
17. What is the best thing that happened to you this week?

With regards to the questionnaire that would be asked to the people experiencing homelessness, the goal was not want to make it too long nor was the goal to make the questions too personal. Respectively, there was a need for certain and some personal information to be able to understand their way of life and their basic day-to-day necessities. For the purposes of this book, their names and faces have been redacted. Above is the actually questionnaire that was used during the interview process.

## 8 Mile and I-75



FIGURE 6.1 - Bridge 1



FIGURE 6.2 - Bridge 2



FIGURE 6.3 - Bridge 3

Before we start with the interview questions and answers, there needs to be some context surrounding the conditions that the people that were interviewed face on a day to day basis. Most of the people that were interviewed either slept under the overpass of I-75 and 8 Mile or Woodward and 8 Mile. Some even used abandoned houses due to their abundance in the area.



# 8 Mile and Woodward



FIGURE 6.4 - Bridge 4



FIGURE 6.5 - Bridge 5

# Abandoned House Near 8 Mile



FIGURE 6.7 - Bridge 7

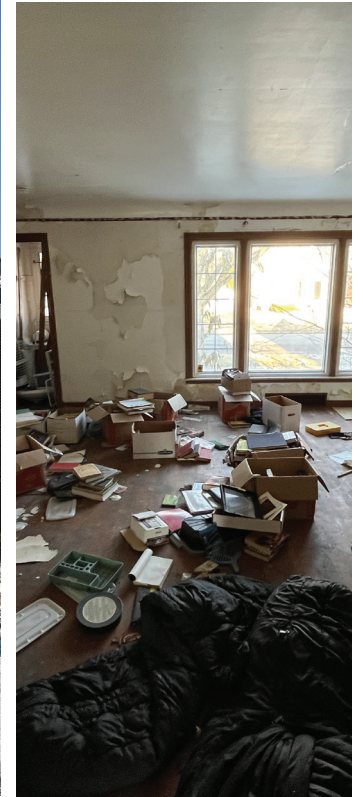


FIGURE 6.8 - Bridge 8



FIGURE 6.6 - Bridge 6



FIGURE 6.9 - Bridge 9



FIGURE 6.10 - Bridge 10



# **METHODS AND PROCESS**

**INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE IN DETROIT  
WHO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS  
ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS**



# SUSAN

AGE 32

FIGURE 7.1 - Susan



# JACOB

AGE 51

FIGURE 7.2 - Jacob



# THOMAS

AGE 35

FIGURE 7.3 - Thomas



# STEVE

AGE 35

FIGURE 7.4 - Steve



# ERIC

AGE 36

FIGURE 7.5 - Eric



## INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE IN DETROIT WHO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS

I had the privilege of interviewing 5 people during the course of my research.

They were all interview along 8 mile, some at 1-75 and some at Woodward.

They range in age from 32-51.

4/5 have no form of formal ID

3/5 we not sober

2/5 had a working cell phone

And All of them lived either in abandoned houses or under the overpass at 75 or Woodward.

But surprisingly 4/5 felt safe on the streets.

During the interview process I was also exposed to the environment in which homeless individuals live, sleep, and eat.

What follows is a collection of question and answer presponses form those whom I interviewed.

# SUSAN

AGE 32

Where do you rest/sleep?

***"We live in an abandoned house, we can get mail there if you consider that a mailing address. It depends on the carrier, some will deliver there and some won't."***

Have you ever thought about going to a rehabilitation center?

***"Umm. I would but it's an issue of getting on the drug. It's the buer period between being able to take the medication and being sick, that's really why I'm still here, that's why I think most of us are still here. We don't want to go through withdrawals and we don't have a segway for that 3-4 day period where you have to be sick before you can take the medication."***

Have you ever been to a homeless shelter?

***"No, I mean I would check it out, but I'm not really sure that it would have much more than what I can prodive myself out here I guess."***



FIGURE 7.6 - Susan large





# JACOB

## AGE 51

What are your thoughts on homeless shelters? Have you ever been to a homeless shelter in the city?

*"It's not for everybody, the first one that I was in, I was attacked, beaten and robbed, the sta didn't care, people were bringing in drugs, people didn't care about it, the sta were engaging people in s\*x, and supporting people's habits while they were in there. I didn't feel like just because I had lost everything, I wasn't afraid of hitting rock bottom, because when you don't have anything then the major worry is over with. Now you know you aint got nothing, where do you go from there, go gotta start all over, but then you gotta formula a plan on how you're going to do it. So I decided I was going to be homeless on my own terms, I didn't need to go squeeze between two strangers who I didn't know, didn't know what was going on with them.*

*"And then the second one I was in, two guys tried to r\*pe me, you know so its not for me, it caused me more problems than it ever did help me. I'm not gonna knock them all but at least the ones that i've experienced, they were corrupt and i'm like its gotta be pervasive, I've never tried to talk anyone else out of it, I always try to tell someone maybe you outta research it, find out what's going on there before you go into on but don't feel like you have to panic just because you lost every and you feel like you need some place to be, there are things that are worse than just being outdoors."*

What keeps you motivated?

*"When you engage a person, that keeps them tethered to society and to reality and keeps them from just giving up on themselves because the longer your isolated you being to give up on yourself and once you start believing that no one really gives a damn, and you've been out here going on 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 years being out here and no one has even tried to lift a finger to help you really."*



# THOMAS

## AGE 35

What does your daily schedule consist of?

***“My daily schedule is to get up, get as much money as I can out here, see we used to clear anywhere from a hundred to a hundred and twenty a day, now I'm lucky to make 50 a day, because the way inflation went up, the stock market crashed 900 points last year. So Just get as much money as we can out here, and then once the sun goes down it's pretty much done and we just go back to our bandos and rest up till next morning.”***

Where do you sleep/rest?

***“We sleep in abandoned houses out here in Detroit, some people will go to an abandoned house and claim it, now that's my abandoned house, you know not to f\*ck around over there, you know stu like that. It's like a subculture. It like lets say i go to this corner everyday at 3 o'clock and you're on that corner, you're gonna have to move or I'm gonna have to move you.”***

Have you ever been to a homeless shelter in the city?

***“No because you gotta be there at a certain time to get there and then they kick you out during the day, it just seems like more of a hassle. I'm more free in abandoned houses.”***

FIGURE 7.8 - Thomas large





# ERIC

AGE 36

Do you have any major health problems?

***“No major health problems but I got abscesses. You know it's hard when you're homeless. Like right now I got an infection on my leg that's pretty swollen. I gotta go to the hospital soon.”***

Where do you get your clothes from?

***“Donation bins. Everything I got on right now is from donation bins. Everything from head to toe, bags and everything.”***

Have you ever been to a homeless shelter in the city?

***“Yea, I have but I don't like how they treat people there. It's almost like being in jail, I don't like being locked down. I'm not out here doing anything reckless, or putting people in harm's way or harming people, so going to a homeless shelter, for someone to tell me what to do on a daily basis, I'm not feeling it.”***

FIGURE 7.9- Eric large



# STEVE

## AGE 35

Where do you get your fresh water and food from?

***“Actually there is this building over here that got a spigot coming out of it, a brand new spigot, that's where I get my fresh water from. For food, people will donate food but if not I'll take the money to go get food.”***

What does your daily schedule consist of?

***“Standing out here with a sign. I can work, ya know, I am able to work, but as of right now I don't have my ID to work. I have people driving by giving me their business cards from companies and I call them but they need the id. So I need to get my birth certificate and social security card. I just lost my dad November second, so we lost the family home, ya know. My family kind of ransacked the house, and that's where my social security and birth certificate are and I can't find it.”***

Have you ever thought about going to a homeless shelter in the city?

