

Welcome to Kenton Women's Village

a project of the Housing Transitions Program of Catholic Charities
(Updated April 2019)



Kenton Women's Village is a creative and collaborative project, offering a new approach for addressing houselessness at a small scale. The villagers are empowered, have a sense of purpose, and are daily taking steps to move into their own permanent housing.

History of Village:

The village was created with a Kenton neighborhood vote in spring 2017, and opened June 10, 2017. It opened through partnerships with local government, nonprofit, and educational institutions: Catholic Charities, City of Portland, the Joint Office of Homeless Services, the Village Coalition, Prosper Portland, Almar Contracting, Portland State University School of Architecture's Center for Public Interest Design, Kenton Neighborhood Association, Catlin Gabel InvenTeam, and dozens of other community businesses, organizations, and individuals.

On June 13, 2018, the Kenton neighborhood voted 119 to 3 in favor of the village staying for up to one more year. This is the only tiny home village in Portland embraced and placed by its neighborhood.

Mission Statement, Philosophy, and Guiding Principles:

KWV provides a safe, dignified, and constructive temporary sanctuary for women who are seeking to transition to permanent housing. It is the goal of the Village for villagers to transition to permanent housing with healthcare, income, self-determination, and connections to services and community.

Villager Demographics

Average age: 47 years old

Average number of years homeless: 5 years

Since moving into the Kenton Women's Village...

- 23 have moved into permanent supportive housing
- 14 received an ID
- 8 received a birth certificate
- 13 received eye care
- 8 received dental care
- 15 started jobs
- 20 have developed income
- 10 have completed or are pending completion of Save First's RentWell program for renters
- 23 have received mental health services
- 22 are working with a peer support specialist
- 11 have received pet care
 - 23 have volunteered in the local community, including Food by Design, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Portland People's Harm Reduction Project and the Oregon Food Bank

Why is the Village Model an Innovative Approach?

- This program offers safety, security, community and basic human needs to people who are living outside.
- Offers a wide range of services can be offered efficiently with on-site case management, health and mental health services and housing placement.
- Connects villagers with community volunteers, leveraging staff hours by helping women with concrete assistance as they look for housing, education and employment opportunities.
- Alleviates long term and chronic homelessness, returning women to their communities and reducing the high cost of emergency services.

Why Tiny House Villages?

- Many women are unable to cope with the noise and lack of privacy in emergency shelters. Each pod is private and has a locking door.
- Sleeping outside is dangerous, leaving women vulnerable to intimidation, theft, sexual assault and physical assault. The Village is safe. Possessions are safe.
- Provides women opportunities for community, leadership and self-determination.
- The short-term nature of a temporary village offers both hope and a sense of urgency for moving toward permanent housing.