

Best Practices for Multi-User Gender Inclusive Restrooms

Code requirements and design considerations for attractive and welcoming environments



Building Code

Washington Amendments to the 2018 IBC (paraphrased):

2902.2.2 Gender-neutral facilities. Gender-neutral toilet facilities, when provided, shall be in accordance with the following:

1. Calculate number of fixtures per Table 2902.1, and combine the required count for male and female fixtures.
2. If urinals are provided, they shall be located in toilet compartments. Refer to ICC A117.1 for toilet compartment requirements and note that compartment partitions without wheelchair toe clearance are required to be larger than conventionally partitioned compartments.
3. Compartment partitions shall have full-height walls and a door enclosing the fixture to ensure privacy. City of Bellingham have confirmed that minimal clearance (~1") at top and bottom of doors are acceptable for ventilation.

Building Code

Washington Amendments to the 2018 IBC (paraphrased):

2902.2.2 Gender-neutral facilities (cont.)

4. Gender-neutral toilet room water closet and urinal compartment doors shall be securable from within the compartment.
5. Gender-neutral toilet rooms provided for the use of multiple occupants, the egress door from the room shall not be lockable from the inside of the room.
6. Compartments shall not be required in a single-occupant toilet room with a lockable door.

1109.2.2 Water closet compartment

Where multiple water closet compartments are located in a toilet room (multiuser), a minimum of 5% or one shall be wheelchair accessible.

In toilet rooms with six or more fixtures, a minimum of 5% or one shall be ambulatory accessible.

See 1109.2.3 for lavatory/sink requirements

Multi-User Restroom Layout

- **Activity zones**

Consider toilet stalls as individual privacy units

Consider the sink/mirror area as shared space (accommodations for religious purposes notwithstanding) for washing and grooming; an area that is an extension of the public corridor or circulation space

- **Two entrances/exits**

If feasible, circular circulation helps to enhance a sense of individual safety

- **Semi-open circulation without closing doors**

If toilet sounds are not disruptive to adjacent functions, consider that it is not always necessary to screen the sink/mirror area from view, since the individual toilet stalls provide the required privacy

Multi-User Restroom Design

- **Water closet partitions**

Consider stud-framed wall partitions between individual toilet compartments

Consider doors that swing only partially closed when not occupied, with vacancy indicator locks

- Allows for quick visual identification of vacant and occupied stalls from further away
- Allows for queueing near the entrance, rather than immediately outside the compartments
- Helps with a stronger sense of security for those inside

- **Mechanical**

Consider dedicated ventilation in each compartment. If not feasible, work with Mechanical Engineer to determine ventilation through floor and ceiling gaps, or louvered grilles that maintain privacy.

Consider that white noise from ventilation system can help to minimize sound transmission

Plan for fire sprinkler coverage within each compartment

- **Electrical**

Consider lighting design in each compartment

Consider electronic white noise system in lieu of or addition to ventilation noise

Multi-User Restroom Design

- **Plumbing**

Are there toilets that are quieter than typical that meet performance requirements?
Consider trough style sinks for space efficiency

- **Acoustics**

Consider acoustic treatments to allow for semi-open restroom design without compromising adjacent spaces with toilet sounds
Consider acoustic separation between and out of individual toilet compartments

