

LA 4/589

URBAN AESTHETICS AND DEMOCRATIC SPACE: DESIGNING A PUBLIC REALM FOR PORTLAND'S GENIUS LOCI

Instructors: Dr. Deni Ruggeri; Kevin Conger & Willett Moss, Partners, CMG San Francisco

M, W, and F 1:00pm- 4:50pm

6 studio credits (+ 4 urban design credits Zero week course)



Courtesy CMG landscape architecture

STUDIO DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This urban design studio is a partnership between CMG (an innovative landscape architecture firm in San Francisco), City of Portland Planning and Sustainability, and the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Oregon. It is intended as an opportunity for students interested in practicing urban design to become familiar with the theories and practices of sustainable urban design in the context of Portland, a city that is currently setting the bar in terms of livability, energy efficiency, and social justice. It is the opportunity to envision the future of our public realm through a design approach that combines issues of sustainability and resilience with a rich understanding of a place's unique genius loci. **The zero week course --open to all MLA students--will teach them innovative urban design research and analysis methods. It is highly recommended to those who will take the studio as it will give them the opportunity to understand the site in depth.**

THE PROJECT

The site for this studio will revolve around Portland's North Park Blocks, the Post Office, and an area currently dedicated to parking and other support facilities to Portland's Main Post Office. This district is one of the few remaining large, single-owner sites in downtown. It is located along the newly proposed bicycle *green loop* and the Park Blocks Open Space system, which connects some of Portland's most iconic, culturally significant areas. Most significantly, the site is at the nexus of several rapidly evolving districts in the city center, and has been recognized as a central element in Portland's newly launched *Central City 2035 Plan*.

Some of the topics we will be addressing in this studio:

- Site as nexus: center (destination) or zipper (threshold)
- Framework Plan: guiding or prescriptive
- Urban aesthetics: district identity; specific versus general; design for experience
- Democratic space: function and social equity
- Public realm catalysts: seed cultural and economic development
- Ecological infrastructure: design for function

PARTNERS

CITY OF PORTLAND

Karl Lisle (City Planner):

Mark Raggett (Urban designer)

www.portlandoregon.gov

CMG LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Kevin Conger, Partner

Willett Moss, Partner

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KEY READINGS

City of Portland Central City 2035 – West Quadrant Reader (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/438072>)

Farr, D. (2008). *Sustainable Urbanism: urban design with nature*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

Sennett, R. (1992). *The conscience of the eye: The design and social life of cities*. WW Norton.

Southworth, M. (2003) "Measuring the Livable City." *Built Environment* 29. 4