***“Yes, yes I have. I haven't gone but I have thought about it. Why haven't you gone? I just don't know where they're at. “If you knew where they were you would go?” yes, I would, especially right now (It was snowing bad during the interview).”***

Out of all 5 of the interviews that were conducted, this gentleman was the only person who had any interest in going to homeless shelters or receiving help. This gentleman lost his father the year before and had lost everything. He had only become homeless within the last six months and had no grasp of the true issues that take place within a homeless shelter. This influenced the thesis design by influencing the design solution, creating the model of bringing necessities to homeless populations rather than bringing homeless populations to the life-saving necessities.



FIGURE 7.10 - Steve large

# **METHODS AND PROCESS**

**HOMELESS SHELTERS ARE NOT THE  
SOLUTION, SO WHAT IS?**



**MENTAL HEALTH  
SUD (SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER)  
HEAT STROKE  
PLACE TO REST  
SOCKS  
COVER/SHELTER  
SANITIZER  
BATHROOM FACILITIES  
FOOD  
CLOTHES  
MAIL  
TOILETRIES  
DOMESTIC ABUSE  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION  
DISABILITY  
LINGUISTIC BARRIERS  
ILLITERACY  
FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS  
REUSEABLE CONTAINERS  
STORAGE  
PET FOOD  
BABY SUPPLIES  
RAIN GEAR  
INEBRIATION  
FLASHLIGHTS  
SUNSCREEN  
GLOVES  
HEAT/COOL  
FROSTBITE**

**problem?**  
homelessness

## **SOLUTION**

### **SMART-CITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

Now that we've mentioned the problem let's talk about the solution.

After watching countless interviews with homeless people, going to homeless shelters and soup kitchens, and conducting interviews of my own, I come up with a very basic list of fundamental necessities that homeless people lack in their every day day-to-day life.

This list is what was used to understand what systems can be implemented to help benefit homeless populations.

This is the point in the thesis process in which a turn was made. The decision was made to use smart city technology as the basis for strategies that could help better the lives of unhouse individuals.

# RESULTS

## S.M.A.R.T.

So what is smart city technology. Well let's start with the word "smart". Smart stands for **self monitoring analysis reporting technology**.

Generically speaking, this refers to the idea that smart technologies provide cognitive awareness to objects that were in the past considered inanimate.

But the idea was not just to use this approach for technology. The concept is to also take the same applied principle and appropriate it to architectural and community driven systems.

Figure 8.1 - Petra Industries  
"What Is Smart Technology?" Wholesale Distributor | Petra Industries, 6 Apr. 2022. <https://www.petra.com/blog/what-is-smart-technology/>.

**S**<sub>elf</sub>

**M**onitoring

**A**nalysis

**R**eporting

**T**echnology

COMMUNITY DRIVEN

TECHNOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE

## ARCHITECTURE PRECEDENT

Looking at some of the precedents that were selected, they were split up into three categories architectural, technology based, and community driven, but all precedents help and benefit homeless populations in some way or another. These precedents were taken from all over the globe ranging from Germany to San Francisco California.

### Ulmer Nests

The timber pod serves as an emergency shelter to protect homeless people from bitterly cold winter weather. The nest is described as a 'last resort'. Rather than spending a night in the freezing cold sleeping on a park bench or on the street, the pod provides a means of protection against the elements.

### Urban Shell

Urban Shell Shelter has been developed to work as a shelter for changing weather conditions. During the night or in cold weather environments, the trolley is placed against a corner protecting the user from rain, wind or snow. The roof cover keeps the safe from water or snow while its lateral covering panels keep them protected from the wind, creating a warm and cozy shelter. During the day or in hot weather conditions its roof protects them from sunlight, while its open structure lets the air pass through, keeping them fresh and comfortable inside.

### weatherHDYE Tent

weatherHYDE is the world's first all-weather, life-saving shelter for the homeless and vulnerable. Its inception was triggered by the tragic 2013 India riots, where 30 displaced children died from hypothermia. After analysing the limited solutions out there, we set out to create something better - a standalone shelter that prevents weather deaths.

### Vancouver Anti-Anti Homeless Benches

The benches could be transformed into a temporary shelter, with a roof, and contained a message with contact information for Raincity - a non-profit which attempts to provide housing for people living with mental health issues, addiction and other challenges



FIGURE 8.2 - Ulmer Nest  
designboom, lynne myers l. "Ulmer Nest Is a Solar-Powered Sleeping Pod to Protect Homeless People in Winter." Designboom, 2 Feb. 2021, <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/ulmer-nest-solar-powered-shelter-protect-homeless-people-in-winter-02-03-2021/>.



FIGURE 8.3 - Vancouver Anti-Anti Homeless Benches  
Taube, Aaron. "These Bus Benches Transform into Homeless Shelters in a Matter of Seconds." Business Insider, Business Insider, <https://www.businessinsider.com/these-bus-benches-turn-into-homeless-shelters-2014-7>.

## TECHNOLOGY PRECEDENT



FIGURE 8.4 - Empower Coat  
"The Coat." EMPOWERMENT PLAN, <https://www.empowermentplan.org/the-coat>.



FIGURE 8.5 - LinkNYC  
Intersection. LinkNYC, <https://www.link.nyc/>.

### Stockholm's Homeless Billboards

Clear Channel, owner of Stockholm's kiosks, partnered with the city government to develop an awareness campaign that replaces commercial advertisements with maps of local homeless shelters and information about how people can volunteer and donate.

### The EMPWR Coat

Our innovative and weather-resistant EMPWR coat can transform into a sleeping bag or be worn as an over-the-shoulder bag. A donation of 5150 provides one of our coats to someone in need

### LinkNYC

LinkNYC is a first-of-its-kind communications network that has replaced pay phones across the five boroughs. Each LinkNYC structure provides super-fast, free public Wi-Fi, phone calls, device charging, and a tablet for access to city services, maps, and directions. LinkNYC is completely free because it's funded through advertising.

### University of Texas BlockChain Identity

Researchers at the University of Texas in Austin aim to use blockchain technology to help homeless people access health care by verifying their identity and sharing it securely throughout a health services network.



# COMMUNITY DRIVEN PRECEDENTS

## Detroit Community Refrigerators

Started amid the pandemic by two college students, Detroit Community Fridge now works with 50 volunteers to manage four fridges stocked daily with donated food.

## Clothes Donation Bins

A clothing bin is a container in which clothing is placed to be donated to charity organizations or for recycling in other ways. They are typically provided by the charities themselves or by local authorities. Bins are often vandalized or filled with unsuitable materials.

## Lava Mae Mobile Showers

Lava Mae has many models within these programs--which include mobile showers, Pop-Up Care Villages, and DIY handwashing stations--with our on-street services in San Francisco, Oakland and Los Angeles that restores dignity, rekindles optimism, and fuels a sense of opportunity.

## New York Overdose Prevention Center

Overdose prevention centers (OPCs) are vital in the fight against overdose deaths and are proven to stop a fatal overdose. OPCs provide a sanctioned, safe space for people to consume pre-obtained drugs in controlled settings under the supervision of trained staff and with access



FIGURE 8.6 - Lava Mae Mobile Showers  
LavaMae, <https://lavamaex.org/>.



FIGURE 8.7 - DOH NY State  
"Department of Health." New York State's Opioid Overdose Prevention Program. [https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid\\_overdose\\_prevention/](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid_overdose_prevention/).

# DISCUSSION

Being that we've looked certain precedent studies from all over the world, the next stage was to cross analyze the precedents against each other. This diagram was created which was used to break down specifically which elements of each precedent helped homeless people and how they specifically they did that.

