



September 05, 2013

Santa Monica Planning Commission
City of Santa Monica
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Re: Development Agreement 10-002, Bergamot Transit Village Center, 1681 Twenty-Sixth Street
Hearing Date: September 11, 2013
Agenda Item 5-A.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, we are writing to express our board's support for the Bergamot Transit Village Center project which is currently under review.

This site is of critical importance to the success of the LUCE, Bergamot Area Plan, and the future of the Bergamot area. The project is a truly transit oriented development located immediately adjacent to the first stop on the Exposition light rail line and will serve as the gateway to our city.

Hines has worked with the community and city staff for over six years to put forward a strong proposal that includes a wide array of significant community benefits that will improve the surrounding neighborhood and the City of Santa Monica. During this time, Hines has diligently met with a diverse group of stakeholders to receive feedback. The result of this exhaustive and inclusive effort is a phenomenal project that responds to the concerns raised by the community that can also serve as a model for the LUCE.

As we are all well aware, the LUCE is a document that received years of public and private scrutiny and, ultimately, won widespread support. Moving forward with this project will allow for the successful implementation of many of the LUCE's ambitious objectives including breaking up the scale of neighborhood blocks, constructing transit-oriented development, and implementing aggressive Transportation Demand Management programs to reduce traffic. Conversely, retention of the existing improvements would frustrate nearly every goal outlined in the LUCE for this part of our City.

Board Members, Cont.

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Readers Fine Jewelers

Mark Harding
LAcarGUY

David Hibbert
David Forbes Hibbert, AIA

Robert Isomoto
Santa Monica College

Jeff Jarow
PAR Commercial Real Estate Brokerage

Iao Katagiri
RAND Corporation

Robert Kull
The Lobster Restaurant

Paula Larmore
Harding Larmore Kutcher & Kozal LLP

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Jason Nazar
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In addition, this project has the potential to expand and enrich our arts community, provide publicly accessible parks and open space to the neighborhood, support the environmental and economic sustainability of our city, improve circulation in the area, provide new affordable and workforce housing, and open up a site that has been closed to the public for more than five decades.

With all of this in mind, we respectfully urge you to direct staff to move the project forward and proceed with the negotiation of a development agreement. It is critical that we maximize the benefits of this important resource in our city.

Sincerely,

Laurel Rosen
President & CEO

Cc: Santa Monica City Council
Santa Monica City Manager Rod Gould
Santa Monica City Planning Director David Martin
Santa Monica Special Projects Manager Jing Yeo

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