- **Accessories**

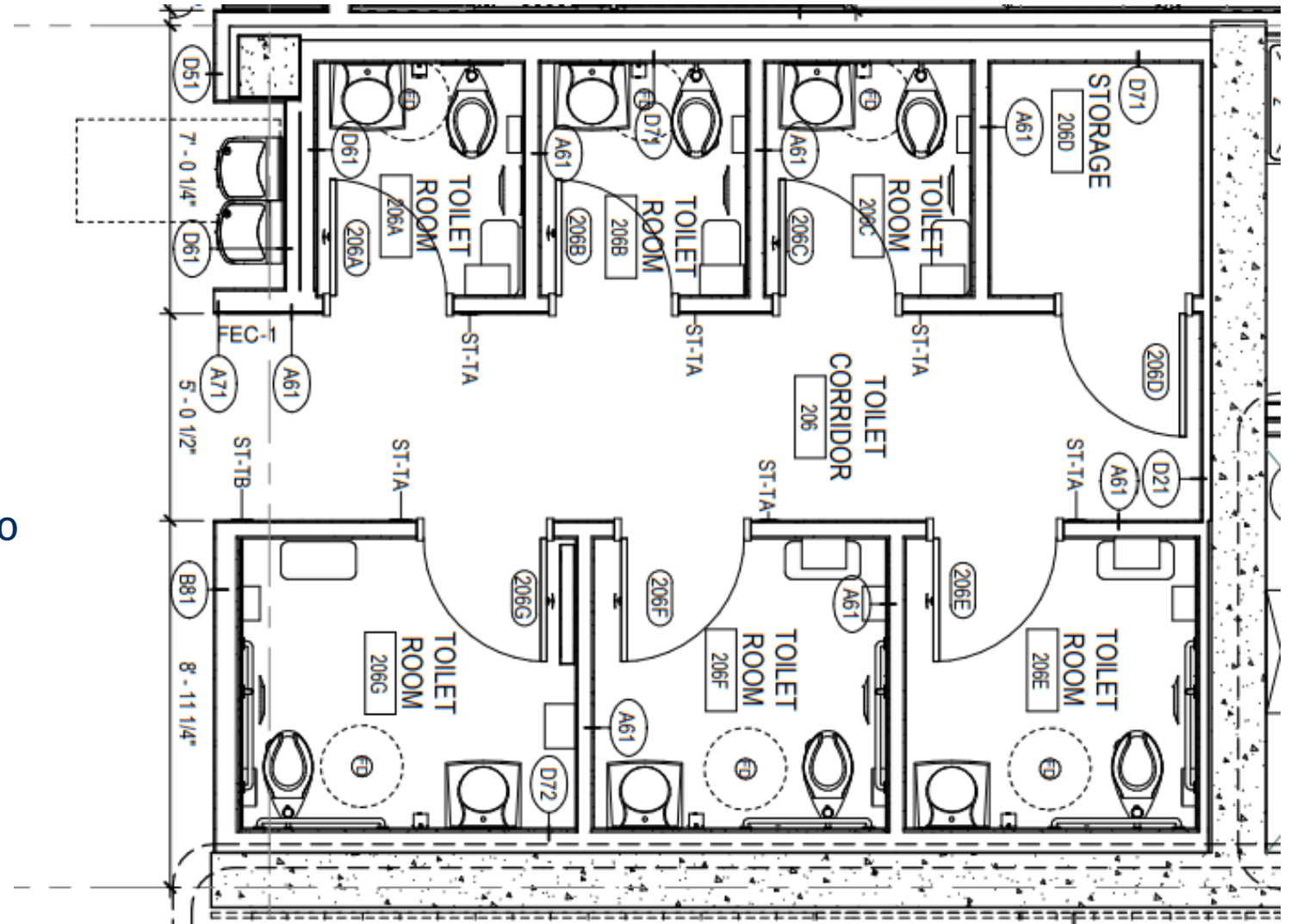
Provide the same amenities as gender specific facilities, including but not limited to menstrual products available for purchase, or even better, free dispensation, and menstrual product disposal bins in each toilet compartment