The creation of a set of variables to use a metrics of measurement was vital to the success of this diagram. The variables were chosen as they encompassed the aspects for a correct solution to the needs of homeless people. The variables that were chosen include **privacy, health, dignity, comfortability, agency or an individuals power, humanity, and protection.**

## PRECEDENT ANALYSIS

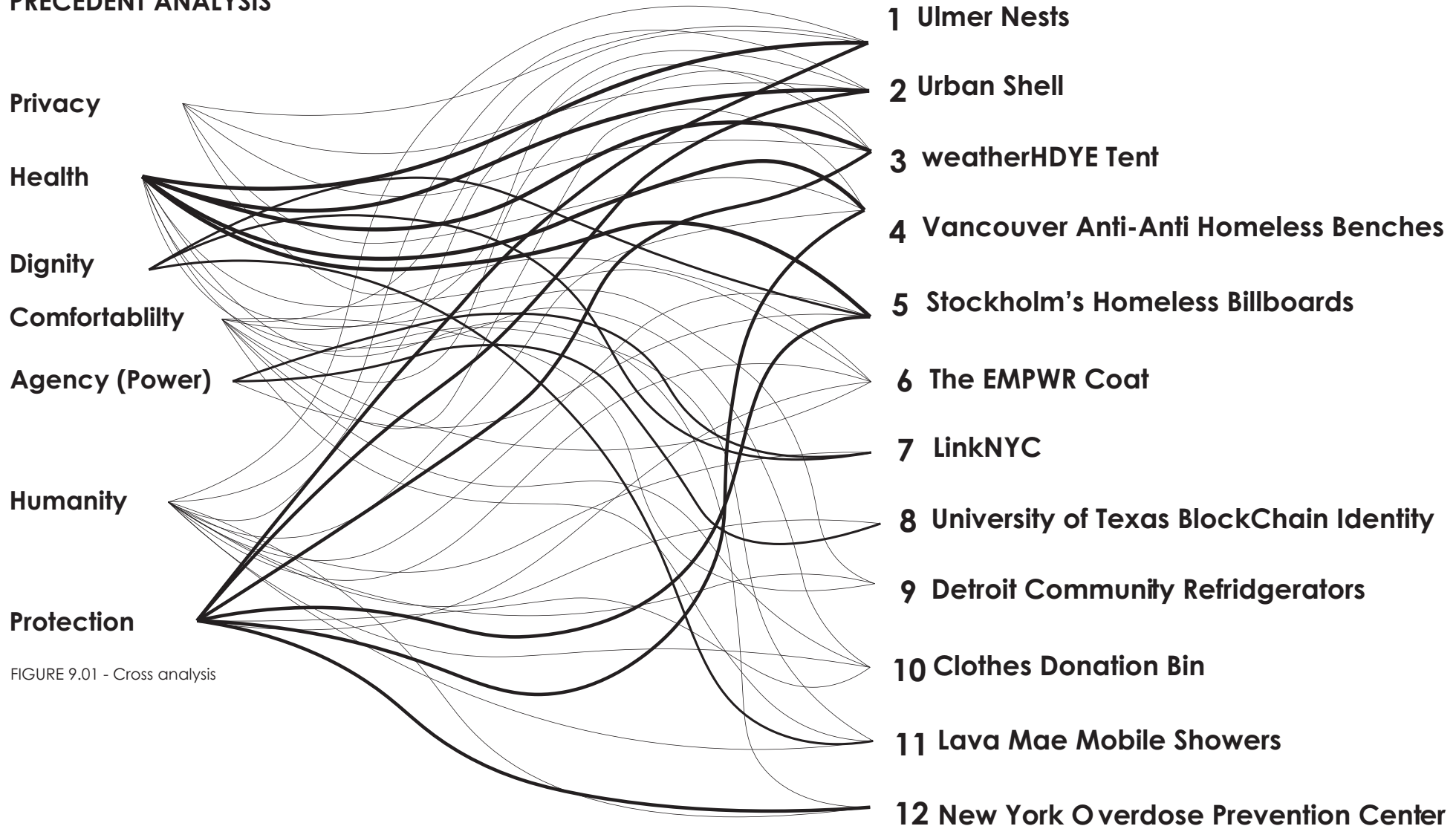


FIGURE 9.01 - Cross analysis

# CONCLUSION

## PRECEDENT CROSS ANALYSIS

The next section of the thesis consisted of looking at how the precedent studies compared to the variables in which a pattern was noticed. The pattern that was realized mentioned that architectural precedents mostly supported **comfortability, privacy and, protection.**

While, after consideration and analysis, the technology based precedents were best at providing homeless people with **dignity and agency.**

The final conclusion that was drawn from the precedent cross analysis was that the community driven precedence focuses on a homeless person's **humanity and health.**

All these precedents have their own individual way of helping homeless people in their day-to-day, every day life, but what follows is the analysis of each individual precedent to see how and why each were successful in their own right



FIGURE 9.1 - Lava Mae Mobile Showers  
LavaMae, <https://lavamae.org/>.

## COMMUNITY DRIVEN

### Detroit Community Refrigerators

*Humanity*  
*Comfortability*  
*Health*

Community fridges sprung up all over the nation during the pandemic, but they also started in Detroit. This is another form of connecting those who want to help with those in need. Some people may feel embarrassed to ask for food. Not anymore!

### Lava Mae Mobile Showers

*Humanity*  
*Health*  
*Protection*

A portion of homeless people use drugs and/or alcohol. Whether it be a coping mechanism or a substance abuse issue, it is very hard for people to get off. OPCs give people a safe, clean, and supervised environment to slowly move themselves off.

### New York Overdose Prevention Center

*Humanity*  
*Health*  
*Comfortability*  
*Dignity*

It is understood that homeless people need access to bathroom facilities, but basic necessities can jump start a person's outlook on life. It can change the way they feel and enable a new lifestyle. They also provide pop-up healthcare.

### Clothes Donation Bins

*Humanity*  
*Health*  
*Comfortability*  
*Protection*

Similar to the community fridges, clothes donation bins eliminate any embarrassment felt when someone asks for clothing or something warm. This connects those who want to help to the homeless/charity.





FIGURE 9.2 - Empower Coat  
 "The Coat." EMPOWERMENT PLAN, <https://www.empowermentplan.org/the-coat>.



FIGURE 9.3 - LinkNYC  
 Intersection. LinkNYC, <https://www.link.nyc/>.

## TECHNOLOGY

### The EMPWR Coat

*Humanity*  
*Comfortability*  
*Health*  
*Privacy*  
*Protection*

This jacket and moreover the company shows a connection linking people who want to help with homeless people, rather than linking the homeless to the people who can help.

### LinkNYC

*Humanity*  
*Agency(Power)*  
*Dignity*

LinkNYC is completely free due to the fact that they run advertisements on the side of the WiFi kiosk. This means no barrier to free, reliable, internet.

### University of Texas BlockChain Identity

*Humanity*  
*Agency(Power)*

The U of T has created a blockchain database that uses biometrics to identify homeless people who may have lost or misplaced their identification. This grants them access to mail centers, hospitals, banks, and other government institutions.

### Stockholm's Homeless Billboards

*Humanity*  
*Dignity*  
*Health*  
*Agency (Power)*  
*Protection*

A large number of homeless people want help but don't know where to go or don't know how or who to reach out to. This allows anyone in the direct sight of the sign access to people and institutions that can help.

# ARCHITECTURE

## Vancouver Anti-Anti Homeless Benches`

Humanity  
Comfortability  
Health  
Privacy  
Protection

It also raises awareness with text that during the day read, "THIS IS A BENCH," and at night, said in glow-in-the-dark font, "THIS IS A BEDROOM."

## weatherHDYE Tent

Humanity  
Comfortability  
Health  
Privacy  
Protection

The structure is built to keep occupants cool/warm with insulating material. It has a flexible, lightweight design.

## Ulmer Nests

Humanity  
Comfortability  
Health  
Privacy  
Protection

The design is fitted out with all the necessary tech, including a heat exchanger to supply fresh air, GPS sensors, smoke alarms, and a motion detection system.

## Urban Shell

Humanity  
Comfortability  
Health  
Privacy  
Protection

Urban Shell has the added value of an external core that works as a structure for hanging and arranging extra belongings or simply keeping them handy.



