

March 12, 2012

To: Jing Yeo, Santa Monica Planning and Community Development

Subject: Bergamot Transit Village Center [Papermate site] Draft EIR Comment

The Board of Directors of the North of Montana Association wishes to go on record opposing any certification of the Draft Environment Impact Report or approval of the Hines project without the cities of Santa Monica and Los Angeles preparing a collaborative, comprehensive regional development plan that takes into account all current and future projects proposed for this area.

The jobs-housing imbalance in our city resulting from over 9,000,000 square feet of commercial development over the past 20 years has put tremendous pressure on the street network of Santa Monica and Los Angeles as well as the I-10 and 405 freeways.

Clearly, our current infrastructure cannot support the high level of additional office space and consequential traffic flow as proposed in the Hines project in an area where there is already complete gridlock during the morning and afternoon rush hours. Traffic studies indicate that this project alone will bring an additional 7,755 car trips daily, and this is only one of at least six projects proposed for the area. It is estimated that the six projects together will bring as many as 1.2 million square feet of additional office space and 13, 600 new car trips daily. And, these figures do not take into account any development across Santa Monica's border in West Los Angeles.

A key goal of the LUCE is to "reduce future traffic congestion" and "reduce regional commercial uses." Projects such as Hines violate these basic principles, adding more commercial uses, not less. The concept of collaborative strategic planning to reduce the traffic congestion throughout the area is also supported in our LUCE and is necessary to address the unmitigatable environmental impacts.

We urge you to coordinate land use and transportation impacts within the region with Los Angeles and await the results of a collaborative Master Area Plan before approving any project.

Sincerely,



Albin Gielicz

Interim Chair, North of Montana Association