



SPUR

San Francisco | San Jose | Oakland

July 12, 2016

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

Re: Letter in Support of the Oakland Infrastructure Bond

Dear Councilmembers,

As a longtime advocate for responsible planning and good government, the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) has long supported measures that invest in affordable housing, sustainability and transportation infrastructure improvements. SPUR strongly urges your support of the proposed \$600 million infrastructure bond to update and improve local infrastructure for the residents of Oakland. This November, Oaklanders could have the momentous opportunity to repave crumbling streets, expand and protect affordable housing and upgrade and improve community-serving facilities. Currently Oakland has a severe shortage of housing that grows more dire each day; a \$443 million paving backlog that has put Oakland in 89th place out of 106 Bay Area cities in pavement quality; and a growing number of dated and aging park and library facilities.

In our report, *A Downtown for Everyone*, we outline recommendations that address the need for Oakland to invest in its infrastructure. We also participated in Mayor Schaaf's Housing Cabinet, which identified the need to stabilize housing costs in existing housing. Based on both our report and the work of the Housing Cabinet, we would like you to consider the following:

Functional and pedestrian-friendly streets will improve safety and mobility. Funds from the infrastructure bond would give Oakland the chance to repave the many streets in disrepair to functional conditions and the capability to address safety and mobility concerns by being able to redesign areas that are already slated for re-pavement. These opportunities can use excess, dilapidated roads to create better transit, biking, and pedestrian experiences in the public realm as Oakland grows.

Adding to the existing affordable housing stock will help alleviate some of the shortage. Providing housing that is permanently affordable allows for citizens in danger of displacement to stay in Oakland as we build up. Additionally, funds spent rehabilitating vacant units will help stabilize rents for residents and make available housing that is safe, decent and affordable.

Public facilities— such as parks and libraries — are central gathering spaces. Community facilities are central to city functioning and play a major role in creating enjoyable places for citizens to be. These amenities are also crucial to community development and providing access to other ancillary services such as reading programs, job programs, festivals and celebrations. Additional funding would keep them operable and available for the public to use as both information hubs and leisure, giving people more reasons to move and travel to Oakland.

Prioritizing Oakland's infrastructure will help set a precedent for its future success. We strongly urge you to move this measure forward to voters this fall.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in and please do not hesitate to be in touch with questions or further discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ROBERT OGILVIE', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Ogilvie
Oakland Director

cc: Oakland board
Mayor Schaaf
City Administrator Landreth