FIGURE 9.4 - Ulmer Nest designboom, lynne myers I. "Ulmer Nest Is a Solar-Powered Sleeping Pod to Protect Homeless People in Winter." Designboom, 2 Feb. 2021, <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/ulmer-nest-solar-powered-shelter-protect-homeless-people-in-winter-02-03-2021/>.



FIGURE 9.5 - Vancouver Anti-Anti Homeless Benches Taube, Aaron. "These Bus Benches Transform into Homeless Shelters in a Matter of Seconds." Business Insider, Business Insider, <https://www.businessinsider.com/these-bus-benches-turn-into-homeless-shelters-2014-7>.

# CONCLUSION

My variables include privacy, health, dignity, comfortability, agency or an individuals power, humanity, and protection.

The variables that were chosen were used due to the reason that they provided and justified a wholistic form of aid.

After conducting the cross analysis, a decision was made to use Lava Mae's Mobiles Showers as the basis for the thesis design. This decision was made due to the reason that they provided the best care when considering all the variables.

Lava mae is a company that uses renovated city buses to provided mobile showers for homeless populations in the Southern California region.

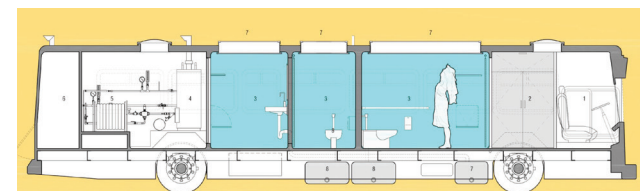
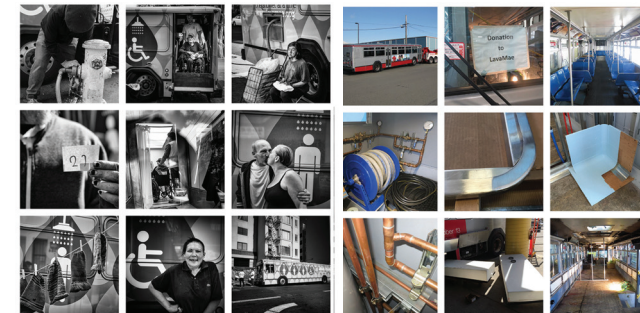
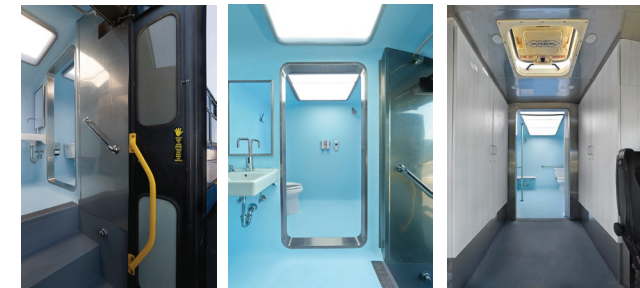
To begin the design process, the first step was to create and formula a concrete strategy that would take the ideals for California and adjust them to develop a smart city system for Detroit.

The first stage of the analysis started by critiquing the current system they had in place.

# STUDIOTERPELUK

Humanity  
Comfortability  
Health  
Dignity

It is understood that homeless people need access to bathroom facilities but basic necessities can jump start a person's outlook on life. It can change the way they feel and enable a new lifestyle. They also provide pop-up healthcare



1 DRIVER  
2 STORAGE  
3 BATHROOM  
4 BENCH  
5 FIRE HOSE  
6 SEAT  
7 SHOWER  
8 BLACKWATER TANK  
9 GREYWATER TANK

SECTION

LAVA MAE

0 2 4

FIGURE 9.6 - 9.7 - 9.8 - 9.9 - 9.10 - 9.11 - 9.12 - Lava Mae Mobile Showers  
LavaMae, <https://lavamae.org/>.



# DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**CRITIQUE OF MAIN PRECEDENT AND  
IMPLEMENTATION INTO DETROIT**

## CRITIQUE - STAGE 1

The goal was to set up the critique in 3 stages starting with the smart technology aspect of their project.

The first part of the analysis for the critique concerned the smart technology aspects behind the project. The main goal was to implement the smart technology through systematic smartness rather than physical integration like cameras, monitors, and sensors, as there was concern around creating an uncomfortable environment for homeless individuals who might feel criminalized with typical smart technology.

The systematic smartness would include things like...

- Help or call button on existing city bus stops that can be used to track frequency, time of day, and locations where people would need assistance.
- A cloud system to track and collect the data
- An app for those who might have a cell phone or access to one, to know about days and times when buses would be deployed
- Advertising, anything ranging from a billboard to a social media page.

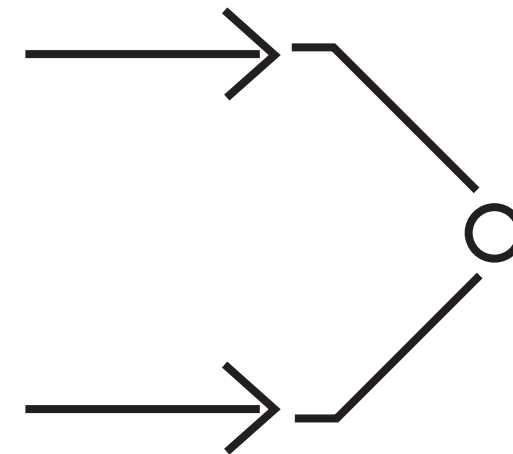


FIGURE 10.01 - Stage 1

## CRITIQUE - STAGE 2

The next stage of my critique looked at their method of physical intergration.

- This would be things like the bud floor plans and systems.
- Site pop up care villages
- City wide engagement

The majority of the city buses used by lava Mae only offer mobile showers so I wanted to consider a variety of buses that could be oriented towards...

- Kids or playgrounds
- Legal help and advice such as Social Security booths or mobile Secretary of State Offices
- Repair bus that can stitch, maintain, or repair a homeless individuals belongings.

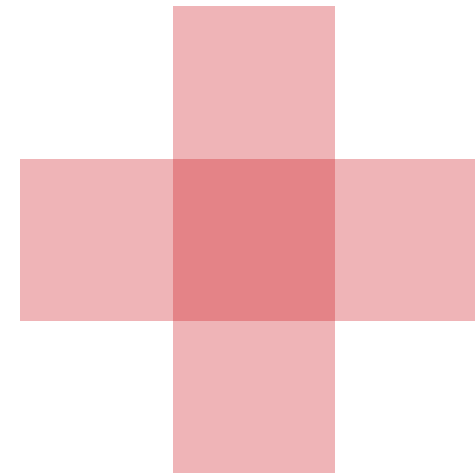


FIGURE 10.02 - Stage 2



### CRITIQUE - STAGE 3

The final stage would be necessities focused on day to day function. These would include maps and routing, timing and scheduling and the operation of a headquarters.

Being that this would be a fleet of buses operated throughout the city, there needs to be an established headquarters to maintain the system.

This building would not be occupied by homeless populations but rather be used by employees and volunteers to maintain the fleet.

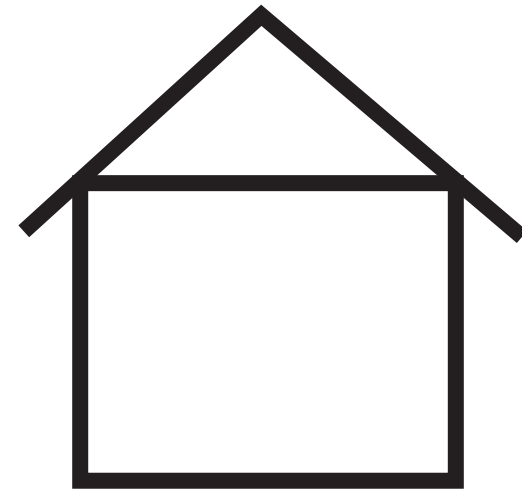


FIGURE 10.03 - Stage 3

## FIRE HOUSE INTERGRATION

At this point in the thesis process is when it shifted gears to look for a site for the headquarters and pop-up sites. The first idea that came to mind was to begin by looking at fire houses and fire stations.

