

AIA/APA/ASLA Urban Design Panel

Portland and Oregon Chapters of the American Institute of Architects, American Planning Association and American Society of Landscape Architects

Date: April 15, 2015

To: Planning and Sustainability Commission
City of Portland

Green Loop Initiative

The AIA/APA/ASLA Urban Design Panel is a committee formed from the Oregon membership of the architectural, landscape architectural and planning professions. The Panel exists to offer a resource for feedback from those professions on projects and initiatives of importance to urban design in Portland, and has been engaged by BPS staff to consider and contribute to the 'Green Loop' Initiative.

The consensus of the Panel is that while there are many details to consider, and opportunities to refine and improve the concept, the 'Green Loop' is an initiative well deserving of Panel support. We see in this initiative a somewhat rare convergence of needs and opportunities in a 'big idea' that is at the same time attainable. The history of our professions draws from a common idea that human habitat must serve and empower people. Our experience also allows us to recognize that human cities are not static, but are accretive and evolving, which means that it is critical for us to speak not only for the present but also for the future. The Green Loop is an opportunity to embody those ideas by bringing together environmental, health, community, and economic benefits with a lasting, form-giving feature in our urban environment. BPS staff has made that case completely and compellingly.

While the broader public discussion must inevitably include consideration of short-term impacts to some interests which are rightly focused on implications to the 'status quo', we on the Panel hope that the Commission will also see in this initiative an important 'big idea' that should not be faced with a question of whether it will happen, but only when and how. The Urban Design Panel supports the Green Loop Initiative and trusts that you will support it as well.

Sincerely,

Urban Design Panel Executive Committee

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