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**Comments from our Councilwoman:
Janice Hahn, 15th District, City of Los Angeles**

Thoughts on Ponte Vista

Ponte Vista has been the most hotly debated topic in San Pedro since I was elected in 2001. I have heard from all sides of this issue, almost daily, since Bisno Development purchased the property from the federal government three years ago. I have heard from our community at Starbucks, at the grocery store and at community events. What I have resoundingly heard is that our community does not want a project this large on Western Avenue.

The planning department's recent public hearing at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium was an important (and lively) step in the process to decide what kind of project should be built at the Ponte Vista site. The planning department will incorporate the public comments and make its recommendation to the City Planning Commission. From there, the City Council will hear the recommendation from the Commission and vote on the recommendation, finalizing the proposed project's status.

Over the past year or so I have heard a number of arguments, both for and against this project. However, not once have I been convinced that the project should be larger than its current single-family zoning.

More than a year ago, I set up my Community Advisory Group to look closely at the Ponte Vista project and create a specific plan that would create the right development for this location. This group worked hard for almost a year and looked more closely at this project than most of us ever will. They studied it, asked questions, visited similar developments and held public meetings.

When it became clear that the proposed 2,300-unit project was too big, the hope was that the developer would work with them and create a smaller project. Both the advisory group and I were disappointed when the new project submitted by the developer was for 1,950 units. The advisory group decided that the new proposed project was still wrong for North San Pedro. Their formal recommendation was that the final project should not "exceed the density of the current R-1 zoning."

The biggest reason for opposing the proposed development is traffic. It is no secret that Western Ave. is already overwhelmed by traffic. You can hardly move on Western on weekdays after 3:30 p.m. or on Saturdays. Western carries 37,000 cars per day. Adding even a minimum 10,000 cars a day, as the developer expects (although I think this is a bit low), will only worsen the problem. If you add a sinkhole or a funeral procession to Green Hills, the problem only gets worse.

While I am in favor of a project at Ponte Vista, I am not in favor of this project. We all know that the current dilapidated Navy housing on the site has become an eyesore. But redevelopment there must be the right kind of development.

I want a project that has workforce housing that is accessible to young professionals (like firefighters and teachers), has affordable senior housing, increases open spaces and common areas for residents to enjoy (including a space for Eastview Little League), is built with union labor, creates good jobs and improves transportation options, including an access road for Mary Star of the Sea High School.

However, the project that is being proposed is just too big for North San Pedro. That is why I asked the planning department to evening of the hearing to deny the 1,950 unit proposal and ask the developer to rework this project and propose something that we can all agree will benefit this community long-term.

Let me be clear, I fully support San Pedro's need for development and density — yet development and density must fit with the character of the surrounding area. Downtown San Pedro is an area where we have access to the freeway, to public transportation, to the waterfront and jobs and where we are creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. That is why I have aggressively backed efforts to increase density in downtown San Pedro, where we are turning the corner from urban decay to urban renewal.

Downtown is the right place for density in San Pedro — not on an already gridlocked Western Avenue. We expect the planning department to make a formal recommendation in the coming months. At the end of the day, I think we all want the same thing: a good project that will be right for San Pedro.