



# GENDER-INCLUSIVE RESTROOM TASK FORCE & WORKGROUP FINAL REPORT



The University of Vermont

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes efforts to establish policies and practices related to gender-inclusive restrooms at the University of Vermont (UVM). It serves three purposes:



1. To acknowledge and thank Task Force and workgroup members for their commitment to the needs of transgender, nonbinary and gender non-conforming people at UVM; and for their critical efforts to address issues of accessibility and safety.
2. To document specific changes and recommendations over the project's tenure.
3. To serve as a resource for the UVM community and beyond.

In November 2016, former President Tom Sullivan acted on the Gender-Inclusive Restroom Task Force (GIRT) [Report](#) by ordering the creation of a workgroup of key individuals to address these issues. The Gender-Inclusive Restroom Workgroup at UVM met from January 2017 to December 2019. The initial charge for GIRT under President Sullivan is now complete.

The UVM Community has many gender-inclusive restroom accomplishments to be proud of:

- Restroom Access Statement for the University
- Gender-Inclusive Restroom Construction Standard
- Gender-inclusive restrooms denoted on the campus map
- Standardized signage and a poster campaign targeting locations with gender-inclusive multi-occupancy restrooms in high-traffic buildings.

Further information about these accomplishments can be found on the UVM gender-inclusive restrooms website: [uvm.edu/gender-inclusive-restrooms](http://uvm.edu/gender-inclusive-restrooms)



# WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIP

The members of the taskforce and the workgroup, through their giving of time, knowledge, and efforts have contributed directly to enhancing the level of access to and equitable distribution of UVM resources. We acknowledge that many people have been part of this effort to make our campus more welcoming to all and we are all better for it.

- Kate Jerman, Chair, Director, Prism Center
- Alex Escaja-Heiss '22, Undergraduate
- Amber Fulcher, ADA/504 Coordinator, Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity
- Annie Stevens, Vice Provost for Student Affairs
- Becky Swem, Education & Outreach Coordinator, Prism Center
- Bob Vaughn, Director, Capital Planning and Management
- Carter Shapiro '20, Undergraduate
- Courtney Cioffredi, ADA/504 Coordinator, Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity
- Henry Moreno, Associate Director of Facilities Operations, Department of Residential Life
- Ken Bean, University Architect
- Krista Walter, Executive Assistant, Office of the Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity, and Multicultural Affairs
- Lindsey "Z" McCarron '19, Undergraduate
- Paul Suk-Hyun Yoon, Senior Advisor for Strategic Diversity Assessment and Research, Office of the Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity, and Multicultural Affairs
- Thomas Gustafson, Vice President, University Relations and Administration
- Wanda Heading-Grant, Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

We are grateful to everyone who participated in the GIRT Task Force and the workgroup, and the many faculty, staff and students who are unnamed here who supported the work along the way.



# SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Early Accomplishments:

- a spring 2017 memo to the campus community detailing recent changes and future plans for additional gender-inclusive restrooms on campus;
- the creation of a comprehensive Google map showing the location of inclusive restrooms in campus buildings (later improved by UVM's new, online Campus Map);
- trainings conducted by LGBTQA (now Prism) Center staff with the entire custodial services team to explain the need for gender-inclusive restrooms and address any concerns.

## Recent Accomplishments:

- the adoption of a Restroom Access Statement for the University in 2019;
- the creation of a Gender-Inclusive Restroom website;
- finalizing an architectural standard to guide the construction of gender-inclusive restrooms in any new campus buildings or major renovations;
- the inclusion of a representative from Residential Life on the workgroup to provide updates on related changes happening in campus residential buildings;
- inclusion of the gender-inclusive restroom map in the UVM Orientation app and Navigate, the new app for student success that launched in Fall 2019;
- posters created for a general campus audience explaining gender-inclusive restrooms, and single vs. multi-occupancy gender-inclusive restrooms; and
- an educational poster campaign targeting locations with gender-inclusive multi-occupancy restrooms and all bathrooms in high-traffic buildings.

Many of the items listed above can be found on the gender-inclusive restrooms [website](#).

An overview of the original Task Force recommendations and the current status of each recommendation is included at the end of this report.



# FURTHER EFFORTS TO ENHANCE ACCESS

The initial charge for GIRT under President Sullivan is now complete. Progress toward greater inclusive restrooms on campus will now continue in different forms, including:

- continued improvements in campus residence halls each time significant renovations or new construction is planned;
- monitoring construction plans for the Multi-Purpose Athletics Complex for compliance with the UVM construction standard on gender-inclusive restrooms; and for the inclusion of multi-occupancy, gender-inclusive restrooms in particular;
- installing ADA-compliant directional signage to help all occupants find the gender-inclusive restrooms in high-traffic buildings including, but not limited to, Jeffords, Old Mill, Mann, and Waterman;
- prioritizing a new renovations agenda for high-traffic academic buildings, based on current campus building usage patterns, and identifying new funding sources;
- advocating for ongoing improvements to existing gender-inclusive restrooms for ADA accessibility; and
- prioritize assuring that the gender-inclusive restrooms signed as accessible indeed meet ADA standards.

The Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will continue to coordinate these efforts in close collaboration with key campus partners, including the Division of Student Affairs, Capital Planning and Management, and the University's ADA/504 Coordinators.

The results of the successful student advocacy to bring awareness of the need for gender-inclusive restrooms to campus, and the ensuing work of GIRT, have also been felt beyond the UVM campus.

A library faculty member who served on GIRT has gone on to develop and share best practices for libraries. This includes an article submitted for publication and two presentations to the Vermont Library Association's College and Special Libraries section annual meeting, and a national conference focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility issues in libraries and archives. The work on the task force, and with the student activists, also led this faculty member to propose a bill in the VT legislature making all public, single-occupancy restrooms gender-free. This became VT law in 2018.



# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 1

Recommendations for the expansion of gender-inclusive\* restrooms by the start of fall semester 2016

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 1: Prioritize the creation of at least one gender-inclusive, multi-stall restroom in each campus building.
- We recommend priorities be developed based on building usage and larger campus patterns. A plan and timeline should be established by the end of Fall 2016. Suggested buildings to consider as initial priorities:
  - **Major Campus Buildings:**
    - Bailey/Howe Library
    - Davis Student Center
    - Waterman
  - **Major academic buildings:**
    - Old Mill/Lafayette
    - Billings
    - Cook
    - Marsh Life Sciences
    - Kalkin
    - Dewey
    - Votey
    - Stafford
  - **Major Complexes:**
    - Given/Rowell/Medical Education Medplex
    - Patrick/Forbush/Gutterson Complex
  - **At least one major building central on each of UVM's campuses:**
    - Southwick (Redstone)
    - Mann (Trinity)
- Recommendation 2: Guarantee access to all by converting all existing single-stall and some existing multi-stall restrooms that are currently segregated by gender to gender-inclusive access in highest use buildings.
- Recommendation 3: Balance ADA accessibility and gender-inclusive restroom access when updating side-by-side multi-stall gender segregated restrooms.
- Recommendation 4: Increase access while also maintaining a diversity of restroom types.

\*To avoid confusion, the terms "non-gender segregated" from the initial report has been replaced in this summary with the term "gender-inclusive" which is the language currently in common use at UVM.



# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

Recommendations for the expansion of gender-inclusive\* restrooms by the start of fall semester 2016

## FINAL STATUS 2019

- Recommendation 1: Gender-inclusive multi-stall restrooms now exist, or are planned, in at least seven public University buildings.
- Recommendation 2: A list of initial priorities was established in lieu of a master plan and timeline. Renovations or new construction have occurred in the following buildings:
  - **Major campus buildings:**
    - Howe Library: Completed
    - Waterman: Planned but no funding identified.
    - Billings: Completed
  - **Major academic buildings:**
    - Old Mill: Completed (needs signage)
    - Lafayette: Planned/No Funding
    - Discovery & Innovation: Completed
    - Jeffords: Completed (needs signage)
    - Cohen: Completed
  - **Major complexes:**
    - Given: Completed
    - Patrick/Forbush/Guterson: Campus Recreation facility plans include gender-inclusive restrooms. Events facility portion of the new Multi-Purpose Athletics Complex do not.
  - **Other areas of campus:**
    - Mann (Trinity): ADA accessibility upgrades necessitated a single-user inclusive restroom in place of a multi-user, gender-inclusive restroom.
- Recommendation 3: Deemed by the work group to be a guiding principle rather than an action item. ADA compliance is also addressed in the new UVM Restroom Construction Standard
- Recommendation 4: Gender-specific male and female restrooms are maintained in all buildings, unless doing so would prevent access to a gender-inclusive restroom in that building.

\*To avoid confusion, the terms "non-gender segregated" from the initial report has been replaced in this summary with the term "gender-inclusive" which is the language currently in common use at UVM.



# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 2

Recommendations for the expansion of gender-inclusive restrooms: Protocols to cover all new construction.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 5: Establish standards for gender-inclusive restroom access in all new construction and renovation projects on campus.
  - The task force recommends that work on these standards begin in September 2016 and be completed before the end of the fall 2016.

## FINAL STATUS 2019

- A construction standard proposed by the UVM Department of Facilities Design and Construction received final approval in September 2019. A copy is available from the UVM gender-inclusive restrooms website.

# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 3

Recommendations for common signage for gender-inclusive restrooms across campus.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 6: Change signage on all single-stall restrooms to represent only facilities and accessibility (for people with mobility constraints and people needing baby changing facilities).
- Recommendation 7: Provide easily accessible information about gender-inclusive restroom access.
- (7a) Buildings with limited facilities that are gender-inclusive should post adequate directional signage to enable people to access facilities as needed.
- (7b) We recommend that a web-based map be hosted and maintained by the Campus Space Program in Campus Planning, indicating the location of all restrooms that are not segregated by gender.



# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

Recommendations for common signage for gender-inclusive restrooms across campus.

## FINAL STATUS 2019

- Recommendation 6: Completed
- Recommendation 7: Completed - Approach to providing information to campus has varied, and improved, over time.
  - Presentations were made at the President's Senior Leadership, Faculty Senate and Staff Council meetings. Campus-wide e-mails were sent. The campus map now includes a filter to display gender-inclusive restrooms. A website was created.
- (7a): Not completed, Significant issues with way-finding remaining in Jeffords, Old Mill/Lafayette & Waterman.
- (7b): Completed - Initial map was produced using Google Maps. The current version is a filter users can enable on the campus map.

# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 4

Recommendations for assessment process for the expansion of gender-inclusive restroom access across campus.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 8: Establish & maintain up-to-date information on existing campus restrooms.
- Recommendation 9: Review use statistics from the Registrar's Office; mapping of existing gender-inclusive restrooms and student use could help to inform further prioritization.

## FINAL STATUS 2019

- Recommendation 8: Initial survey of all restrooms completed, including ADA compliance, number of fixtures, and current gender assignment.
  - During the survey process a number of restrooms received updated signage indicating ADA accessibility despite not being ADA compliant, with the hope of finding funding to make upgrades to bring them into compliance in the future.
  - Currently maintained by campus planning services.
- Recommendation 9: Initial review was provided as appendix C in the GIRT Task Force Report. Further prioritization and renovations will require a new review as campus traffic patterns have changed significantly.



# PROJECT DELIVERABLE 5

Recommendations for professional development for faculty, staff, student, administrators, and visitors.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 10: Establish a communication plan that can serve to notify and educate members of the campus community about upcoming and continuing changes to campus restroom facilities.
- Recommendation 11: Provide education to affiliates that is tailored to specific needs.
- Recommendation 12: Expand existing capacity for providing needed staff and faculty trainings and briefings.

## CURRENT STATUS 2019

- Recommendation 10: See details in Deliverable 3, Recommendation 7
- Recommendation 11: See details in deliverable 3, Recommendation 7
- Recommendation 12: Trainings for the entire Custodial Services team were provided by the Prism Center.



# ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION 2016

- Recommendation 13: Consider privacy upgrades in both gender-segregated and gender-inclusive restrooms.
- Recommendation 14: Create a central funding source to assist with costs of construction and renovations.
- Recommendation 15: Establish a committee to provide oversight, resource allocation and prioritization for gender-inclusive restroom access.
- 3a) The Task Force recommends inclusion of students from Justice for QTs, Capital Planning and Management, the Prism Center, Custodial Services, ADA Coordinator, Division of Student Affairs, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion among others in future planning.

## FINAL STATUS 2019

- Recommendation 13: Privacy upgrades are made at the time of renovation. Privacy design criteria and standards are outlined in the UVM Restroom Design Criteria and Standards document (Appendix)
- Recommendation 14: Not completed. Resources were identified within current construction or renovation projects. No new or central funding sources have been identified.
- Recommendation 15: Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion charged with convening community members together once per semester.
- 3a) Membership has shifted over time and included representatives from the recommended groups.

## Conclusion

The workgroup experienced challenges in a few areas as they sought to enact the recommendations put forth by the Task Force. Most notably, a lack of financial resources from new or existing sources prevented progress on renovations in existing campus buildings. This has impacted the ability to achieve the goal of establishing multi-occupancy, gender-inclusive restrooms in as many buildings as feasible. Despite the challenges presented by the current budget climate on campus, the workgroup supports the initial Task Force recommendation that financial resources continue to be made available and prioritized for renovations that create additional gender-inclusive, accessible restrooms.



# APPENDIX

## Restroom Access Statement

The University of Vermont strives to create and sustain a campus environment that supports and values all members of our community, including students, employees, and visitors. The University recognizes that health and safety are critically important to the learning, working and residential environments on campus. One aspect of creating a welcoming environment is providing safe, accessible, and convenient restroom facilities. Many individuals benefit from accessible, gender-inclusive restrooms including those with disabilities and others who have caregivers or attendants of a different gender; people accompanying small children; and transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming individuals who may be subject to harassment or violence when using gender-specific restrooms. Accordingly, the University supports the option of individuals to use the restroom that meets their individual needs or in which they feel safest.

## Find Gender-Inclusive Restrooms

Find gender-inclusive restrooms on the [campus map](#).

## Additional Resources

Find the full text of campus communications, the construction standard, and additional resources on the gender-inclusive restrooms [website](#).

