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DRAFT (for Internal Review only)**Lamphier Gregory**1944 Embarcadero
Oakland, CA 94606
Attn. Scott Gregory**Re: Proposed Baseline Project Evaluation/Preliminary Urban Design Criteria and Guidelines**

Project: Kaiser Design Review # 20518.01

This evaluation is based upon information in the Oakland Medical Center Long Range Master Plan Report dated April 6, 2005, a physical model of the entire proposed project showing general location and massing of buildings, and discussions with NBBJ in regards to the proposed project. This evaluation (*shown in italics*) is based upon a preliminary set of urban design criteria and guidelines that have been developed to provide a framework for the identification and development of future alternatives.

Objectives

1. To ensure that all Kaiser's medical campus programs are accommodated and sensitively integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods.
2. To recognize that Kaiser provides an important institutional function for surrounding neighborhoods and the City as a whole.
3. To develop good transitions between varying programs and uses into the surrounding neighborhood.
4. To promote good urban design edges so as to provide and promote an attractive street character, ease of access and lively street life for Piedmont Avenue, Broadway, and West MacArthur Boulevard.
5. To ensure that the City's future vision for the development of Broadway and West MacArthur Boulevard is promoted.
6. To enable the Kaiser medical campus to contribute positively to the street life and character of existing neighborhoods.

Building Form and Massing

- Kaiser buildings should work as an ensemble to enhance the visual skyline of the area, serving as an attractive landmark appropriate to a respected institution in the City.
- Building massing should respect the adjacent neighborhoods in terms of size and scale, and with particular attention to transitions.
- Buildings should be massed so as to minimize shading of adjacent properties or public open spaces.
- Buildings should hold the street edge and utilize stepbacks on the upper floors to allow for terracing/outdoor spaces and overlooks where appropriate.
- Taller buildings and increased density should be focused on the MB Center site so as to minimize impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The plan properly places the large physical plant and parking garage adjacent to the freeway and places the hospital's taller buildings on the MB Center site.

The proposed 7-story parking garage for the MOB (on the Honda site) is out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and screening measures have not been adequately articulated for review. The shadows from the structure do adversely impact both the existing creek and the backyards of the existing residential neighborhood along Manila Avenue.

The proposed MOB on the corner of Broadway and West MacArthur Boulevard does not successfully step down into the residential area along Manila Avenue. The building is out of scale and character of the surrounding fabric and physically overwhelms the surrounding residential buildings. As measured in the physical model, the associated 7-story parking garage is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the block long and presents a very uniform mass and bulk that is out of scale for the area. It is not clear as to the extent of the landscape screening and how effective it would be as a buffer to the neighborhood. The parking garage, due to its height, will also significantly shade the adjacent residential properties along Manila Avenue.

Streets/Frontages

- Building entries should face the street or other public courts.
- Minimize curb cuts.
- Provide key streetscape improvements such as paving, street trees, street furniture to ensure use by pedestrians and promotion of a vibrant streetscape.
- Buildings should hold the street edge, creating an attractive street wall.
- Ground Floor: At least 75% of the ground floor of a building along the major streets should be transparent with non-mirror reflective glazing.
- Where buildings meet the street it is important to provide ground floor active uses, particularly along Broadway and West MacArthur Boulevard, and as it becomes possible, along Piedmont Avenue.

The proposed MOB and its associated parking garage are designed to hold the street wall along Broadway and West MacArthur Boulevard. The lack of active uses along the ground floor, however, will inhibit the potential for a vibrant street frontage. The proposed new hospital, due to the curvature of the ground floor, pulls away from the existing street edges. It is difficult to determine from the submitted conceptual massing studies the activity and transparency of the proposed ground floor uses along these streets.

The proposed project suggests some streetscape improvements such as new tree plantings along major streets and along Glen Echo Creek. Implementing a complete new streetscape improvement program that is integrated with the City of Oakland's streetscape plan is recommended for the entire area.

