

Good afternoon Mayor Wheeler and members of the council. My name is Jason Franklin and I am the Associate Vice President for Planning Construction and Real Estate at Portland State University. I would like to thank the Design Commission and staff for inviting me to talk about our new building for Art and Design. PSU is helping to lead the renaissance of downtown and the construction of our new 100,000 square foot mass timber building is another positive step towards a downtown that emphasizes arts, education and culture.

A new building in downtown is always a complex undertaking with numerous design challenges. In this case we are building on the Park Blocks so there was heightened attention. However, with early advice from the design commission and guidance from staff we were able to design a new building that demonstrates PSU's commitment to high quality architecture and placemaking.

By engaging Design Review early in the process, as well as communicating PSU's intentions for the project, we were able to get early feedback that helped us shape the design in a way that both improved the design and enabled us to gain swift approval.

Each side of our full block site has an important frontage. Its main entry is on Broadway and is connected to the South Park blocks via one of the first built sections of the Green Loop. It also sits directly across from the PSU Native American Student and Community Center. Design review provided advice that helped generate a design proposal that steps down towards the Native American Center while still addressing Broadway, the Park Blocks and the Green Loop

As our project occupies the last full block site on the South Park blocks in many respects the building has no back. Because of this unique situation there were some conflicting regulations that needed to be clarified. For instance where could we put services and loading but still maintain the streetscape. Staff was very helpful in guiding our team to a quick resolution that benefited PSU and the building's design.

I want to thank Lever Architects and their partners for creating a well designed building and for the work of the design staff and Design Commission.