See <https://www.stalled.online/> for other design ideas

Interdisciplinary Science Building

2022 Completion

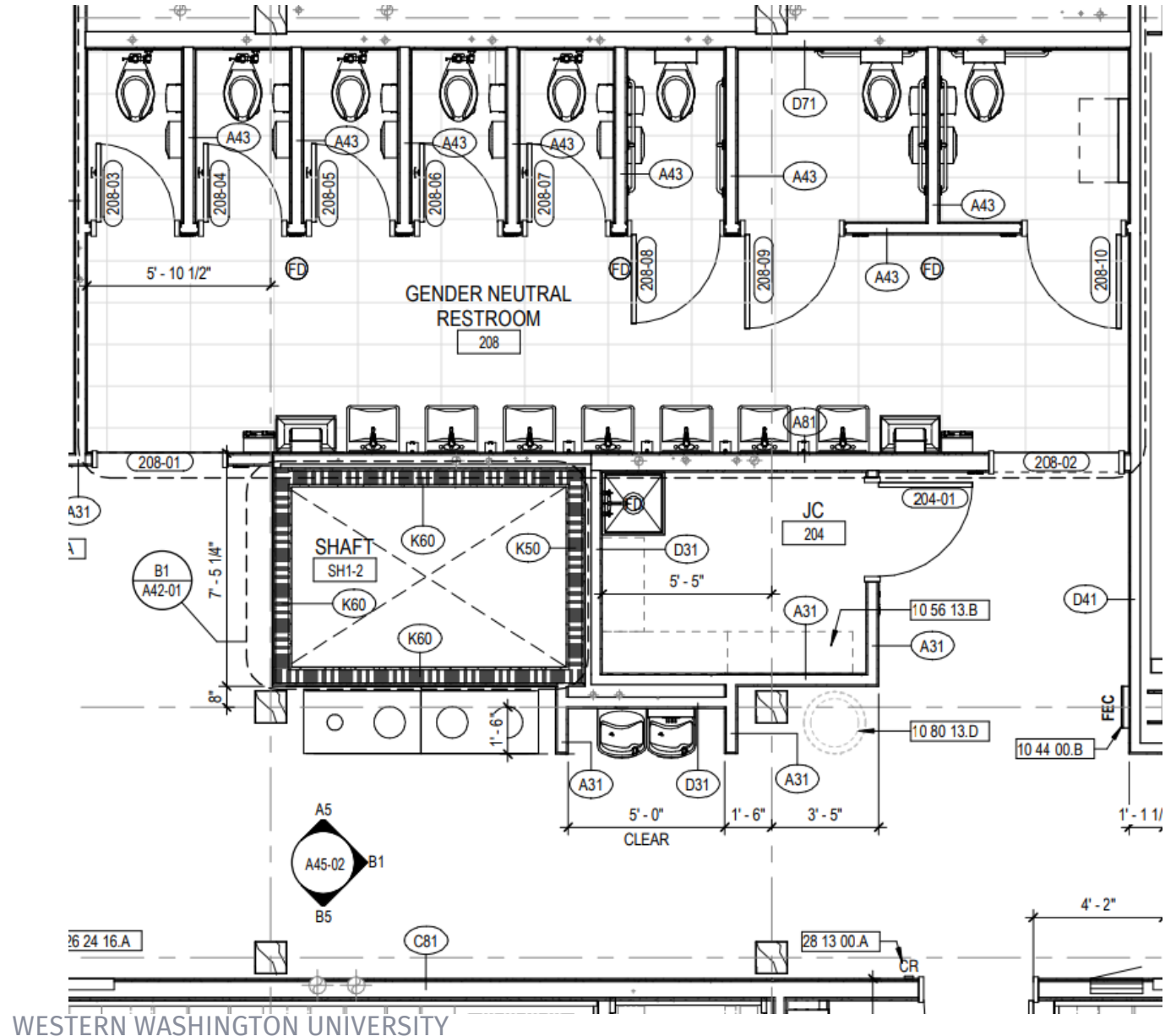
- First building at WWU to be completely gender-neutral
- Individual toilet/sink rooms
- Access hallway spur off of main corridor
- Provides optimum acoustic separation between stalls and to corridor (ideal of toilet sounds are a concern to neighboring spaces)
- Individual restrooms provide a high degree of privacy, but may not be as effective in a sense of passive safety



