

February 27, 2017

Oakland City Council  
1 Frank H Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612

**RE: MacArthur Transit Village Parcel B  
March 7, 2017 agenda: Item 9.2 (File Nos. 16-0709 and 16-0709)**

Dear City Councilmembers:

Boston Properties and McGrath Properties presented the MacArthur Transit Village Parcel B project to SPUR's Project Review Advisory Board at our February 2017 meeting for review and consideration.

SPUR is a member-supported nonprofit organization. Through research, education and advocacy, SPUR promotes good planning and good government in the San Francisco Bay Area. We bring people together from across the political spectrum to develop solutions to the big problems our cities face. With offices in San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland, we are recognized as a leading civic planning organization and respected for our independent and holistic approach to urban issues.

In general, SPUR is focused on policies, plans and codes rather than on individual projects. In order to make infill development easier, we prefer to help set good rules around zoning, fees, housing affordability, sustainability, etc. However, on occasion SPUR's Project Review Advisory Board will review and endorse development proposals of citywide or regional importance, evaluating their potential to enhance the vitality of the city and region according to the policy priorities and principles of good placemaking supported by SPUR.

Parcel B is a 1.15-acre site located within the MacArthur Transit Village, a five-parcel, 7.76-acre, mixed-use transit-oriented development in North Oakland adjacent to the MacArthur BART Station. Two parcels have already been developed (90 units of affordable housing and a 6-level parking structure for BART). Parcels A and C, entitled for 383 residential units and approximately 20,000 sq ft of retail, just broke ground.

Parcel B includes 402 residential units and 13,000 square feet of commercial in a 260' tall building, and a 4,000 square-foot plaza close to the entrance to BART. We appreciate the proposed density and think a high-rise immediately adjacent to a BART station is appropriate.

The Parcel B project at the MacArthur Transit Village:

- ✓ **Is located at an appropriate location for development**, near transit and infrastructure and not on a greenfield site. This site is part of a master-planned area immediately adjacent to the MacArthur BART station, one of the most heavily trafficked stations in the BART system.
- ✓ **Provides an appropriate mix of land uses** of residential and retail, contributing to diverse stock of housing, fostering economic development, providing amenities and services to the surrounding community.

- ✓ **Provides sufficient density at the site** with 350 dwelling units per acre (FAR of 10:1), which supports adjacent transit and prevents underutilization of land, serving the future needs of Bay Area residents.
- ✓ **Creates a good place for people and contributes to a walkable environment** with active ground floor uses, including the possibility of a grocery/"grab and go" vendor and a residential lobby along the two internal streets, minimizing parking and curb cuts, and providing parking ratio of 0.65. The frontages that face the BART parking garage and the access road between the property and the BART tracks/Highway 24 are less active in response to those neighboring uses.

**The SPUR Project Review Advisory Board finds this development to be an appropriate and welcome use for this site and endorses the MacArthur Transit Village Parcel B project. We also encourage the project sponsor to continue to collaborate with Hines, the developer of Parcels A and C, in order to advance a holistic public realm and landscape vision for the "village" as well as coordinate the retail programs across the whole of the master-planned site.**

Please do not hesitate to contact us or Kristy Wang, SPUR's Community Planning Policy Director with any questions or clarifications.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Curtis

Diane Filippi

Co-Chairs, SPUR Project Review Advisory Board