

October 1, 2021

Members of Planning Commission
City of Berkeley, Land Use Planning Division
1947 Center St, Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: Recommendation for the Bayer HealthCare LLC Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) and Development Agreement Amendment

Dear Berkeley Planning Commissioners,

My name is Lukas Webb, and I am a community college student in the Bioscience Career Institute of Biotech Partners. Our organization was established in 1993 as part of a Development Agreement (DA) between Bayer and the City of Berkeley. Biotech Partners helps students, such as myself, and especially students who are from communities underrepresented in STEM fields, attain the personal, academic, and professional development needed for careers in biotech.

Biotech Partners would not exist today without Bayer. Since its inception, we have had 3,900 participants in program, 15 internship placements per summer at Bayer, as well as 8 year-long co-op jobs provided to our community college program, with nearly \$3.5 million earned collectively since 1993. Eighty-five of our participants fall in the “income challenged” bracket, and 85% identify either as people of color or as female; the students in our programs gain valued professional experience, learning, mentorship, and other wrap-around services. Our graduates demonstrate the effectiveness of our approach. Many have gone on to lucrative careers at Bayer, other biotech companies, or other scientific fields. Biotech Partners and the support from Bayer has created an excellent pipeline for creating pathways into employment in a growing, lucrative, and meaningful industry born right here in the Bay Area.

Through BCI, I have gained multiple different internship opportunities with both East Bay Municipal Utility District and Bayer Pharmaceuticals. These internship opportunities have helped to broaden my horizons, and show me what biotech fully encompasses. They’ve helped me choose a career in biotech.

I support Bayer’s new development agreement without hesitation because it will continue to give the community more opportunities to grow, develop, and learn in the STEM field, giving Berkeley natives an equitable start and bright future in Biotech. This DA is a great project and a wonderful opportunity for the City to continue working with an entity that truly cares about the community where it is rooted.

Given the decades of value the amended DA could bring to Berkeley and the region, I urge you to recommend extending Bayer’s DA in Berkeley.

Thank you,

Lukas Webb