It is unclear from the model or drawings as to the amount or degree of transparency on the ground floor/upper floors for the entire proposal or the number of proposed curb cuts.

Sustainability

- Medical Office Buildings and site features should strive to incorporate sustainable building measures and establish equivalency to LEED NC2.1 certification as the minimum standard for all new projects, with a goal of LEED Silver as a minimum.
- Hospital buildings should follow Green Guidelines for Healthcare.
- Of particular interest on this site, from an urban fabric perspective, will be measures to support public transit use by staff and visitors, introduction of permeable landscape areas, preservation/restoration of riparian corridors in Oakland, and deconstruction/disposal procedures.

It is not clear from the proposal if all or any buildings are intended to be LEED certified or the degree of sustainable measures that are to be incorporated into the design.

Access and Circulation

- Meet health service provision requirements for improved connectivity among facilities, while respecting the neighborhood pattern and street character.
- Minimize vehicular conflicts with pedestrians.
- Provide clear and visible entry points for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Provide enhanced crosswalks at intersections for pedestrians.
- Pedestrian access and circulation between various parts of the neighborhood and the medical campus should be primarily via sidewalks, public courts, or pedestrian walkways. Pedestrian bridges over streets are not encouraged.

The proposed project looks to minimize pedestrian vehicular conflicts through consolidating vehicular entrances to service, loading, and parking garages while building entrances are oriented to major streets. The vehicular access to the Broadway parking garage at 38th Street appears very close to the intersection of Broadway and 38th Street, potentially leading to congestion. This potential issue should be investigated more closely as traffic patterns and flow are studied.

The project proposes a number of pedestrian skybridges crossing many of the streets in the area. There are two key aspects to the consideration of skybridges: health care connectivity and urban design character. In terms of health care connectivity, it is essential that Kaiser reconsider each of the potential skybridge locations, evaluate below grade as well as at grade connections and narrow the focus to those very limited locations where patient needs are paramount and other links are proven infeasible. As to the urban design character effects of skybridges, there are powerful reasons to avoid their use wherever possible. Negative impacts include: visual impacts where important arterial and local corridors in the city are interrupted, long views blocked, regional orientation reduced and shadows cast on public areas. In addition skybridges remove pedestrians from the local streets where they are essential to maintain a lively, safe, retail character as an important and positive area of common ground between neighborhood and institution. Therefore, the use of skybridges is not recommended.

It is not clear if a new signalized intersection along Broadway (between 580 and West MacArthur Boulevard) will be required to serve the new drop off, parking access, and loading area for the hospital. If so, this may present a great opportunity for additional pedestrian access to the Park as well as slow traffic along Broadway.

Additional detailed multi-modal transportation studies by Kaiser are awaited to provide a district-wide and street-by-street analysis of existing and future conditions, and to evaluate the potential to meet hospital and neighborhood needs.

Parking and Service/Loading

- Have a clear parking strategy for vehicles to ensure that they do not adversely impact the surrounding neighborhoods. Set the target for parking to serve essential needs, yet encourage transit use by staff and visitors.
- Encourage parking structures and other service facilities near the 580 freeway.
- Encourage remote parking locations for staff to minimize the need for larger parking garages.
- Demarcate clear drop-off, service, and loading areas that do not hinder pedestrian activity, encroach upon, or reduce the size of the adjacent sidewalks.
- Any proposed parking garages should provide active ground floor uses.
- Facades should be designed with a modulated system of vertical openings and pilasters. Repetitive horizontal strip openings should be avoided in parking garages. Lights from cars should be screened from surrounding uses.
- Maximize the amount of subterranean parking provided in areas adjacent to residential uses so as to minimize the height of garages. Consider subterranean parking elsewhere to allow hospital related uses to come to ground level, facilitate mid-block connections and enhance the urban landscape setting of the hospital facilities.
- Service and loading dock areas should be concealed from public view and not directly seen from the street or other public spaces.
- Develop a creative phasing plan to accommodate parking needs during hospital construction.

