



SPUR

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June 25, 2018

Brisbane City Council
50 Park Place
Brisbane, CA 94005

RE: Brisbane Baylands General Plan Amendment Case GP-1-18

Dear Brisbane City Councilmembers:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the plan for the Brisbane Baylands. SPUR is a nonprofit member-supported public policy organization. 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. Through research, education and advocacy, we promote good planning and good government in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Brisbane Baylands site is a key site not only for Brisbane but for the region. Environmentally, this is the exact location that should be targeted for a dense mix of housing and jobs. The Brisbane Baylands is not only located adjacent to the major Schlage Lock redevelopment project in San Francisco but also right at a Caltrain station which provides access to the region and close to SF Muni Metro. This transit-oriented location is the right place for dense, mixed-use development that helps to get people out of cars and onto public transit, bicycles and their feet.

SPUR has supported and continues to support Universal Paragon Corporation's (UPC) plans for 4,400 homes, 300 acres of open space and more than 7 million square feet of other commercial uses at the Brisbane Baylands. However, we understand that the city is moving forward with a plan that would include as few as 1,800 housing units and approximately 4.4 million square feet of commercial uses. We are happy to see that the city is working to find a viable solution, but we would like to emphasize a few points:

- **To accommodate the growth of Bay Area — which is likely coming, like it or not — we must add housing and jobs in places on regional transit to avoid exacerbating climate change, increasing traffic congestion and increasing the cost of living in this already-expensive place.** We must use the capacity of this infill opportunity and build intelligently here.
- **Density is key to creating feasible, interesting, pedestrian-oriented places with a mix of uses that work at regional transit stations.** We need plenty of people — whether residents or workers — near each other to create activity that makes retail, restaurants and other public-serving uses viable. The lower FARs proposed at this location may make the development not only infeasible but also undesirable. We urge you to tread lightly here and not reduce the scale of the project so much as to be impossible to finance and construct. In addition, many of the community benefits currently proposed will not be viable if the project's overall scale/size is reduced.

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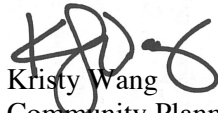
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We urge you to work with UPC to identify a plan that works for the Brisbane community, the needs of the region and neighboring cities, and the reality of development conditions. I would also like to point you to a recent white paper that SPUR released — *San Francisco's Next Mayor: A Blueprint for Change* (<https://www.spur.org/publications/white-paper/2018-05-09/san-franciscos-next-mayor>). While tailored to the particular needs of San Francisco, there are many housing-related recommendations within it that may prove to be constructive for the city of Brisbane and UPC as you implement this plan, among them:

- Eliminate expensive city requirements,
- Use data and financial analysis to inform inclusionary policy,
- Promote factory-built construction, and
- Reduce the time it takes to review housing proposals.

Thank you for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you on this important site in Brisbane. Thank you for re-considering this plan, and we encourage you to work with the developer to identify ways to find a compromise that works. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions (kwang@spur.org, 415-644-4884).

Best,



Kristy Wang
Community Planning Policy Director

cc: SPUR Board of Directors