I looked at fire stations in two different aspects, active and inactive firehouses.

The inactive fire houses could be used as a host for the headquarters or home base for the new system as they already have the framework and ground layout of a "help" facility.

The active firehouses would be used as locations where the buses could go set up pop up care villages.

Active fire stations are a common public place, that is already seen as a help facility and has set resources on site.

## SITE SELECTION - INACTIVE FIREHOUSES

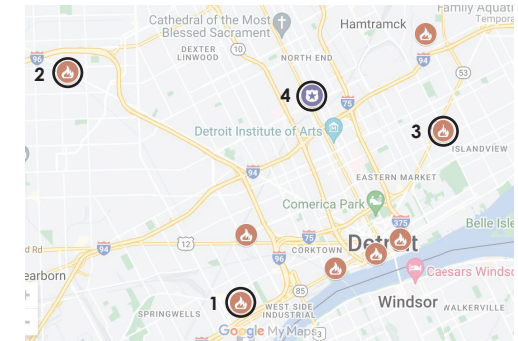
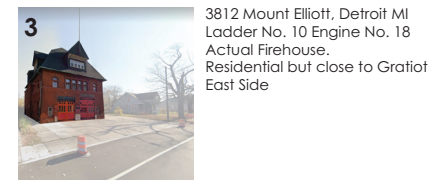
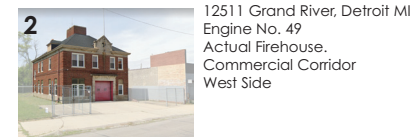


FIGURE 10.1 - 10.2 - 10.3 - 10.4 - 10.5 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

# DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**DESIGN CONCEPTS, SITE ANALYSIS,  
AND PROXIMITY TO AMMENITIES**



## THESIS DESIGN CONCEPTS

That brings us to the final design portion of the thesis processes.

This building was an inactive police stable that was used to care for horses that served in the Detroit Police Department.

The original structure of the building was much larger and had way more grander

There was an extension made during the 70s and 80s which is part of the current structure that remains

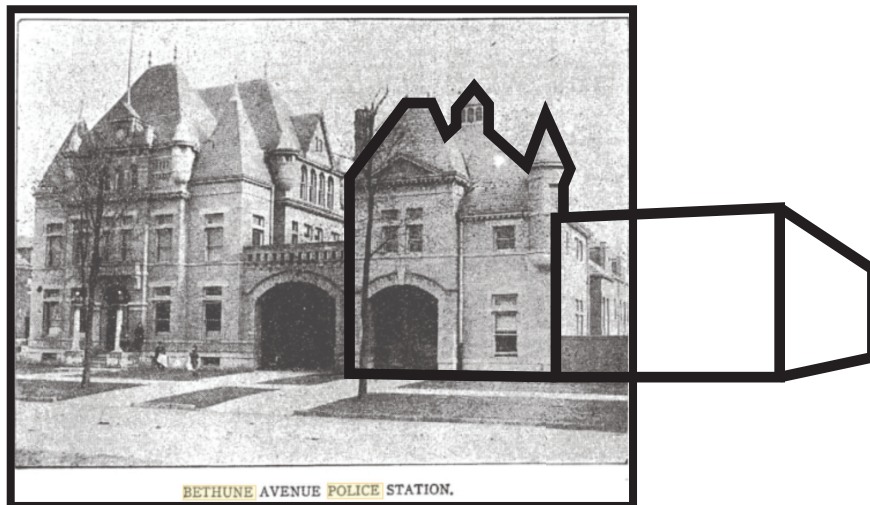


FIGURE 11.1 - All the King's Horses.  
"All the King's Horses." Nailhed, <https://www.nailhed.com/2017/04/all-kings-horses.html?m=1>.

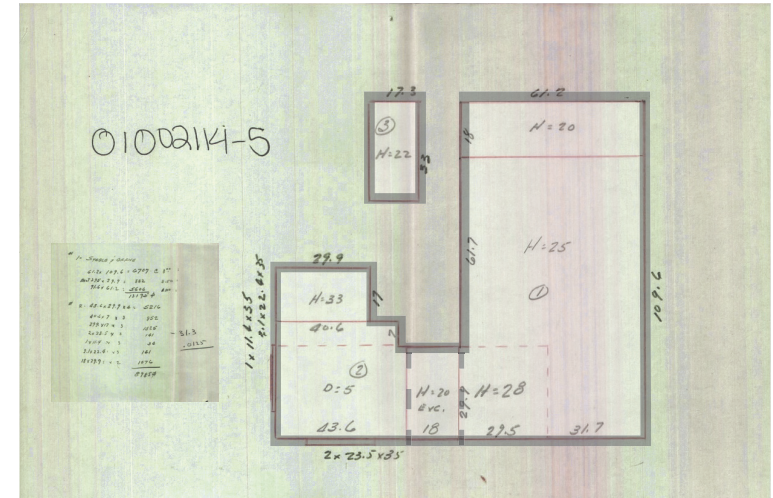


FIGURE 11.2 - All the King's Horses.  
"All the King's Horses." Nailhed, <https://www.nailhed.com/2017/04/all-kings-horses.html?m=1>.



FIGURE 11.3 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

# SITE LOCATION

The site is right off Woodward as that was the main artery through Detroit.

It also is situated between 8 miles and downtown as those were where homeless individuals congregate most.

This site is also close to local hospitals, food banks, soup kitchens, and transit as they would help massively getting supplies, personal, donations, or equipment too and from the site.

An important thing to mention is that the building itself is large enough to house the facilities for daily operation and the lot on site is large enough to house the multiple city buses that are.



FIGURE 11.4 - City of Detroit Parcel Viewer. City of Detroit, <https://detroitmi.gov/webapp/city-detroit-parcel-viewer>.



- AMMENITIES
- - SITE
  - - DMC
  - - HENRY FORD
  - - VA
  - - URBAN GARDEN
  - - FOOD BANKS
  - - SOUP KITCHENS
  - - HOMELESS SHELTERS
  - - Q-LINE

FIGURE 11.5 - Google Maps "Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

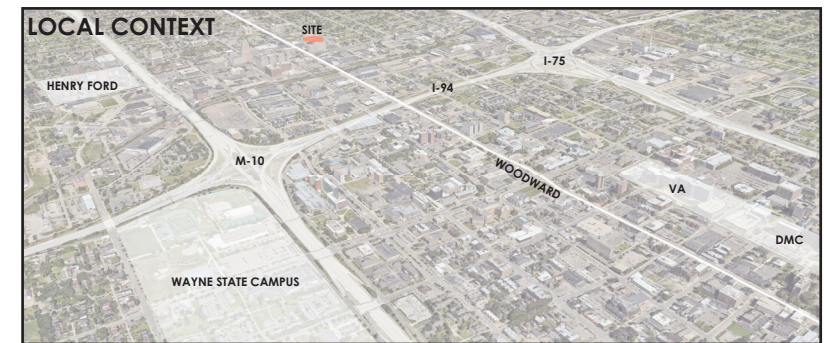


FIGURE 11.6 - Google Maps "Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>



# CURRENT EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR SITE CONDITIONS



FIGURE 10.61 - Exterior 1



FIGURE 10.62 - Exterior 2



FIGURE 10.63 - Exterior 3



FIGURE 10.64 - Exterior 4



FIGURE 10.65 - Exterior 5



FIGURE 10.66 - Exterior 6



FIGURE 11.7 - 11.8 - 11.9 - 11.10 - 11.11 - 11.12 - 11.13 - 11.14 - 11.15 - All the King's Horses.  
 "All the King's Horses." Nailhed, <https://www.nailhed.com/2017/04/all-kings-horses.html?m=1>.

Being that this is a project centered around creating a new smart city system for Detroit, this building would be an adaptive reuse project, turning this once Detroit Police Department stable into a hub for new system.

