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# Flexibility and Gender Neutrality in Toilet Design

tvsgdesign



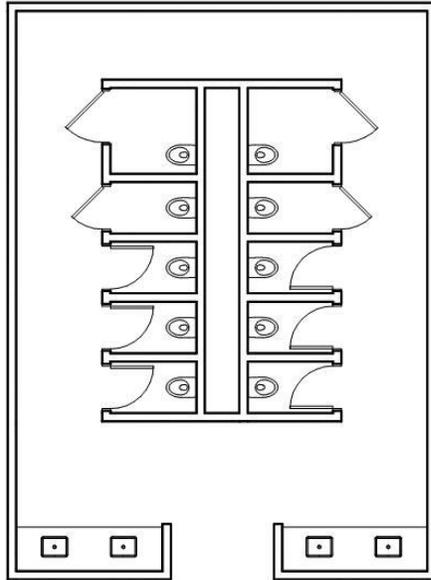


The tvsdesign **Public Assembly Segment** is investigating ways to address changing Owner design requirements. This discussion focuses on **flexibility and gender neutrality in toilet design**.

While not comprehensive or conclusive, the intent of this quick review is to inform the Segment regarding future discussions with Owners and Operators around the 2 potential questions below.

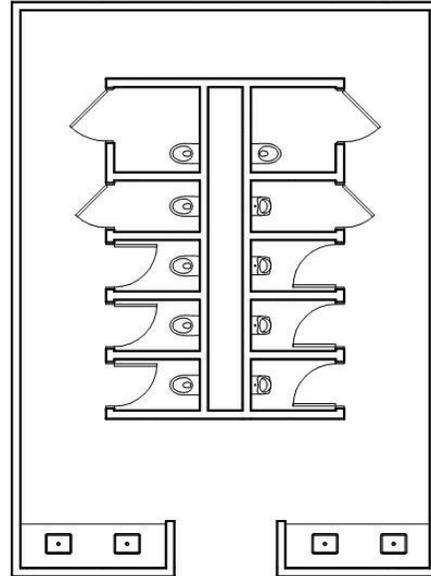
- 1. Should Owners consider flexibility and gender neutrality in toilet design?*
- 2. If utilized, how would we adjust/change Public Assembly toilet design?*

# NEUTRAL GENDER RESTROOM LAYOUT STUDY



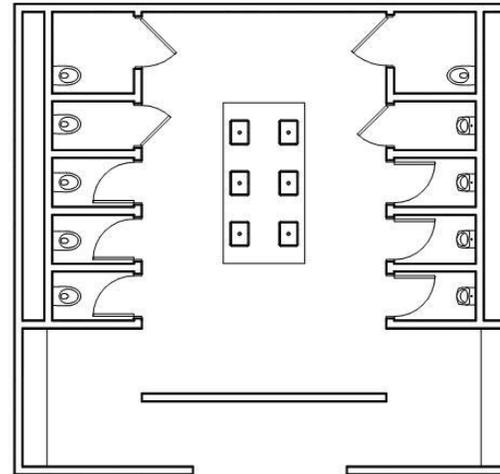
## Option One

- All full height walls and full height doors
- All toilets/ no urinals
- No deadend corridors
- 785 Square Feet



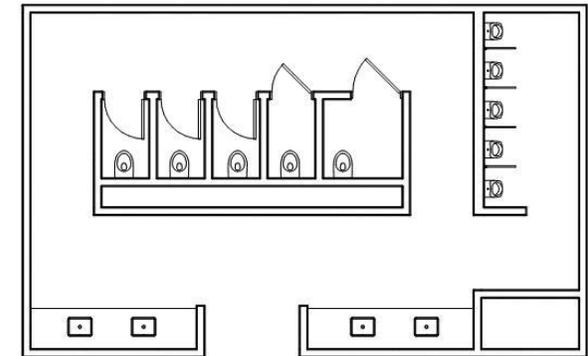
## Option Two

- All full height walls and full height doors
- Combinations toilets & urinals
- No deadend corridors
- 785 Square Feet



## Option Three

- All full height walls and full height doors at toilets
- Combination toilets & urinals
- Entirely open with sinks in center with no mirrors
- Counter and mirror at entry
- 839 Square Feet



## Option Four

- All full height walls and full height doors at toilets
- Toilets & urinals separated
- Urninal screens full height
- 739 Square Feet

## 1 BACKGROUND

Toilet design is a major component of the guest experience in Public Assembly. Operators commonly consider serviceability and aesthetics in toilet room design, but are also challenged by event populations that tilt to more women than men (or vice versa), guests that are physically challenged, intermission traffic jams, or attendees that are sensitive to gender roles.

Building Codes\* typically require a population assumption of 50% male and 50% female when providing toilet fixtures. Family restrooms are a recent addition to building codes, providing a single room/fixture option for families. Some Owners are now being asked to accommodate gender neutral facilities – which are non-gendered, multi-featured restrooms.

*\*Building Codes set toilet count requirements by gender. Consider the code variance process to obtain official acceptance for deviations.*

### 1 GENDER NEUTRALITY

Gender neutrality, is generally defined as an anti-discrimination movement defined by a desire to abolish gender discrimination determined by socially defined gender roles for a given sex.

Restroom choice (men's or women's) governed by birth gender is also being challenged. Many locales seek to allow individuals to use their gender identity, not birth gender, to select which room to use. In response, some Owners seek to enhance individual privacy.

### 2 FLEXIBILITY

As with any facility designed to accommodate diverse events, flexibility offers Owners the ability to adjust to

changing needs. Well designed gender neutral facilities also provide an Owner with flexibility apart from addressing gender issues.

In larger configurations than a single-fixture Family Restroom, gender neutral facilities help manage events with populations with more attendees of one gender or another. They can provide a relief valve to address an intermission traffic jam. Gender neutral facilities also provide options for people with disabilities, the elderly, children, who frequently need help from someone of another gender or sex.

Many Public Assembly buildings already address population imbalances for particular events. **Swing Toilets** are grouped toilet stalls placed strategically such that entry can switch access from one gendered restroom to the other, often achieved with a lockable doorway. Other examples incorporate permanent or temporary features that screen urinal areas, to transform a restroom from male to female. A successful swing toilet design can incorporate neutrality.

When considering flexibility and neutrality, also consider signage flexibility. Toilet room signage may need to change depending on event needs.

### 3 PRIVACY

Apart from gender or flexibility, increased privacy is a trend in facilities looking for a higher level of hospitality. Toilet stalls are becoming more private – visually and acoustically, either by reducing or eliminating gaps in enclosure panels or becoming fully enclosed. New door hardware locks with occupancy indicators (similar to airplane restroom doors) also enhance a sense of privacy and help avoid awkward interactions.

## 4 CONCLUSION

*Should Owners consider flexibility and gender neutrality in toilet design?*

Good toilet room design should consider flexibility. Programming conversations with Owners should include anticipated event population makeup as well as gender neutrality to determine a level of flexibility appropriate to their needs.

*If utilized, how would we adjust/change Public Assembly toilet design?*

Per the previous diagram, there are many options to be considered with an Owner in lieu of or in tandem with separate gendered (Male or Female) toilet rooms.

A design addressing flexibility and/or gender neutrality may require a code variance and/or additional fixtures (and cost).