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## Architects plan bus shelter for The Healing Place

### Healing Place clients brave elements to catch a ride

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The women's shelter off Glenwood Avenue offers a chance at a new life for substance abusers, but getting to the Northwest Raleigh facility can be a challenge.

Most of the women living at the Healing Place of Wake County don't have cars, so many take the bus to look for jobs and take skills classes. They wind up waiting at an uncovered bus stop with a tiny wooden bench.

The women braving the elements attracted the notice of BBH Design, which has its headquarters down the street. "All of our staff drives by and sees them every day," said Kenyon Worrell, an architect at the firm.



*Architects Tzu Chen and Josh Lewis designed this bus shelter that their firm, BBH Design, plans to build for clients at The Healing Place of Wake County. Women at the treatment facility picked the design over several others submitted by BBH architects.*

The architects decided to help their neighbors, but they wanted to do more than buy the generic \$3,000 shelter the city offers.

Instead, BBH plans what could be Raleigh's fanciest bus shelter, made from recycled materials with decorative plants and a built-in safety alarm.

Seven teams from BBH took time out from designing health-care and higher education facilities to work on the perfect bus shelter. The three finalists presented their ideas to Healing Place clients last week.

“My thought was let the clients at the Healing Place choose their own,” said Frank Giordano, an architect who helped organize the project.

During a pizza lunch with BBH architects, the women picked Tzu Chen and Josh Lewis’ idea. Lewis said their shelter will have open doorways facing the street. It sends a clear message to those who have had few opportunities in the past, he said: “no more closed doors, the future’s open.”

Behind the benches, a trellis of recycled wood pallets will create a space for vines and other plants to grow. Healing Place clients can even plant seeds themselves.

“We wanted to use the materials in a new way,” Lewis said.

The Healing Place’s vice president of programs, Chris Budnick, said the nonprofit has wanted to improve the clients’ transportation options for years. But because most workers in the surrounding business park commute by car, Healing Place clients are the main users of the Glen Royal Road stop.

“We’ve been concerned about some proposed cuts to service,” Budnick said.

The next challenge for BBH is raising money for construction; they’re not yet sure how much the shelter will cost. They’ll be asking neighboring businesses to help them fund the project.

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