The proposed project properly locates a large parking garage and the utility plant near the 580 Freeway, thereby minimizing impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods north of West MacArthur Boulevard. The additional parking garage for the proposed MOB on Broadway, however, adversely impacts the adjacent neighborhood through its size, scale, length and lack of pedestrian oriented amenities along the street, and buffering along the creek.

The totals for the proposed parking appear to be very high given the size of the project. A strategy to minimize the number of on-site parking spaces and place more parking below ground should be investigated so as to minimize traffic in the surrounding neighborhoods and reduce the size and bulk of the proposed parking garages.

In the proposed plan, there is significant amount of area on the MB Center site devoted to service and loading facilities. It is suggested that a more efficient and consolidated configuration of these facilities could be developed in order to minimize the amount of this area fronting Piedmont Avenue.

Open Space

- Provide public gathering spaces that relate to the public streets and that provide adequate amounts of direct sunlight.
- Encourage the incorporation of outdoor spaces and courts in the building massing to serve contemplative needs of patients and families, offer upper-level landscape spaces that

- overlook and may be visible from the streets below and which open vistas to City and regional views beyond.
- Promote the development of the Glen Echo Creek as a natural amenity for surrounding neighborhoods, and as consistent with long-term Oakland efforts to restore an attractive network of Creeks throughout the City.
 - Look for opportunities to establish a variety of open spaces/plazas at key nodes throughout the campus.

The master plan proposes a public plaza at the corner of Piedmont Avenue and West MacArthur Boulevard with a series of ground floor retail uses. While this public amenity presents a public benefit to the neighborhood, additional design studies should be done to verify if it will have enough direct sunlight and will be sufficiently connected to the commercial area of Piedmont Avenue to ensure pedestrian use. Alternative locations that should be explored for additional public spaces are the corner of Howe Street/West MacArthur Boulevard, Broadway/West MacArthur Boulevard, as well as the possible closure of a portion of Howe Street near West MacArthur Boulevard.

Although the proposal provides for a restoration of the Glen Echo Creek, the proposed MOB is designed to traverse it, and by doing so, will interrupt the naturalistic character of the Creek and the view corridor along it.

The proposal provides a number of opportunities both for the MOB and the new hospital to have upper floor roof decks and overlooks, but it is not clear from the plans if they are occupied or accessible.

Careful attention must be paid to size, scale, and fenestration of the proposed buildings that front onto Mosswood Park so as to ensure that the public and community nature of the Park is preserved.

Views

- Maintain view corridors along Broadway, Piedmont Avenue, Howe Street, and West MacArthur Boulevard Street
- New buildings and structures should not block existing view corridors, particularly along major streets.

The proposed skybridges will block existing view corridors down Broadway, West MacArthur Boulevard, and Howe Streets. The intense use of these skybridges will severely impact the potential for an increased street life and pedestrian activity on the sidewalks.

Phasing

- Phasing in a continuing health care setting poses major challenges for the continuity of care, ease of access, changes in orientation and parking demands, and a step by step plan needs to serve both institutional and neighborhood objectives.
- Phasing of the project should be designed so as to minimize impacts of the project on the surrounding neighborhood, and to anticipate wherever possible long-term use of all Kaiser sites.

The proposed project places a priority on developing large amounts of structured parking in the first phase that will adversely impact the surrounding neighborhood (see parking comments). Alternative

phasing strategies should be looked at in terms of limiting the amounts of new parking in the first phase, and staging the development near 580 to retain some parking on that large site.

Future use of the existing hospital site is as yet unclear and undeveloped. A better understanding of the entire program for all the Kaiser sites and alternative phasing options for the project might possibly result in containing the total site requirement for the Kaiser Oakland Medical Center.

Signage

- Develop a clear and comprehensive signage and wayfinding program to assist visitors.

It is understood from the project architects that the refined project will have a clear and comprehensive signage and wayfinding program.