



**Planning and Community Development
Department**

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commissioners Jim Ries, Gwynne Pugh, Gerda Newbold;
Architectural Review Board Members Michael Folonis, Lynn Robb;
John Kaliski, AIA

CC: Francie Stefan, Steve Traeger, Peter James, Jing Yeo

From: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Planning & Community Development

Subject: Bergamot Transit Village – Area Plan

Date: November 9, 2010

As you may know, PCD has initiated the planning for the Bergamot Area Plan that will include the Bergamot Transit Village, which is divided into two elements, the Bergamot Transit Village (the area north of Olympic Boulevard) and the Bergamot Arts Center (the area south of Olympic Boulevard). In addition the Plan will include the Mixed-Use Creative Arts District as defined in the LUCE, which is located east of Bergamot.

The Planning for the Bergamot Area Plan is happening concurrently with the processing of a series of Development Agreements. Therefore, it is important that the city accelerate portions of the planning so that the planning guides the review of the DAs rather than the DAs directing the Area Plan. The first of these issues is preparing Design Guidelines for the large streetwalls and streetscapes, both internal to the planning districts and externally along the city's major corridors.

We are pleased that you have agreed to participate in a mini worksession on Thursday, November 11, 2010 from 11 AM to 2 PM at City Hall in PCD's Large Conference Room on the 2nd Floor, Room 212. We will provide lunch. As you can see from the list of people to whom this memo is directed, the participants include staff, members of the Planning Commission and Architectural Review Board and City design consultants. While we will briefly review most of the DA submittals to provide some context as to what is occurring in the area, the intent is to establish principles and a framework or a preferred direction for streetscape design guidelines with regard to form, building typologies, and skyline variation. In order to ensure that there is no pre-judgment of any particular project that may come forward for formal hearings we will not critique any of the DA designs.

The primary urban design challenge is to establish design principles and guidelines for new construction with little or no adjacent context for projects that may be as tall as 86' and as long as 1,250' or 3+ typical city blocks. While it is the intent of the LUCE and the City to reduce the

length of the streetwalls by extending the city grid through this former industrial area, there will be long uninterrupted streetwalls such as where the Expo maintenance facility is planned to be located. The issues for discussion may include:

- What is the appropriate format for the streetscape? Should the street/boulevard be modeled after a typical or traditional urban street/boulevard where buildings typically have common walls and the architecture is primarily a street façade? Or, a campus approach where buildings are standalone elements with four facades? Or, a combination? Or?
- How should the buildings address the street? Should the city require buildings, e.g. along Olympic to generally locate the building's streetwall along the street property line or the back side of the sidewalk, or at the edge of open space plazas or mini-parks? Should the typical building be allowed to be set back from the sidewalk? Importantly, along Olympic Boulevard, should there be a required continuity of active uses and building entries at the ground floor?
- While the development parameters in the Draft LUCE that shape form were generalized, what more specific standards or guidance could/should be developed in order to ensure that the desired character is achieved in the District? Should facades follow the current zoning requirements for stepbacks from a given height of streetwall? What provisions should be incorporated for building articulation? Should there be a minimum ground floor height based upon building height, e.g. taller buildings have taller ground floors? Should there be provisions for variation in the height of buildings as called for in the LUCE (or portions of buildings) to create an interesting skyline/streetwall within the maximum allowed development parameters?
- At what locations should heights be allowed to reach the maximum parameters as prescribed by the LUCE? What are the conditions that trigger the highest heights? At what locations should heights be limited to the minimum parameters?
- Should the length of any one building along the length of the street be limited? Should a single building be allowed to be 300'+ in length? If so should the building façade be articulated and expressed in a manner so that it appears to be several smaller buildings and thus reducing the apparent scale of the building?
- The LUCE characterizes the Bergamot Transit Village as a "Village" of workers, residents and local serving retail/services. What are the characteristics that will distinguish this area as a "Village?" Realistically, given the limited opportunity areas that currently exist within the Transit Village boundaries, what features of the District Plan are most important to be realized and in what areas?
- Should the new buildings fronting the "new internal roadways" within each district follow the same design guidelines as for buildings fronting the "existing external roadways/ boulevards?" How should the District Plan address the LUCE hierarchy of streets to create a permeable, walkable and functional street pattern?
- Should there be provisions to control the impact of reflective glass on adjacent open space or other structures? Should this be an issue that is explored in the building's EIR?

- Should projects over a certain size require a more rigorous design review process?
Should projects of a certain size require a different architect for different buildings such as was the case on the Village where there were originally three architects?
- Should there be a “Village” incentive to encourage multiple smaller buildings that are more in keeping with the concept of a “Village?”
- To what extent should the District Plan identify industrial or architectural “artifacts” (non-landmarks) or themes as a means to establish an existing “industrial and creative arts” context for new development to reference, as stated in Policy D20.8?

It is the city’s hope that based upon your knowledge and experience you might be able to bring to the worksession examples of what you believe to be good or bad examples of streetscapes, large buildings in a boulevard or major street context, etc. One example that is close to Santa Monica is the street facades/streetwalls on the exterior and the interior of Playa Vista. It might be worth driving by (through) as the scale is not dissimilar to BTV and there are lessons to be learned.

The following are the first thoughts on the agenda for the worksession:

11:00 AM - Staff Overview/Orientation

1. Goals/Objectives for the Worksession
2. Overview of the Area Plan’s Work Flow/Scope
3. Project Boundaries – Surrounding Context
4. Existing Development Agreements
5. Other Proposed Projects
 - i. Bergamot hotel
 - ii. Expo Maintenance Facility

11:15 AM - Review of Transportation/Circulation Issues/Opportunities

1. BTV Concept Diagram
2. Shared parking opportunities
3. Circulation Opportunities
 - i. Regional Bikeway
4. Expo Station
 - i. Expo single platform
 - ii. Side Platform opportunities

11:30 AM – Review of LUCE Goals and Policies

1. Goals and Policies
2. Height and FAR
3. Stepbacks and other provisions

11:45 AM – Open Discussion

1. Review precedents as brought to meeting by participants/staff

12:15 PM – Lunch Served – Eileen Fogarty intends to join the worksession during the noon hour

1. Discuss/Agree on Specific Streetscape/Streetwall Design Guideline Elements (similar to the bulleted list of issues above).
2. Open Discussion for each of the agreed to Streetscape/Streetwall Design Guideline Elements.

1:15 PM – Summary

1. Streetscape/Streetwall Design Guideline

We very much appreciate your participation in this Streetscape Design Guideline Worksession and look forward to your valuable insights and contributions.