A Community by Design

Clusters of pods can be arranged so they are linked with trails, leading to each other. This is a natural feature of linking communities to form bigger communities. Ideas from one cluster are shared with others. Friends are made over fires and the sharing of ideas. The spacing should be enough for each cluster to have some limited privacy, but close enough so interactions occur. Trails funnel to each other and inward to more clusters and a “great building” or gathering area. Where big ideas are made and shown. If this looks familiar, you are right! Black Rock city got it right. We know how to do this. No training is needed. When Paul Romer, who won the 2018 Nobel prize for economics, visited Burning Man he came back talking about a grid of stakes in the ground, designing a “funnel” effect that generates an optimal number of interactions and diversity. Take care of the basic needs of guest-participants, and they will form a community. This is community and city planning. It is scalable and the structures are so simple they can build it themselves and invest in each other and themselves. With one pod design and stakes in the ground or on paper, some magical spot at the Fly Ranch can be community that taps into the intellectual treasure of so many creative and talented people.

Shade is scalable

Anyone that has set up camp in Black Rock has an intimate knowledge about wind direction and shade. Once you take care of shade overhead, you have to address how the sun starts and ends low, creeping in. The wide eaves of the pods are designed to combat that. But ultimately side shade can help a lot on a big exposed side. Prestiched shade cloth with gromets are a standard on the Playa. With a simple detail of making sure the sides of the buildings have common dimensions, we make the openings fit off the shelf shade cloth. This eliminates any custom fabrication and allows replacements to come ready to fit. Where needed, side panels can be more opaque for privacy. In some cases the sides can have other panels fitted to make vented walls.

A shelter Cluster, makes a home

One shelter is just a place for a bed. Several pods together make a community home. Each cluster has a fire circle adjacent to a community building that houses a kitchen and bathroom. The kitchen has an open counter for serving food. The kitchens are very basic. Shelves, counters, drains, doors and walls. Participants bring coolers, water, food, fuel, and cooking items. This encourages coordination, planning, and cooperation. The bathroom is just a toilet and a shower stall. This can be anything from a compost toilet and a place to hang sun showers, to running water and a flush toilet. These amenities are dependent on how much infrastructure and innovation other builders define.

The community building can also be the collection point for solar power and a storage place for that power. Where needed, side panels can be more opaque for privacy. In some cases the sides can have other panels fitted to make vented walls.

A “great house”, Kiva, open Playa, gather place on a large scale, whatever you want to call it...is waiting at the center.

Open sides of the shelters will be the exact dimensions to fit off the shelf shade cloth for side shade and privacy.

Off the shelf shade saves money.