



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Leaders, Agencies, Developers Celebrate Coliseum Connections Groundbreaking

Oakland, Calif. – Local elected officials joined with developers and transit agencies Friday to celebrate the start of construction for Coliseum Connections (formerly known as the Coliseum Transit Village), a transit-oriented development with 110 mixed-income units. It is located immediately behind the Coliseum BART station on a 1.3-acre lot on Snell Street between 70th and 71st avenues. The project is being developed by a joint venture of UrbanCore Development and the Oakland Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) after 17 years of planning and is scheduled for completion and occupancy in December 2018.

“As we navigate this regional housing and cost of living crisis, Coliseum Connections brings much needed housing for Oaklanders,” said Mayor Libby Schaaf. “With half of the homes in this new development designated as affordable, residents will now have access to high-quality affordable housing coupled with exceptional transit access.”

The last week has seen a surge in support for accelerated development of affordable housing units, with Governor Brown signing into a law a package of bills designed to increase the affordable housing supply across the state. In the Coliseum Connections alone, 50 percent of the residential units will be affordable to households at or below 60 percent of the area median income, to go along with the 55 units that will be some of the first market-rate rental units in East Oakland in a decade.

The project consists of a five-story building accommodating 66 one- and two-bedroom flats, and 44 two-story townhome units on the eastern portion of the site, grouped in three separate buildings. Eighty-six (86) residential parking spaces, including two car share spaces, are provided in a partially below-grade structure. The project has been designed to be built using modular housing by Guerdon Modular Buildings. Michael Johnson, President of UrbanCore, indicated that the use of modular housing will reduce the construction schedule by 30% and lower project construction costs by approximately 10%.

Coliseum Connections will have exceptional access to BART’s rail system, numerous AC Transit bus routes, Amtrak’s Capitol Corridor line and the Oakland Airport Connector, all complemented by recent streetscape improvements.

“Like many development projects, the process to assemble funding and garner approvals has been fraught with delays,” said BART Board Vice President Robert Raburn. “I expect the pace to quicken with the widespread attention to resolve the housing crisis, and this is a great step forward toward meeting our goal of 6,000 affordable housing units on BART property.”

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“I have enjoyed forging the various partnerships to create Coliseum Connections,” says Council President Larry Reid. “Seventeen years ago, members of this community came together to form OEDC which partnered in 2012 with UrbanCore, led by Michael Johnson, to create one of the best-defined, transit-oriented development projects in Council District 7. Working families will benefit from exceptional access to regional transit options and affordable housing to improve the quality of their lives. I want to thank our State and County financial partners, my BART colleagues and the members of OEDC who have made this vision a reality.”

Beyond adhering to state-of-the-art green building standards, the project will enhance the neighborhood’s health by adding much-needed green space. The project includes development of a 25-foot-wide pedestrian mews bordering the east edge of the project. This landscaped mews will link 71st and 70th avenues, providing neighbors with a direct walking and biking path to the Coliseum BART Station. Storm water management will be accommodated in a combination of bio-swales located at the pedestrian mews and along the frontage at Snell Street. There will be a net gain of seven trees for a total of 41 in the project area. The project also features a 1,000-sq.-ft. publicly accessible community café.

The construction site is currently a parking lot with 164 parking spaces; the loss of these spaces will be mitigated, in part, by the creation of a 20-space, city-owned parking lot on Snell Street. Additional mitigation efforts will include the conversion of on-street parking spots along Snell Street into BART’s paid parking system.

The developers assembled funds from seven financial sources, including public sector funding from the City of Oakland (\$12 million), State of California (\$10 million) and County of Alameda (\$2.5 million) to leverage private investment from Chase Bank (\$29 million), Royal Bank of Canada (\$9.7 million), Commonwealth Multi-Family Housing (\$1.25 million) and HUNT Mortgage/Freddie Mac (\$16.3 million). Additionally, the project will be developed on a long-term lease of the land from BART. The architects for the project are Pyatok Architects and Prefab Logistics. The general contractor is Cahill Contractors.

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