



## Design Commission Briefing

### DISCUSSION MEMO

**Date:** March 14, 2025  
**To:** Portland Design Commission  
**From:** Benjamin Nielsen, Design & Historic Review Team  
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**Re:** Briefing – North Park Blocks Extension  
Design Commission Hearing on March 20, 2025

This memo is regarding the upcoming Briefing on March 20, 2025, regarding the North Park Blocks Extension. The following supporting documents are available as follows:

- Presentation Slides
- Preferred concept Briefing Memo from Gary Datka, Portland Parks & Recreation
- All documents may be found here: <https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/17177625>

#### OVERVIEW

Portland Parks & Recreation staff have been working with PLACE Studio since 2023 to develop a design plan for the North Park Blocks extension, as envisioned in the 2019/20 USPS (Broadway Corridor) Central City Master Plan. Although Open Space uses are exempt from Design Review per PZC 33.420.045.A.7, the North Park Blocks extension project represents the culmination of many years of dreaming and planning, and the development of the North Park Blocks extension will likely serve to catalyze new development at the former USPS campus.

The Design Commission is invited to provide advice to the project team.

#### STAFF COMMENTS / COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- The proposal appears to align well with the open space sequencing and general programming as envisioned in the USPS Central City Master Plan.
- The three blocks have a diverse set of programmatic elements for future park visitors to enjoy.
- The Green Loop is given designated space within the three park blocks with a ramped structure connecting up to the Broadway Bridge starting at the northernmost block. This structure provides opportunities for covered areas that can provide shade in the summer and protection from rain in the rainy months. This elevated/structured portion of the Green Loop and the building at the north end of the Park Blocks will be subject to a future Type III Design Review, per condition of approval in the USPS Central City Master Plan.
- Staff believes the overall design proposal will satisfy the spirit of the *River District Design Guidelines* and *Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines* as well as the master plan.