

City of Possibility to carry forward the Design Week Portland legacy through Design Portland

City of Possibility and Design Week Portland are pleased to announce a handoff from past to present with an eye to the future. City of Possibility will assume stewardship of Design Portland, historically the umbrella brand for the city's long-running design festival, Design Week Portland. DesignPortland.org will now house a new platform for a wide range of design-related exhibits and programs, carrying forward the DWP legacy.

"Design Week Portland brought together our city's creative community in ways we'd never seen before," said DWP cofounder Tsilli Pines. "For ten years," added cofounder Eric Hillerns, "the festival proved that the identity of Portland is deeply rooted in design, and that design has real power to improve how we live. We're thrilled to see that spirit continue and evolve."

"With Design Week Portland's extraordinary run of programs as our inspiration, we want to help bring Portland's deep well of talent together and showcase it to the region as a whole," said cofounders William Smith and Randy Gragg. "We started with a focus on architecture and urban design, but in the spirit of DWP, we want to slowly grow Design Portland into a platform where designers across all disciplines can come together and foster dialogue with each other and the community at large."

From 2012 to 2022, Design Week Portland grew to become an essential annual celebration of creativity. It brought together Portland's most accomplished and ambitious designers for a week-long spring festival—hundreds of companies, studios, and individual designers presenting 400+ lectures, panels, workshops, exhibits, open houses, and demonstrations each year.

City of Possibility, launched in January 2025, with the largest survey of Portland architecture in the city's history. It continues with an ongoing series of focused programs devoted to downtown Portland's urban regeneration. City of Possibility will continue as a program under the banner of

Design Portland, and the new organization will invite other design disciplines to join in presenting programming. DWP's archive will remain accessible at DesignWeekPortland.org.

BACKGROUND:

Smith and Gragg first collaborated at Design Week Portland in 2017, when Smith's group, Untitled Studio, produced a week-long exhibit that engaged thousands of Portlanders in conceptualizing the "Green Loop", a then-emerging idea for a 7-mile bike and pedestrian path connecting the Central City's neighborhoods on both sides of the river. The Green Loop is now methodically taking shape in segments across the city.

In 2025, Smith and Gragg launched "City of Possibility"—an exhibit of more than 80 historical and contemporary architectural models (the widest survey of local architecture ever assembled) along with nine major programs exploring projects and ideas to bring new life to Portland's Central City.

Under the heading of Design Portland, and with the JK Gill Building as headquarters, Smith and Gragg will continue producing City of Possibility exhibits, talks, and charrettes focused on the Central City. But they're also inviting designers of all disciplines to consider Design Portland and JK Gill as a shared platform—a gallery, stage, and workshop to bring creative communities together.

City of Possibility + Design Week Portland = Design Portland

(400 words)

City of Possibility and Design Week Portland are pleased to announce a handoff from past to present with an eye to the future. City of Possibility will assume stewardship of Design Portland, the umbrella brand for the city's long-running festival Design Week Portland and its web domain, DesignPortland.org, carrying forward DWP's legacy as a platform for an extended range of design-related exhibits and programs.

"Design Week Portland brought together our city's creative community in ways we'd never seen before," said DWP cofounder Tsilli Pines. "For eight years, the festival proved that Portland's identity is deeply rooted in design, and that design has real power to improve how we live," added Eric Hillerns. "We're thrilled to see that spirit continue and evolve."

"With Design Week Portland's extraordinary run as our inspiration, we want to bring Portland's deep well of talent together and showcase it to the region," said cofounders William Smith and Randy Gragg. "We started with architecture and urban design, but now, in the spirit of DWP, we want to grow Design Portland into a platform where designers across all disciplines can foster dialogue with each other and the community."

From 2012 to 2020, Design Week Portland became an essential annual celebration of creativity, bringing together the city's most accomplished designers for a week-long spring festival—more than 400 companies, studios, and individuals presenting upwards of 500 programs.

City of Possibility, launched in January 2025, took a different approach: focused programs devoted to Portland's urban regeneration. Now, these approaches merge. City of Possibility will continue as a program of Design Portland, inviting other design disciplines to present programming. DWP's archive remains accessible at DesignPortland.org.

BACKGROUND: Smith and Gragg first collaborated at DWP in 2017, when Smith's Untitled Studio produced an exhibit engaging thousands in conceptualizing the "Green Loop"—a 7-mile bike and pedestrian path connecting Central City neighborhoods. The Green Loop is now taking shape across the city.

In 2025, they applied the DWP model to "City of Possibility"—an exhibit of over 80 architectural models (the widest local survey ever assembled) with nine programs exploring ideas to revitalize Portland's Central City.

Under Design Portland, with the JK Gill Building as headquarters, Smith and Gragg will continue producing City of Possibility programs focused on the Central City while inviting designers of all disciplines to consider Design Portland and JK Gill as a shared platform to bring creative communities together.