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Skanska Reveals Details of Dynamic Design for 2+U's 'Urban Village'

Multi-Level, Open-Air Retail and Community Space Represents First-of-its-Kind Ground Floor Design in Seattle Market, Melding Retail, Art, Culture and Nature

SEATTLE – Skanska today announced further design details for the three-level, pedestrian focused Urban Village at [2+U](#), its 38-story, Class-A+ office tower currently under construction in downtown Seattle. The developer and its design team, led by [Pickard Chilton](#), worked with [Graham Baba Architects](#) and the [Swift Company](#) to create the first-of-its kind Urban Village, a dynamic open-air retail experience that will serve as a gathering space for the public that fuses local retail, art, culture and nature.

The Urban Village spans approximately 24,000 square feet of covered, open and outdoor space nestled under 2+U's lifted office tower. With five access points, including the refurbished alley off University Street and two welcoming access points from First and Second Avenues, the **Urban Village** also includes 16,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space, a more than 220-foot long structural **GeoWall** made from local soils, and approximately 1,100 square feet of arts and cultural space in the newly named **Studio**. With construction nearly complete at 2+U, Skanska plans to open the Urban Village to the public in late August.

"Our intense collaboration with Pickard Chilton, Graham Baba and Swift Company created a compelling destination for both our tenants at 2+U, as well as downtown residents, workers and visitors," said Skanska Executive Vice President Murphy McCullough. "The Urban Village will provide the downtown community with the best the city has to offer that seamlessly combines the natural environment with its urban surroundings. With its mix of local fare and shops, as well as gathering places for business or pleasure, we are proud to deliver this truly unique amenity to the community."

The Urban Village design approach was unconventional. Skanska empowered its retail and landscape architects to help shape the design, in partnership with Pickard Chilton. Pickard Chilton not only developed the lift at the 2+U office tower creating the Urban Village, but they also successfully assembled the design visions of Graham Baba and Swift Company to bring the Urban Village to fruition. The retail designer, Seattle-based architect Graham Baba, which specializes in unique retail and commercial spaces, worked with Skanska to design the retail spaces throughout the Urban Village to accommodate multiple food and beverage offerings, and boutique retailers along First Avenue. The Swift Company, the landscape architect, is well-known for successfully crafting the public realm of projects to reflect the nature of the region.

Working with their team, Skanska created a unique sense of place at the ground level, designed as an urban amenity for the community and building tenants to gather and enjoy the surrounding retail, amidst a rich landscape that reflects the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest landscape.

A central design feature of 2+U is the podium tower lifted 85-feet above ground, which requires significant structural support. After much exploration, Skanska chose a structural insulated rammed earth wall, called the **GeoWall**. Resembling the multi-hued walls of Discovery Park or Whidbey Islands' cliffs, the GeoWall is built from local soils from the Pacific Northwest, creating a warm and visually appealing nod to the region. Invented by [SIREWALL](#), Skanska's GeoWall at 2+U is the first in Seattle and one of the largest of its kind in the world. The GeoWall curves through the Urban Village, starting at two feet in height and ending at more than 30 feet, spanning the entire three-level Urban Village.

Another distinctive design element of the Urban Village is the **Studio**, an 1,100 square-foot, multi-use arts space on the third level of the community space, where local emerging artists and performers can create, practice their craft and perform in celebration of the rich cultures of the Pacific Northwest. Honoring its commitment to provide a unique public benefit to the community as a required part of the development project, Skanska will offer use of this amenity to the arts community for free in perpetuity.

The Urban Village will also include other unique public spaces including the **Square**, which will feature local art installations and event programming, and the **Lookout**, where office tenants, shoppers and visitors can take in sweeping views of the Puget Sound.

[2+U](#) is a 686,000 square-foot office tower in the heart of downtown Seattle. Skanska engaged community stakeholders in the planning stages of the project to create a building that adds immediate value to the tenants and the surrounding community. Located at the corner of Second Avenue and University Street, the building is adjacent to Seattle Art Museum and Benaroya Hall, and just steps from the new waterfront. Through its thoughtful design, 2+U becomes a connection linking the new waterfront, Pioneer Square and surrounding downtown neighborhoods.

Other Skanska developments in the Seattle area include [Stone34](#), the global headquarters for Brooks Sports, which was the first project to meet the City of Seattle's requirements for the city's Deep Green Pilot Program, making it one of the greenest buildings in the region. At [400 Fairview](#), Skanska delivered headquarters offices for Tommy Bahama, Impinj and Car Toy's/Wireless Advocates, and assembled a Market Hall with mix of local retailers, as well as a rooftop restaurant with unparalleled views. Skanska also developed [Alley 111](#), a 260-unit multi-family project with 6,000 square feet of retail in the community of Bellevue.

In July 2018, Skanska purchased a land parcel located at NE 8th and 108th in the Bellevue's downtown core, ideally located near major Bellevue employers, including Microsoft's Bellevue

Campus, Amazon, Salesforce, Paccar, Symetra, Expedia and Concur. In October 2017, Skanska also purchased the 2200 Block, a 19,440 square-foot parcel comprised of three properties on 4th Avenue in the Belltown neighborhood of Seattle, which is currently being designed and entitled for a 300-unit multifamily tower.

With more than 70 years of history in the Puget Sound region, Skanska combines generations of local knowledge with the vast tools of a global development and construction firm to build what matters for local communities. Skanska's portfolio ranges from investing its own capital and developing award-winning sustainable real estate, like Brooks Sports' headquarters at Stone34, to building local landmarks, such as Benaroya Hall and the Museum of Glass, major infrastructure projects like the replacement of the southern mile of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and small tenant improvements. Recognized as one of the region's top corporate philanthropists, Skanska is also committed to creating new opportunities for local small, traditionally disadvantaged businesses.

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About Skanska

Skanska is one of the world's leading construction and development companies. In the U.S., Skanska's core operations include building construction, civil infrastructure and developing self-financed commercial properties, which together generated \$8 billion in revenue in 2018. As a developer in the U.S., Skanska has invested a total of \$2.3 billion in commercial and multi-family projects. With U.S. headquarters in New York City, Skanska has offices in 28 metro areas with 9,000 employees nationwide. Skanska is an industry-leading innovator in both safety and project execution, and offers competitive solutions for both traditional and complex assignments to help build a more sustainable future for our customers and communities. Global revenue of parent company Skanska AB, headquartered in Stockholm and listed on the Stockholm Stock.

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