



September 3, 2019

Dear Oakland City Councilmember Kalb:

As the co-owner of The Golden Squirrel, an Oakland restaurant, and a board member of the Rockridge District Association representing 355 Oakland businesses, as well as a resident, all in your district, I wanted to express how vital it is to support the Oakland A's stadium project. As you evaluate the A's proposal, I ask you to please consider not only the additional jobs and revenue the project would generate for those in immediate proximity to the Howard Terminal ballpark itself, but also the economic impact it would deliver in perpetuity for businesses such as mine elsewhere in the city.

The A's are not only an irreplaceable part of Oakland's social fabric; they are a key financial component for my business and many others in Rockridge. Most restaurants and bars in our area experience a sizable increase in business before and after A's games, with fans taking BART and enjoying the neighborhood, generating a 10 to 25% increase in revenue. For small local businesses such as mine that staffs 25 employees, the additional revenue that A's fans provide is vital. With the financial boost the A's consistently deliver, we are better positioned to turn profits and provide paychecks for our employees, many of whom are working-class Oakland residents fighting to stay in their hometown amidst the ever-rising cost of living.

To visually illustrate the A's importance: Although The Golden Squirrel is a neighborhood family pub and not a sports bar, a large A's flag waves prominently below our main signage throughout baseball season; the same with George and Waltz, which displays an "A's Elephant" in front. McNally's hosts A's watch parties for major games, as do numerous other bars along College Avenue. Cactus Taqueira's line for burritos is noticeably longer and marked by green and gold on game nights. The list goes on. In short, supporting the A's in Oakland is not just a matter of sports pride—for local businesses such as ours, it is an essential business practice.

The civic energy surrounding teams that possess an authentic Oakland identity is also immensely important to our businesses. This has never been more apparent to us than with the impending departures of two professional sports teams from Oakland: the Raiders and Warriors. Since the Raiders announced their move to Las Vegas, we experienced a significant decline in customers during Raiders games, regardless of whether the games took place at home or away. We expect a similarly depressed turnout next Warriors season when the team moves to San Francisco, despite the franchise being just one Bay Bridge away.

I can say, without question, that it would be devastating—to the city generally and to our businesses specifically—if the A's Oakland stadium project went unsupported by the Oakland City Council and the team eventually relocated to another market. Conversely, the boost in enthusiasm and activity that a new Oakland stadium would provide for A's fans would translate into real, longstanding patronage and revenue for us, enhancing our ability to be sustainable local employers serving Oakland. For all it would bring to us and many other bars, restaurants and shops in the Rockridge district going forward, I urge you to approve the A's Oakland stadium project. Thank you, and let's go, Oakland!

Sincerely,
Andrew Snow