

Consultation services for building and renovation projects

The staff of Design Resources for Homelessness often serve as project consultants, providing trauma-informed guidance to specific shelter, supportive housing or other projects. We work alongside a project's architect and/or interior designer to lend mental and behavioral health insights that can be enacted through built space. These strategies are intended to enhance the experience of the project's building for clients, volunteers, staff and the public.

We recommend and advocate for the application of trauma-informed care and trauma-informed design principles within built spaces. Doing so can make spaces secure for clients, their families and their possessions, staff, and volunteers, including in ways that

- support the organization's processes and therapies
- provide space-based environmental psychological cues that support project's desire for clients to make progress
- convey a sense of dignity and respect in the space to support exiting homelessness
- support an atmosphere of calm and optimism
- support intuitive wayfinding
- reduce effort of staff to assist clients
- assist with community and peer support


As each project is different, here are some options for specific services that we can offer.



1. Written and visual recommendations that link trauma-informed research to architectural application

These ideas are offered in the form of **a report** that can be general (if a project has not yet been started) or more specific if a building shell or other details are known. These can help donors realize that the project is proceeding from an informed position regarding available research.

Example:

Promote transparency and trust	Connellan 2013	Provide open design to encourage staff to engage with clients with minimal effort while preserving ability for staff's head-down, minimally distracted work
	Shepley 2013	Use furniture heights so that staff and clients are at an equal height to each other when they interact to minimize sense of heavy authority 
	Connellan 2013	Design desk areas so that staff do not have to stand up to monitor a client situation

2. Analysis of existing or proposed plans

Should an existing building already be located, or plans exist for a new one, we can provide suggestions and questions to consider from a trauma-informed point of view.

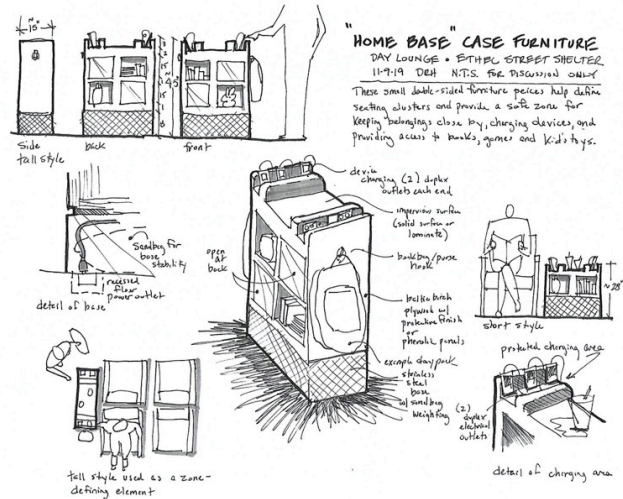
3. Preliminary visioning of spaces

These are floor plans, perspective views or similar graphics that can help explore the potential of a space that embraces trauma-informed features, or provide visuals to assist with fundraising activities.



4. Conceptual-level design of project-specific features

Sometimes a project requires specific architectural features to meet trauma-related challenges. These could be architectural lighting, millwork, furnishings, graphics, or other elements. Preliminary refined sketches can help the design team and contractors move forward with a solution.



5. Participation alongside architectural designers with clients at design meetings

Provide ongoing ideas and suggestions as a project evolves.

Consultation services are provided on an hourly basis with a 'not to exceed' number of hours so that everyone is comfortable. Hours spent and billed are documented on time sheets provided with invoices. A signed agreement sets the parameters and goals of the work.

As Design Resources for Homelessness is a non-profit organization, all funds from consultation services support DRH associates' performance of the work at reasonable rates and also the production of future reports, case studies and research references made freely available from the DRH website (designresourcesforhomelessness.org). Project lead Jill Pable does not receive payment for this work.

Thank you for your interest in integrating the principles of trauma-informed design into your project. We stand ready to assist you with this goal.