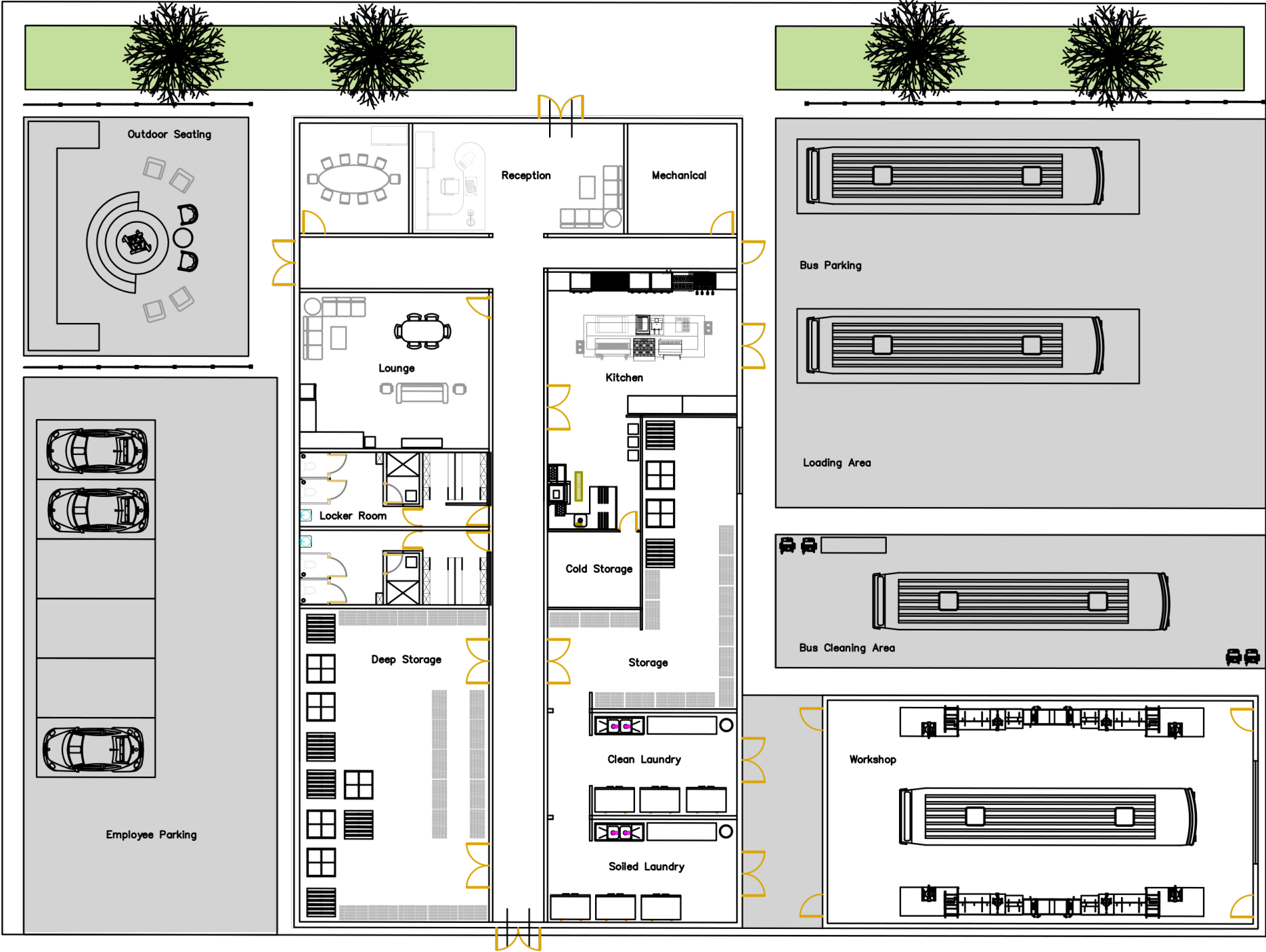


# DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**FINAL FLOOR PLANS, SITE PLANS,  
AND BUS LAYOUTS**

# BUILDING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN

FIGURE 12.02 - Site plan



# BUILDING LAYOUT AND CIRCULATION

Some of the facilities that I included within the building include...

- Commercial kitchen for food deliveries.
- Laundry to cleaning equipment used during the pop up villages
- Storage for necessities that can be dispensed to homeless individuals
- Essentials for the employees like a conference room, reception, lounge, and locker rooms.

There is also a cleaning area for the buses, transition points for soiled laundry, and a workshop for bus maintenance.

Circulation throughout the building was an important point for concern as there would never be unhoused individuals at the facility. The facility is strictly for employees and volunteers to clean and reload buses to be spent throughout the city.

Ammenities like storage are used for material collection to the be dispersed throughout the city while ammeneities like laundry and the kitchen are used by employees to clean or create items for distribution.

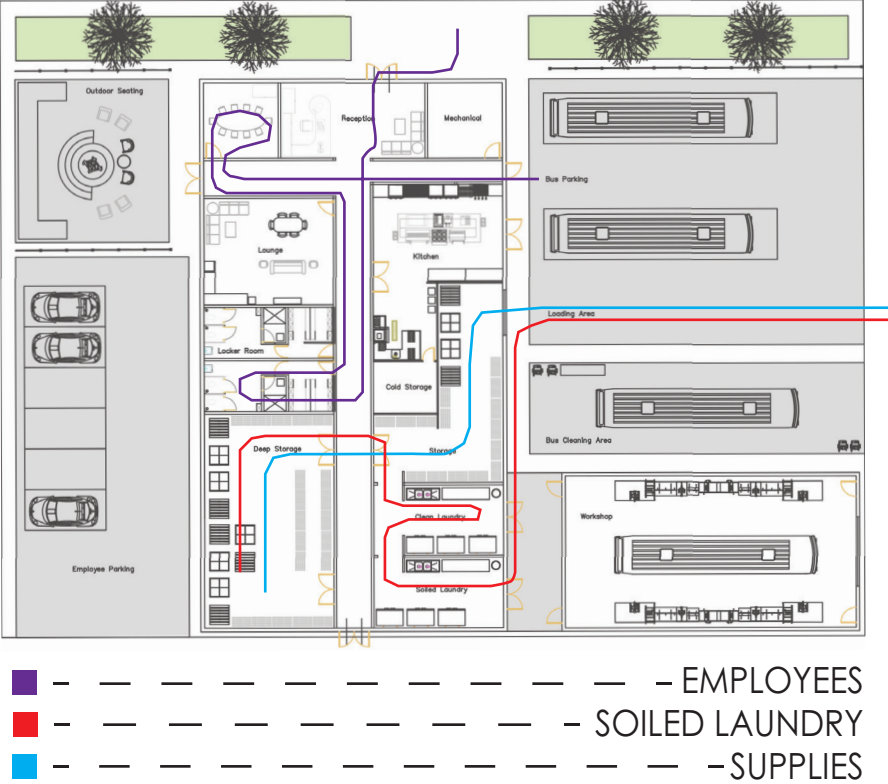


FIGURE 12.03 - Circulation



## BUILDING LAYOUT AND CIRCULATION

The final stages of my thesis process involves a mock up for the pop up villages and routes that could be in place.

With a mobile clinic there are multiple more requirement than normal.

And these are possible routes that run to various different active fire station within the city. They would set up for a few hours a day and hopefully help solve the homeless problem in Detroit.

