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March 21, 2016

Molly Bressers  
Program and Outreach Coordinator  
Campus Sustainability Office  
Portland State University

Dear Ms. Bressers,

Last year, Portland State University architecture students designed and built Portland, Oregon's first downtown public parklet, or mini park, on a stretch of road that was previously public parking spaces. The 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Public Parklet now provides an attractive gathering place and seating area at a popular food cart pod near campus, encouraging students, faculty and workers from the surrounding offices to enjoy their lunches outside with colleagues and friends rather than racing back to their desks to eat.

The installation is intended to help revitalize this stretch of SW 4th Avenue in the heart of the SoMa Ecodistrict—of which Portland State University is a part—and contributes to SoMa's sustainability goals of placemaking and community-building.

The parklet was student-designed and student-constructed, but community members, city planners, and university staff and faculty stood firmly behind the project. When raising funds to purchase the building materials for the parklet proved challenging, students and PSU employees launched a successful crowdfunding campaign to close the funding gap. The project also received contributions and in-kind donations from local businesses. Last spring, a class of 22 architecture students constructed the parklet pieces and installed them over the course of Memorial Day Weekend. On June 1, 2015 Portland Mayor Charlie Hales joined PSU President Wim Wiewel, students, and officials from SoMa to cut the ribbon and officially open the 4th Avenue Parklet, a now-beloved feature of the neighborhood.

I can affirm that this is indeed an innovative project. In addition to it being the first public parklet in downtown Portland, the project launched new collaborations between PSU students, faculty, staff, local businesses, nonprofits, and city agencies, and I've no doubt these partnerships will continue to bear fruit as we work toward a more livable, sustainable future.

Best regards,

Fletcher Beaudoin  
Assistant Director  
Institute for Sustainable Solutions  
Portland State University