



**City of Portland, Oregon**  
**Bureau of Development Services**  
**Land Use Services**  
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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## Briefing

### SUMMARY MEMO

**Date:** December 3, 2021

**To:** Joan Frederiksen, BPS (Project Lead)  
Cassie Ballew, BPS

**From:** Benjamin Nielsen, Design / Historic Review  
503-865-6519, Benjamin.Nielsen@portlandoregon.gov

**Re:** Briefing on West Portland Town Center Character Statement  
Summary of 09/02/21 Design Commission hearing

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a preliminary briefing with the Design Commission regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Attached is a brief summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the 09/02/2021 briefing. This summary was generated from notes taken at the public meeting and a subsequent review of the public meeting recordings.

These Design Commission comments are intended to guide you in further design exploration of your project. These comments may also inform City staff when giving guidance over the course of future related land use reviews. It should be understood that these comments address the project as presented on 09/02/2021. As the project design evolves, the comments, too, may evolve or may no longer be pertinent.

Preliminary briefings are not intended to substitute for other Code-required land use or legislative procedures.

Please continue to coordinate with **Benjamin Nielsen**, as necessary as you prepare your formal land use application and as you prepare your application.

Encl: Summary Memo  
Cc: Design Commission

This memo summarizes **Design Commission** design direction provided on 09/02/2021.

Commissioners in attendance on 09/02/2021 include: Julie Livingston, Chandra Robinson, Don Vallaster

**Executive Summary**

Commissioner comments were brief and to-the-point, and commissioners reiterated many of the comments that were given during prior briefings about the need for place-specific guidance as opposed to universal best practices.

**Guide to the Character Statements**

Commissioners said that this is an excellent addition to the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines.

**Architecture & Urban Design**

Commissioners reiterated past comments about making this section more specific to the special characteristics of this neighborhood and avoiding repeating general principals of urban design that are incorporated into the greater *Portland Citywide Design Guidelines* document. Related to this, one commissioner said, “We don’t know about this place. [The Character Statement] needs to be very clear and stand out and be obvious how different these neighborhoods are.”

**Other comments**

Commissioners thought that revisions to the natural resources section are becoming more specific and focused on the West Portland Town Center area and reiterated that the other two sections of the Character Statement should be similar in their focus on the neighborhood.

Please contact me with any questions.