

Block 49 Groundbreaking Remarks

“New Beginnings and Overcoming the Odds”

Good morning.

Thank you Dee for the kind introduction.

I’m honored to participate in this historic groundbreaking.

The Roman philosopher Seneca once said that “Every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end.”

Today, we celebrate new beginnings,
and the people and partners who made
this day possible.

Some said this day would never
happen.

Others made it happen.

There would be no Block 49 without a
new Portland Housing Bureau, and a
dynamic new Director who would not
take NO for an answer.

To Margaret VanVliet and her team –
Thank you for your perseverance and
leadership.

There would be no Block 49 without an
outstanding non-profit partner who
shares our vision and has the
experience to deliver on that vision.

To Dee and the Reach family – Thank
you for your deep commitment to
serving the needs of low income
individuals and families in our
community.

There would be no Block 49 without community leaders advocating for an inclusive neighborhood where everyone is welcome.

To my colleagues on the City Council and the residents of South Waterfront,
Thank you.

There would be no Block 49 without a strong partnership with the Portland VA – and a shared commitment to meet the needs of our veterans.

To David Greaves and his team at the VA, Thank you.

Finally, there would be no Block 49 without our public and private funding partners whose significant investment made this day possible.

To my colleagues who support the 30% set-aside for housing, the Portland tax payers who fund it, and to the State of Oregon, US Bank and Enterprise Community Partners – Thank you.

*** PAUSE ***

A new bureau.

A new director.

Strong partnerships with Reach CDC
and the VA.

The support of this neighborhood,
Portland taxpayers, my colleagues on
the Council and a blue chip roster of
funders.

This is a very solid foundation – strong enough to support this Block 49.

* **PAUSE** *

Today, we celebrate a historic milestone.

In 15 months, when we gather here again to cut the ribbon, we will say – to those who have served us and to those we seek to serve – **“Welcome Home”**