

To The Portland Design Commission - Darcelle XV Interim Plaza

From Paddy Tillett, RIBA, FRTPI, FAICP, FAIA *emeritus*

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Dear Design Commissioners,

It is encouraging to see the return of O'Bryant Square to the public realm, after a long hiatus. However, to see it returned as a gated and fenced precinct is a radical step in the wrong direction. Lasting damage was done to our city when it was cast as 'riot city' on media around the world following the peaceful 'Black Lives Matter' demonstrations. We are still struggling to win back the trust of investors and others to rebuild our community and image.

The message sent by a new park surrounded by a six-foot high fence is one of fear and danger in the heart of our Downtown. Should we expect fences to secure the North and South Park Blocks and other downtown parks in the near future? The proposed fence around the Darcelle Plaza must be disallowed unless we are to abandon our civic way of life in Portland. The fence would set an unacceptable precedent for our public realm and for access to public parks. Please eliminate it from further consideration.