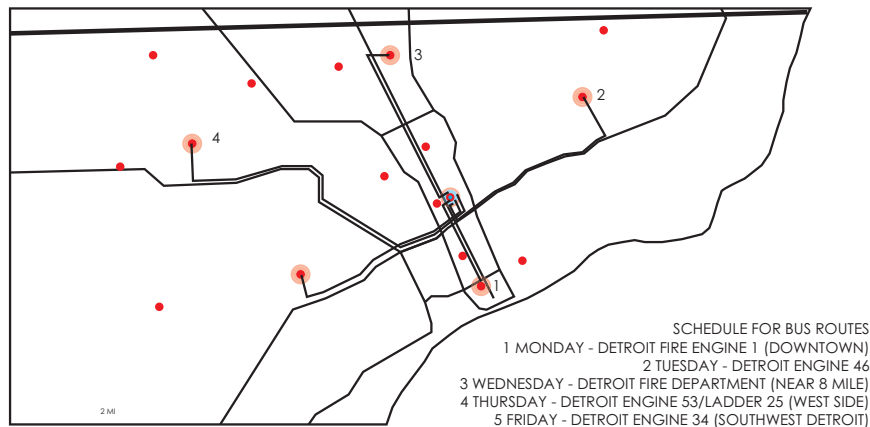
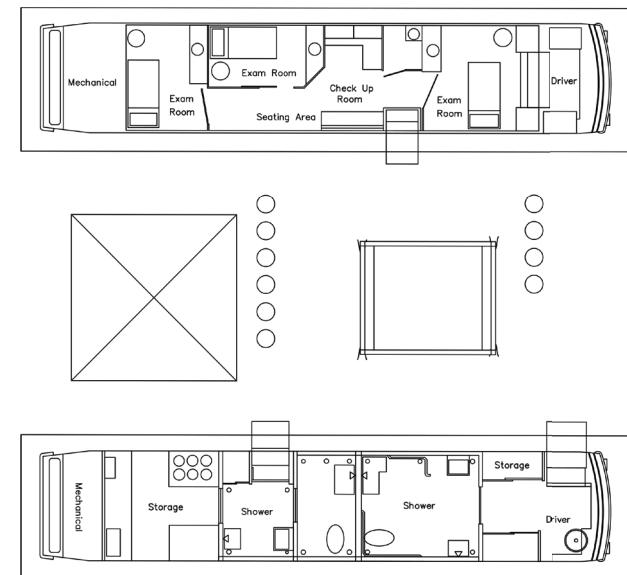


FIGURE 12.1 - Google Maps  
"Google." Google Maps, Google, <https://www.google.com/maps/>

FIGURE 12.11 - Bus plans



### CLINIC SET UP REQUIREMENTS

- Cleaning Supplies
- Equipment Supplies
- Pharmacy Supplies
- Storage
- 911 and GPS
- Security Team and Panic Button
- Patient Meeting Area
- Warmers and Refridgeation W Electrical Supply

### 3 Stage Waiting Area

- Standing Room
- Sitting Room
- Stretcher Space

### General Check-up Area

- Blood Pressure Cuff
- Provide Water, IV, or Oxygen

### Interior Clinic Space

- Vaccum and Suction System
- Autoclave - Sterilization

# INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

# FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT - JACOB

Alright so what is your first name, how old are you and where are you from.

My name is william im 51 i'll be 52 this year and i'm from detroit

Fantastic

How long have you been homeless in detroit

I gotta tell you I just got house

Are you serious oh fanatics

Congratulations

From 2009 up until last year you were homeless

You just got housing last month

Do you suffer from any health problems,

Oh yea

I have chronic asthma

I have chronic bronchitis

I am hypoglycemic and low blood sugar

I also have some problems with my vision

That's all I can think of

Do you have any form of personal I D

I do have my ID yes

Do you have a permanent mailing address, well that kind of answers it

Do you have a cell phone or any other form of technology

I do I have a cell phone

You do have a cell phone, okay fantastic

Do you have any social media accounts?

Well i have facebook

I'd say this from your Homeless Point of View where did you typically get your food from that's what I'm here for now until my Bridge Card gets turned on

some helpful stranger to just donate and then you'll find answers when you are almost ready to get your drinking water from same thing same thing

This location right here, God has sustained my life. I've been here since 2010. I came here in 2010 but I was at 8 Mile and 75 for the first year in 2009, but I've been here, I've lived right up under this bridge since 2010, and this has sustained me. I've been clothed, I've been fed and I've been able to meet wonderful people, have great conversations that keep from having my mind snap.

You know because when you're isolated, which some people out here are, that due to their drug habits, I don't judge anybody, we may all have been homeless in common but once you live up the hood we all got different things going on but you know god loves us all still.

If I feel that being isolated, that's what drives people, not everyone that comes out here is mentally ill when they get out here, the longer they have been out here, the lifestyle, the longer society continues to isolate them, they begin to have a break. But god has sustained me, allowed me to meet wonderful people, who are understanding, caring, trying to do what it is your doing, put someone's story out there get to know someone, engage a person, and when you engage a person, that keeps them tethered to society and to reality and keeps them from just giving up on themselves because the longer your isolated you being to give up on yourself and once you start believing that no one really gives a damn, and you've been out here going on 2,3,4,5,6 years being out here and no one has even tried to lift a finger to you help you really. There are alot of people that just judge you and throw a lot of negativity at you, you begin to give up on yourself. Me, i've always been a fighter, I've always had god to rely cuz i have had people try and misuse me you know, my identification, all kinds of illegal stuff, treat me like garbage, be mean, but i've always had faith in god, oh god bless you (Gets donation)

And that's kinda how it works

That's kinda how it works

Just a few more questions,

Typically, when you were homeless where did you sleep?

Right up under this bridge, right under the bridge, yea

People provided a cot for me, other people provided tents

I've slept all around here, over in that field over there i've slept with a tent, I've slept in that pavilion with a tent, i've slept on those benches, i've slept right here, but mostly under the bridge because when the inclement weather comes that's kind of a roof over your head.

And where would you do your personal hygiene like use the bathroom?

Uhh, wherever I could, public bathrooms, bushes, but when people gave me a tent it became much easier because of the privacy.

What does your daily schedule consist of?

Well as of recently i've been suffering from cancer so every day if different and some days I get a late start but most days when I felt up to it, I would get up sweep up, clean up, because My thought of it was if your standing around a bunch of garbage and trash and looks like you don't pick up behind yourself and you don't care about yourself, that's not gonna encourage someone to want to part with their hard earned money to try to help you because their feel like their throwing it out in the street, like trash that's around you so i would pick up but my mom instilled in me ever since I was a child i been cleaning up so i would find things to keep me going so I didn't just collapse within myself because of the pain and suffering i was in. I would tend to challenge myself by cleaning up around here ummm. I would also try and assist people, people running out of gas, some people come through here and just need someone to cut the grass, jus needed day labor, I have found more work actually holding a sign on a corner then i did when the economy was bad then whatever it was from an attic to a driveway. And you got by that way

Do you ever go to homeless shelters?

I've done that earlier on, I don't like it

You don't like it, why is that

It's not for everybody, the first one that I was in, I was attacked, beaten and robbed, the staff didn't care, people were bringing in drugs, people didn't care about it, the staff were engaging people in sex, and supporting people's habits while they were in there. I didn't feel like just because I had lost everything, I wasn't afraid of hitting rock bottom, because when you don't have anything then the major worry is over with. Now you know you aint got nothing, where do you go from there, go gotta start all over, but then you gotta formula a plan on how you're going to do it. So I decided I was going to be homeless on my own terms, I didn't need to go squeeze between two strangers who I didn't know, didn't know what was going on with them.

Thank god with covid they had cut that stuff off because i always knew before covid even came, what if a major epidemic or pandemic hit, and you got all these people crammed up in a shelter thats gonna be a nightmare

And then the second one I was in, two guys tried to rape me, you know so its not for me, it caused me more problems then it ever did help me. I'm not gonna knock them all but at least the ones that i've experienced, they were corrupt and i'm like its gotta be pervasive, I've never tried to talk anyone else out of it, i always try to tell someone maybe you outta research it, find out what's going on there before you go into on but don't feel like you have to panic just because you lost every and you feel like you need some place to be, there are things that are worse than just being outdoors.

Did you feel safe while you were on the streets?

