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November 27, 2019

Mr. Ashley Feeney  
City of Davis  
23 Russell Boulevard  
Davis, CA 95616

Re: Comparison of Aggie Research Campus and MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative

Dear Mr. Feeney:

Per our discussion this week, we understand that a few members of the public have questioned why the City has determined that the Aggie Research Campus (ARC) may utilize the environmental analysis conducted on the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative as the basis of its environmental review and CEQA compliance. The short answer is that the proposals are sufficiently similar in scope and use that the analysis of the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative, which was prepared as an equal weight alternative, is directly pertinent to the environmental review of ARC and retains considerable relevance in light of the similarities of the proposals. This letter and the attached tables demonstrate both the similarities and differences between the proposals, all of which are offered to assist in the subsequent CEQA analysis now underway.

In June 2019, property owners, Buzz Oates, Ramco Enterprises and Reynolds & Brown requested that the City of Davis recommence processing of its innovation center application, which was first submitted in 2014. The innovation center, previously known as the Mace Ranch Innovation Center ("MRIC"), has been redesigned and renamed the Aggie Research Campus ("ARC" or "Project"). Aggie Research Campus is a name that conveys the Project's location, its proximity to UC Davis, the type of innovative research activity proposed, and the campus-like environment being created. The ARC is a Project intended to effectively, efficiently and sustainably deliver an innovation center for the City of Davis, one that reflects market demands and will meet current and future City needs.

Despite refining and improving the prior MRIC submittal, ARC retains the basic land uses that were analyzed in the Mixed-Use Alternative chapter of the MRIC

environmental impact report (“EIR”), which was certified on September 19, 2017. To elaborate: the ARC offers a mix of office, research and development, laboratory, prototyping, and advanced manufacturing, with a total of 2,654,000 square feet of jobs-creating space. It also includes up to 850 housing units, with a density range of 15 to 50 units per acre and a median density of 30 units per acre. The Project site is 187 acres located east of Mace Boulevard, north of County Road 32A and adjacent to the incorporated City. In sum, ARC proposes the exact type and scale of land uses that were analyzed in the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative, at the same physical location, but on a footprint that has been reduced by 25 acres. Additionally, the site layout, including general land uses, roadways, points of access onto existing infrastructure, and nonautomotive paths of travel remain largely unchanged.

Because the Project is substantially similar in both nature and design to the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative, we believe that the potential environmental impacts of ARC fall squarely within the envelope of impacts analyzed in the MRIC EIR, particularly those in Chapter 8 on the Mixed-Use Alternative. As such, the prior EIR contains relevant and valuable informational and we are asking the City to rely on the certified MRIC EIR as the basis of the CEQA analysis for ARC.<sup>1</sup>

For ease of comparison, the following is a list of ARC components that differ from the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative:

- **Less Acreage/Reduced Project Footprint**
  - ARC excludes the City’s ±25-acre parcel (APN 33-650-026) in the northwest corner. The City parcel will retain its agricultural land use designation and zoning.
  - Overall Project acreage is reduced to 187 acres (APNs 33-650-009 and 33-630-009).
  - 6.8-acres of the City parcel is proposed with an easement to be improved and utilized as an Agricultural Buffer.
  
- **Compressed Roadway Infrastructure**
  - The ARC roadway alignment is still a modified grid with two access points onto County Road 32A, two full access points onto Mace Blvd at Alhambra and County Road 30B, and a third right-in and right-out onto Mace Blvd.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Friends of the College of San Mateo Gardens v. San Mateo County Community College District* (2016) 1 Cal.5th 937.

- As part of ARC, the right-in and right-out onto Mace Blvd has been moved north in response prior traffic engineering comments.
  - The east/west roadways have been shortened in length and now end at the vertical extension of the eastern north/south roadway. This is an overall reduction in project roadways.
- **Reduced Parking Area**
    - Parking ratios are greatly reduced for all proposed land use types (see attached Table).
    - The overall number of proposed parking stalls was reduced down to 4,340 parking stalls. This is less than the City municipal code standard and reflects changing travel patterns.
    - The ARC housing is proposed at one parking stall per unit with an option for the multi-family to parked at 0.5 stalls to 1 unit.
- **Modified Phasing**
    - The ARC phasing plan has been modified to more clearly tie the construction of housing to the creation of jobs. The phasing now permits the construction of 1 housing unit for every 2,000 square feet of jobs-creating space until the maximum 850 units are built.
    - The modified phasing allows housing to be built in phases 1, 2 and 3 of ARC. In the MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative, housing was only in phases 2, 3, and 4.
    - No housing can be constructed until 200,000 square feet of non-residential uses are built. Thereafter, building permits for housing may be sought at the ratio of 1 unit/2,000 sqft to ensure that housing is and continues to be supportive of the jobs created.
- **Increased Floor Area Ratio**
    - The MRIC Mixed-Use Alternative had a net FAR of 0.82.
    - With less acreage, the ARC Project FAR is now 0.93.

The distinctions and similarities between ARC and the Mixed-Use Alternative analyzed in the MRIC EIR are further displayed on two tables that are being submitted with this letter. We will publicly display these tables at the scoping meeting on December 2, 2019 for the benefit of those in attendance.

We hope that this information is beneficial to the City, project consultants and the public in understanding the ARC proposal. Please do not hesitate to ask for any additional information that may help with evaluation and consideration of ARC.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Keasling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Matthew Keasling

cc: Mike Webb, City Manager  
Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner  
Dan Ramos, ARC Project Manager