Kaiser Borsari Hall

Electrical Engineering & Computer Science – 2024 Completion

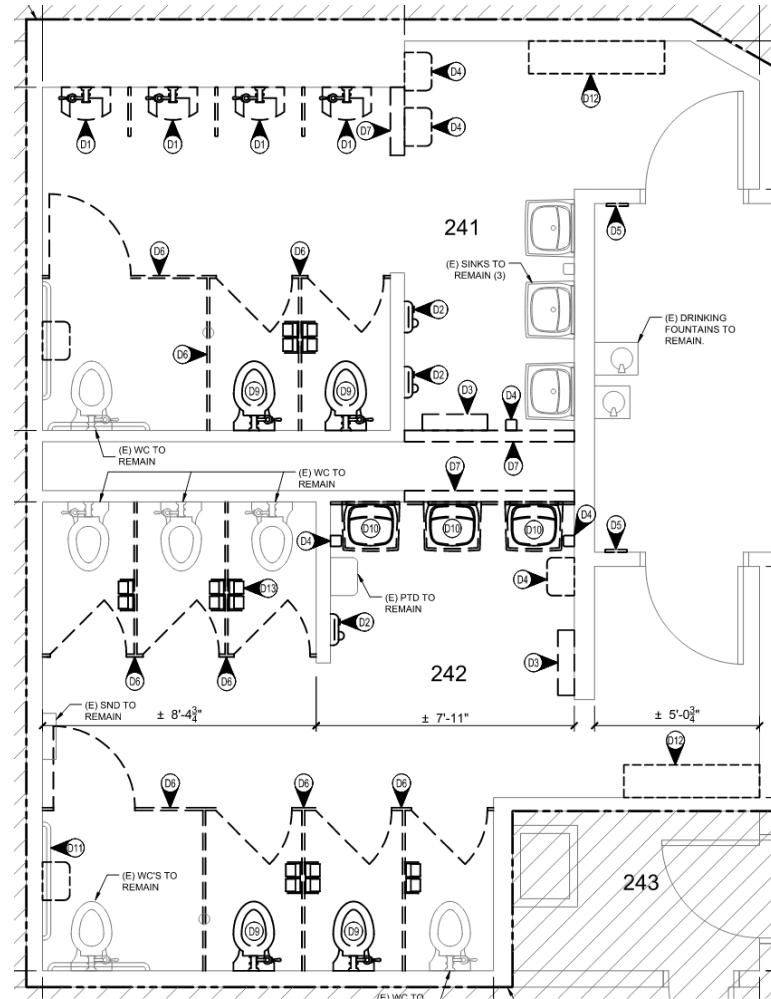
- Semi-private, communal sink/grooming zone
- Two openings to corridor
- Stud-framed, full-height partitions surround small toilet rooms, w/ conventional doors/hardware
- Provides effective acoustic separation between stalls and to corridor
- Provides sense of safety w/ multiple exits & acoustic openness from sink zone to corridor passersby



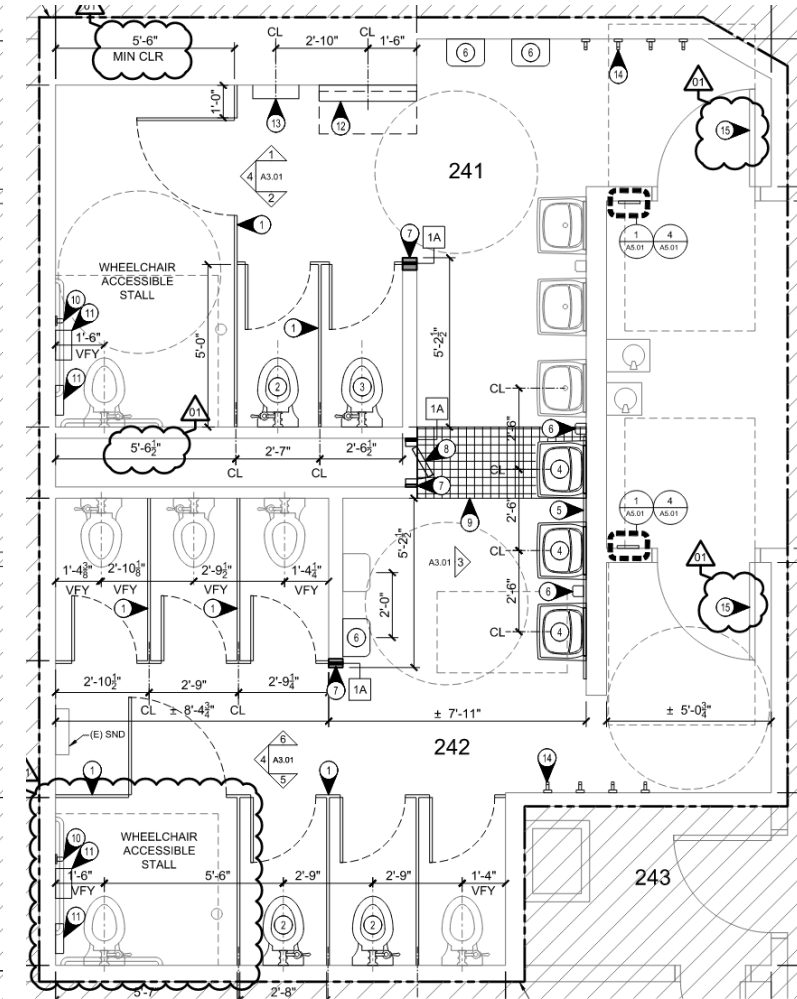
Haggard Hall (Renovation)

2022 Completion

- Semi-private, communal sink/grooming zone
- Two openings to corridor
- Full-height privacy toilet partitions
- 1" gaps at top and bottom for ventilation, water drainage
- Provides sense of safety w/ multiple exits



Original



Final