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December 4, 2018

Greg Guernsey
Director, Planning and Zoning Department
City of Austin
505 Barton Springs Road, 5th Floor
Austin, Texas 78704

Re: Downtown Density Bonus Application for 1700 Guadalupe –
Travis County Courts Facility and Office (the “Application”)

Dear Mr. Guernsey:

We are submitting this letter on behalf of Travis Hotel Group LLC (“Travis”) to submit our density bonus request for property located at 1700 Guadalupe Street (the “Property”). The density bonus request is to allow a floor-to-area ratio (“FAR”) of 9.5:1.

The Property is approximately 1.76 acres and is currently developed as a surface parking lot with one commercial/residential building which will be demolished. Vehicular access to the site is located along 17th Street, 18th Street, Guadalupe Street, and San Antonio Street. The Property is zoned Downtown Mixed Use (“DMU”) and within the Downtown Austin Plan, not under the Capitol View Corridor, and not subject to the Downtown Parks Overlay. The maximum FAR for DMU zoning is 5:1 with a maximum allowed height of 120’. On a 1.76-acre site this would yield approximately 383,328 square feet of building area.

The purpose of this Application is to request a density bonus to exceed the 5:1 FAR limitation for a 14-story office building with underground parking and a ground floor public plaza, and a 12-story Travis County courts facility building with separate secured underground parking (the “Project”). The proposed buildings will be 242’ tall. Please note there is not a residential component to this Project. The density bonus, if approved, would allow a 9.5:1 FAR, which would allow approximately 725,138 square feet of building area. This is an increase of approximately 341,810 square feet when applying an 5:1 FAR.

The Project shall adhere to Section 25-2-586 by meeting all of the Gatekeeper requirements. This includes (i) a restrictive covenant committing to streetscape improvements consistent with Great Street standards, (ii) a commitment to achieve a minimum two-star rating under the Austin Energy Green Building program, and (iii) substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines as outlined in the attached matrix worksheet.

A site plan has been filed with the City (SP-2018-0448C.F1) that provides streetscape improvements along San Antonio Street, 17th Street, Guadalupe Street, and 18th Street consistent with Great Streets Standards. In addition to incorporating Great Streets along the adjoining right of way, the Project will incorporate a large plaza adjacent to San Antonio Street. The shaded plaza will provide for outdoor seating and gathering areas around landscape features creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. The plaza will allow a direct connection for the public and encourage greater pedestrian activity.

In addition to the plaza, the site location provides an intermodal benefit to the public and businesses with multiple bus routes (including two high frequency bus routes – 801 and 803) and a dedicated bicycle lane along Guadalupe Street. With the existing residential buildings and more planned or under construction in the downtown area, the site offers substantial walkable employment opportunities and convenient access for the public to a modern court facility. The proximity to the Capitol is another pedestrian benefit.

In summary, the request is to increase the allowed FAR from 5:1 to 9.5:1 in order to develop a pedestrian-friendly project that enhances the City's public and civic space.

We appreciate your consideration of our project and look forward to meeting with you to answer any questions and provide further details.

Respectfully,

ARMBRUST & BROWN, PLLC



Michael J. Whellan

cc: Stuart Thomajan
Rodney Moss