Yes  
Really  
Yes

What was the hardest everyday struggle you suffer from?

Getting out of bed, i actually had colon cancer and I also have crohn's disease which kind of isolates you from people, ya know you can't really go anywhere. I've had to learn to deal with that and keep moving on and not let it discourage me from wanting to still be sociable, I had to learn some tricks on how to deal with that.

What's the best thing that happened to you this week?

I got back in touch with my brother who is a year younger than me who I haven't seen since my mother died in 2007, matter of fact, me, my brother, and sister, the last time we were together was at my mother 's funeral. February 2007. He's supposed to be coming and staying with me tomorrow, he's coming up from tennessee, we've been looking for each other and we found each other on facebook,

So you found your brother through your digital profile

Yes  
Wow, so you had your digital profile when you were homeless  
Yea  
You had your cell phone

Yea cuz i wanted to look for my family, i had lost touched alot of them had thought I was dead because I just dropped of the face of earth, alot of them had moved out of state and far away but now alot of them are moving back in state and I couldnt find them, god is good.

Thank you so much for your time sir.



## FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT - THOMAS

Whats your first name, how old are you, and where are you from?

Umm, my first name is jasmine. Im 32 as of the 27th of this month, and i spent half my life in tennessee and then moved to hazel park, half detroit half tennessee.

How long have you been homeless in detroit?  
2 years, march of 2021

Do you suffer from any health problems?  
Depression and i have addiction issues, thats why im here

Do you have any form of id  
No, thats the big issue why it's hard to get out, it costs money to get it back

Do you have a permanent mailing address  
We live in an abandoned house, we can get mail there if you consider that a mailing address. It depends on the carrier, some will deliver there and some won't.

Do you have a cell phone?  
Occasionally i have them but they get lost or stole, right now i don't

Where do you get food from?  
Honestly drivers. Sometimes they have food but if not I usually just save up to go to a fast food place.

Water?  
Again, same thing, money and donations, honestly there are unopened bottles of water all over the place.

Where do you rest?  
State fair and Yacama

Where do you do your hygiene type stuff?  
Usually I've got some friends and we go to their houses and we can wash up and take showers there but you know we have toothbrushes, drinking water, and toilettiers at our (abandoned) house. It's as set up as much as it can be without utilities

What does your schedule consist of  
We get up, make money, go "get right", to feed our addiction. It's pretty much just a corner, house, corner house.

Have you ever gone to a homeless shelter, would you go?  
No, I mean I would check it out, but I'm not really sure that it would have much more than what I can prodive myself out here I guess.

Do you feel safe on the streets?  
Yea, because we kind of learned how to survive, most of what happens out here are situations you put yourself into. I mean, shit does happen but it's more or less keeping yourself safe. Not wandering around at night, paying attention to what's around you

Hardest struggle?  
Umm. Getting money for my addiction. It's miserable. I hate it but I feel trapped. No matter how much you make you always seem to come up short. There's never enough.

Would you got to rehab if there were facilities directing you.  
Umm. I would but it's an issue of getting off the drug. It's the buffer period between being able to take the medication and being sick, that's really why I'm still here, that's why I think most of us are still here. We don't want to go through withdrawals and we don't have a segway for that 3-4 day period where you have to be sick before you can take the medication.

What is your drug of choice  
Heroin

Best?  
Ummm. I like making money.

# FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT - ERIC

You gotta be careful, some people are assholes and will splash us.

My first name is Damien, I'm 36 and I'm originally from Milwaukee Wisconsin but I've been in Michigan for about 4 years.

How long?

Basically the whole time I've been here except for a year.

Health?

No major health problems but I got absists. You know it's hard when you're homeless. Like right now I got an infection on my leg that's pretty swollen. I gotta go to the hospital.

Id?

At the current moment no i don't, but i've been looking to try and get some, it's pretty rough

Mailing address

I just one.

Cell?

I did have an Obama phone but that broke a while ago.

Food?

Really its from the people out here with donations.

Rest?

Abandoned house on the west side

Clothes?

Donation bins. Everything I got on right now is from donation bins. Everything from head to toe, bags and everything.

Shelter?

Yea I have but i don't like how they treat people there. It's almost like being in jail, I don't like being locked down. I'm not out here doing anything reckless, or putting people in harm's way or harming people, so going to a homeless shelter, for someone to tell me what to do on a daily basis, I'm not feeling it.

Safe?

No but it is what it is right now

Struggle

Imma keep it real with you, I struggle with drug abuse, thats my hardest struggle, heroin

Best?

Umm. someone and bless me with a whole wardrobe of clothes.

## FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT - STEVE

Name?

Im jason im 32 im from 8 mile and van dyke

How long?

About 6 months. KINDA NEW TO IT

Health?

Depression and anxiety

Id?

No

Address?

No

Cell phone

I got cell phone but i can only use it on wifi

Social media?

No, I used to have a facebook but i dont go on it anymore

Food and water?

Actually there is this building over here that got a spigot coming out of it, a brand new spigot, that's where I get my fresh water from. For food, people will donate food but if not I'll take the money to go get food.

Rest?

Umm, out here. I sleep under the bridge over there

Hygiene

They drop stuff off, the homeless places drop stuff off like toothpaste and stuff like that. I think it's like a purple heart, red cross, and some shelters.

Clothes?

Donation bins or find em

Daily schedule?

Standing here trying to get some money, I even have a sign that says "will work" but I have no id, social security card, or birth certificate, to get another id.

Homeless shelter

Yes, yes I have. I haven't gone but I have thought about it. Why haven't you gone? I just don't know where they're at. "If you knew where they were you would go?" yes, I would, especially right now (Snowing bad)

Do you feel safe?

Yea somewhat, i have high anxiety always watching my back not getting much sleep.I just gotta make sure I protect myself.

Hard?

Standing out here with a sign. I can work, ya know, i am able to work, but as of right now I dont have my ID to work. I have people driving by giving me their business cards from companies and I call them but they need the id. So I need to get my birth certificate and social security card. I just lost my dad November second, so we lost the family home, ya know. My family kind of ransacked the house, and that's where my social security and birth certificate are and I can't find it.

Best?

Actually you talking to me, really, i swear, because some people just look at you or spit at you or whatever, might call you names, all types of things, ill work, i will work. If someone pulls up right now and says jump, come on we're going to work, i'm going to work. I'm dead serious.

## FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT - SUSAN

Name?

Im jesse, im 35, ill be 35 next month and im from oxford michigan.

How long?

This will be my second year?

Health?

no

Id?

No

Address

no

Cell?

No?

Food?

They usually give us a lot of food out here, but when ever we get money well go grab something

Rest?

We sleep in abaonded houses out here in detroit, some people will go to an abandoned house and claim it, now thats my abandoned house, you know not to fuck around over there, you know stuff like that. It's like a subculture. It like lets say i go to this corner everyday at 3 o'clock and your on that corner, your gonna have to move or I'm gonna have to move you

Hygiene

I usually do it at the house, i might go to a gas station, but summer time i do it wherever

Clothing,

Imma be honest with ya, i get em out of the donation bins

Daily,

My daily schedule is to get up, get as much money as I can out here, see we used to clear anywhere from a hundred to a hundred and twenty a day, now I'm lucky to make 50 a day, because the way inflation went up, the stock market crashed 900 points last year. So Just get as much money as we can out here, and then once the sun goes down it's pretty much done and we just go back to our bandos and rest up till next morning

Homeless shelter?

No because you gotta be there at a certain time to get there and then they kick you out during the day, it just seems like more of a hassle. I'm more free in abandoned houses.

Do you feel safe on the streets?

Yea, see I keep this motto out here, and i tell people this, where your a street guy or a homeless guy, we all know the dos and don'ts here in detroit, we all know how to follow the rules, as long as you don't break the rules your fine, if something happens to you most likely violated somebody somewhere

Hard?

Making a dollar

Best?

Someone gave me a 20 dollar bill out here.



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