

March 2nd, 2018

William A. Gilchrist
Director of Planning and Building
City of Oakland
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 2114
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Gilchrist,

On behalf of SPUR, it my pleasure to provide this letter of support for the Oakland Planning and Building Department's applications for assistance under the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments Priority Development Area (PDA) Planning Assistance Program for the following projects: (1) Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Initiative (PDA Staffing Assistance); (2) Construction Innovation Initiative (PDA Staffing Assistance); and (3) Framework for Updating the Oakland General Plan (PDA Technical Assistance Program).

The proposed projects are regionally-significant because the Bay Area faces an enduring and chronic housing shortage. The City of Oakland is uniquely positioned to both capture a share of the region's growth in a way that reinforces Plan Bay Area goals of reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The City of Oakland (as well as the region overall) is also facing an affordability and displacement crisis that can be mitigated through increased housing production.

In 2016, Mayor Schaaf convened a group of stakeholders (including SPUR) to help develop strategies to both create new market rate and affordable housing and to preserve existing homes that house low income households. Two strategies that were identified as part of that process would be supported by this PDA grant – 1. making it more viable to construct 1500 new accessory dwelling units in Oakland and 2. promoting the use of innovative construction types such as modular and factory-built housing to construct housing in neighborhoods where the construction of new housing may be cost prohibitive. This grant would also support the creation of a framework for ongoing community input into plan implementation. This framework will enable the update of the city's General Plan.

The type of work proposed by the Planning and Building Department will help achieve goals that align with Plan Bay Area 2040. We at SPUR look forward to continuing to work with the Oakland Planning and Building Department to implement these important policies.

Sincerely,

Sarah Karlinsky
Senior Policy Advisor