



University of California
San Francisco

September 22, 2015

The Honorable Edwin M. Lee
City Hall, Room 200
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Golden State Warriors Arena and Events Center in Mission Bay

Dear Mayor Lee,

We write as faculty members at UCSF who are also members of the US National Academy of Sciences. Many of us either are, or have previously been, leaders on this Campus. We have seen this University rise to true excellence over the course of the past 40 years, and we look forward to an even greater future for UCSF and the exciting private biotech and medical organizations that it has attracted to Mission Bay. But we are seriously concerned that this future is threatened by the plan to construct a very large sports, entertainment, and event arena in our midst.

As you know, the plan for Mission Bay approved by the Board of Supervisors (October 1998) states, as one of the major objectives of this visionary project:

Facilitating emerging commercial and industrial sectors including those expected to emerge or expand due to the proximity to the new UCSF site, such as research and development, bio-technical research, telecommunications, business service, multi-media services, and related light industrial...

And indeed, Mission Bay has rapidly become one of the most prominent academic-industry biotechnology/medical complexes in the world. But we cannot stop here: we face increasing competition from other rapidly growing complexes of this type, both in the US and abroad. It will be critical to keep moving aggressively forward, if we are to continue to attract the very best talent – both academic and private sector – to San Francisco.

It is absolutely clear to us that the planned new Golden State Warriors Arena and Events Center in Mission Bay would severely degrade the environment for the many thousands of researchers and private sector biomedical scientists who come to work at Mission Bay each day. It would also curtail the beehive-like, daily exchanges of personnel – from the South Bay and elsewhere – on which the success of the Mission Bay biomedical complex depends. Our major fear is that the Mission Bay site will lose its appeal – not only for the new biomedical enterprises that the city would like to attract here, but also for most of its current occupants. The result could critically harm not only UCSF, but also the enormously promising, larger set of biomedical enterprises that currently promises to make San Francisco the envy of the world.

Much attention has been properly focused on how traffic gridlock caused by the new stadium would affect access to the three new UCSF hospitals that are immediately adjacent to the site, one of which houses one of only two Children's Emergency

rooms in San Francisco. It is unavoidable that terrible, and possibly even life-threatening, traffic congestion will be associated with the planned complex, given that it is intended to be the site of some 220 events per year, held both in the evening and during the day (*New York Times*, September 6, 2015; business section, pages 1, 4 and 5). Many of us have experienced the hours-long gridlock that paralyzes all Mission Bay streets before and after San Francisco Giants home games. The absolute paralysis that it creates is already a non-trivial problem, which the planned stadium promises to both greatly expand and intensify.

The presence of the 41,000-seat AT&T Park less than a mile (a 15-minute walk) from UCSF Mission Bay has not been sufficiently factored into the plans to build the Warriors' huge new sports/entertainment complex. The ballpark already significantly impacts life and work at Mission Bay, with nearly 50 San Francisco Giants home weekday games per season. Due to these events, it can take cars and UCSF shuttle buses over an hour to exit from the UCSF parking lot onto the streets, and a 20-minute trip may require two hours.

The widespread traffic impact of AT&T Park games is noted on the website for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA):

“Motorists are advised to avoid the increased congestion in downtown San Francisco related to these special events and advises commuters to use transit, taxis, bicycles or walk and to avoid using the Bay Bridge in the two hours before or after these games. ... As a reminder to fans, in order to reduce congestion on city streets after all events at AT&T Park, the SFMTA will close eastbound King Street between 3rd and 2nd streets from the seventh inning until after the post-game traffic has died down. Additionally, the northbound portion of the 4th Street (Peter R. Maloney) Bridge will be closed to all traffic except streetcars, buses, taxis and bicycles during the post-game period. (<https://www.sfmta.com/news/press-releases/sfmta-weekend-transit-and-traffic-advisory>)

Adding an 18,500-seat Warriors complex on top of what is already a transportation mess is asking for disaster. We are highly skeptical of any plan that proposes to segment traffic by restricting 4th street and other routes for "UCSF business only," since those of us at Mission Bay have experienced the unruly behavior of frustrated drivers stuck for long times in traffic jams. In fact, there is no believable transportation solution for two very large complexes placed in such close proximity at Mission Bay.

Imagine dropping a 41,000-seat stadium anywhere within a 1-mile radius of San Francisco City Hall, and then tripling the capacity of Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. It would make no sense, for the same reason that it makes no sense to squeeze the planned Warriors facility into the Mission Bay neighborhood. The resulting perfect storm of traffic would make it miserable for both the existing neighborhood and for sports fans – in addition to threatening the entire future of UCSF as the center of a world-class academic/ biotech/medical complex.

In summary, we urge you and the city to reconsider the wisdom of proceeding with

current construction plans.

Sincerely yours,

Bruce Alberts, Chancellor's Leadership Chair in Biochemistry and Biophysics for
Science and Education

Elizabeth Blackburn, Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics, and Nobel laureate

James Cleaver, Professor of Dermatology and Pharmaceutical Chemistry

John A. Clements, Professor of Pediatrics and Julius H. Comroe Professor of
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Robert Fletterick, Professor of Biochemistry, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, and
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Carol Gross, Professor of Microbiology

Christine Guthrie, Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics

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Alexander Johnson, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, and Biochemistry
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Cynthia Kenyon, Emeritus Professor, UCSF, and Vice President, Aging Research,
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Michael Stryker, William Francis Ganong Professor of Physiology

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Arthur Weiss, Professor of Medicine, and of Microbiology and Immunology

Zena Werb, Professor of Anatomy

Cc: Tiffany Bohee