BOLD IDEAS CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE. OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND WITH EVERY PROPOSED PROJECT. WHAT PREVENTS THEM IS NOT SEEING THEM. YOU HAVE TO SEE THE OPPORTUNITIES, CONNECT THE DOTS AND PUNISH WITH VIGOR.

What first intrigued me about Lane Community College's plans to expand downtown was the prospect of designing a project in Eugene's urban core. Then the unique chance to combine student education and housing on the same site really caught my imagination. This possibility of creating a whole, student-centered neighborhood was fascinating.

The College has built a presence in Eugene's downtown core for many years, but when the City offered LCC a new dollar for new dollar, both institutions knew their fates were deeply connected. The adjacent library, parking garage and public transit was in a perfect location for housing a new family block to urban campus and precipitate the sustainable urban development.

The project was also unusual in bringing together three architects: SRG (academic); Robertson Sherwood (student housing); and Robertson, Robertson, Robertson. We spent a lot of time on urban design issues, knowing that we were putting a lot on the line and dealing with competition for the ground floor spaces. It made sense to put the student store on the 100% corner, but better sense to put student admissions there. We wanted to capitalize on multiple opportunities and enrich the surrounding neighborhood. This required very careful planning and coordination so that each move added value and ensured special "place making."

We also wanted the design to resonate LCC's ambitious goal to become carbon neutral by 2050. Many measures were purposely left exposed to engage and inspire environmental stewardship right downtown. A dramatic four story glass atrium is the project's lung, while a large solar collector, made of glass tube integrated into the façade, provides hot water. The stunning façade makes a bold architectural statement and contributes to efficiently coordinated passive strategies: Cooling LEED Platinum high performance envelope, integrated solar panels; daylighting, sun and shading, building moves and natural hot water, and a high-performance envelope.

Having a like-minded client added to our pursuit of innovation. We envisioned and then realized a classroom on the academic building's top floor that's completely open to the lobby. Visitors can easily see what's happening inside and get drawn into the learning experience. Exploitation and discovery are encouraged and underline the bold moves that are this project's hallmark.

LCC's energy management students now have the chance to learn the intricacies of heating and cooling systems bythemselves. They are specially taught with a wide variety of HVAC systems, as well as extensive monitoring and metering, public live data displays, a lighting lab and a roof top observatory for mechanical equipment and monitoring. What resulted was a whole garden of ideas for the students to work on. We integrated solar panels, ventilation, building moves, daylighting, sun and shading, building envelope, and ensured special "place making."

What began as a dream to build a net zero energy building as a teaching tool for LCC's prestigious energy management program converged with the City of Eugene's desire to revitalize a struggling urban neighborhood. What prevents them is not seeing them. You have to see the possibilities of creating a whole, distinct world.

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