



7/7/2015

VIA EMAIL

Matt Diaz, Associate Planner
City of Rancho Cordova
Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Bridgeway Square Apartments (DD8588)

Dear Mr. Diaz

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Development Project Routing (May 22, 2015) for the Bridgeway Square Apartments project. We neither support nor oppose projects but instead make recommendations based on the walkability of a development. Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the project.

Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community's future. Human beings need moderate exercise, such as walking, for about 30 minutes a day in order to prevent the development of chronic disease and overweight. Only 30% of the population in the Sacramento region is active at this minimal level, often due to limitations placed by a built environment not suited to walking and other types of physically active travel. This project proposes 194 new residential units in close proximity to commercial and retail destinations, creating the opportunity for many new walking trips. To best accommodate those trips, it is imperative that the project provide safe, attractive, accessible and direct pedestrian routing to and throughout the site.

Based on our review and the community's input at the June 23, 2015 community meeting, we offer the following recommendations:

Include a mix of uses to conform to the Special Planning Area zoning designation of Loft District.

Additional on-site commercial and retail opportunities would create nearby walkable and bikeable destinations for future and existing residents. Nearby residents have insisted that the new development provide amenities that also benefit existing Capital Village residents.

Create accessible, attractive and direct pedestrian routes that enable access between the apartments, existing neighborhood and commercial destinations to the west.

Without well-defined pedestrian access through the site, the proposed development may create a significant barrier between existing residences and the commercial area to the west.

Direct walking routes through the site will not only enable existing residents to access commercial destinations, but will enable future apartment residents to access amenities throughout Capital Village, such as the nearby park.

To best create these pedestrian throughways, design at the east and west ends of the two main horizontal pedestrian paths of travel should be in such a way that is inviting, safe and accessible to offsite locations. These areas should be designed at a pedestrian scale with lighting and signage to maintain security and encourage use.

The following are locations where access to and through the site should be improved:

1. A paved path should be continued through the proposed landscaping north of building 2 where the sidewalk ends before connecting with the sidewalk on Bridgeway Drive. Doing so will create continuous pedestrian access between the existing residences to the east and commercial uses to the west.
2. A paved path should be installed between the walkway to the east of building 3 and the sidewalk on Bridgeway Drive adjacent to the existing crosswalk. To reach this crosswalk, residents of building 3 would either need to cut through the landscaped area or across the parking lot drive aisle to the pedestrian travel path then down Bridgeway Drive. Direct access to parks and other open spaces is critical to enabling healthy, active citizens.
3. Sidewalks and curb cuts between buildings 1 and 3 should be extended onto the landscaped corners to better connect the project site with the commercial development to the west. As proposed, the sidewalk ends in a vehicle driveway. Additionally, a crosswalk across the private drive at northern leg of this intersection would improve connectivity to and through the site.

Create well-defined, accessible and attractive pedestrian circulation throughout the site.

WALKSacramento commends the centralization of parking lots within the site. Internalized parking can significantly improve the walking environment around a development. However, because parking is centralized, pedestrian travel must be especially accommodated in order to maintain a walkable environment.

1. Crosswalks along longer stretches of parking lot should be raised. Raised crosswalks calm traffic and can better alert drivers to pedestrian presence. This is particularly important at the main entrances where high volumes of pedestrians will be directed.
2. Crosswalks should be inlaid with patterned materials or painted with high visibility paint to further alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians.
3. Finally, all building entrances should front onto direct and well-marked pedestrian paths of travel. In addition, side and rear entrances should be designed in a manner that is attractive, well-lit, and inviting to pedestrians. If these entrances are designed as secondary access points without adequate lighting or aesthetic treatments, pedestrians may be encouraged to only enter through a main entrance. However, each of the front entrances are only accessible through parking lots, often fronted by garage doors.

Lessen the development's impact on nearby residents.

There are several opportunities to improve the site in a way that not only enhances the walking environment within and around the site, but lessens the impact on nearby residents.

1. Large high-growth trees such as redwood or pine trees should be planted along the property's western edge. Doing so will significantly improve the nearby walking environment with shading. The trees will also help shield apartment windows and balconies from existing residences and vice versa.
2. The trash receptacles should be relocated away from Bridgeway Drive toward the site's commercial side. Moving the dumpsters will lessen the sound and smell impacts of both the trash and garbage trucks driving through the site. Doing so will also improve the project's internal walking environment by removing unsightly trash areas and trucks from prominent pedestrian routes.

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255 or kkumar@walksacramento.org

Sincerely,

Kirin Kumar
Project Coordinator

Enclosure: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST for BIKING and WALKING

*Prepared by WALKSacramento and SABA (Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates)
September 2012*

This checklist is provided to give an indication of design, engineering, and policy elements that we consider when reviewing development projects.

POLICIES

- Walking and biking is a priority
- Adopted a policy to develop a full multi-modal and ADA accessible transportation system

Project Review and Comment

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Regional Blueprint
- Regional Blueprint Consistent General Plans
- Adopted Climate Action Plans
- Subdivision ordinances to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Zoning ordinance to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety

ENGINEERING

- SIDEWALKS & BIKELANES ON BOTH SIDES OF MAJOR ROADWAYS
 - Pedestrian Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
 - Bicycle Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
- SAFE CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS
 - every 300-600 feet on major arterials
 - well lit, marked crosswalks
 - audible signals & count-down signals
 - median refuge islands
- SPEED MANAGEMENT
 - Speed limits based on safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Implement "road diets" where there is excess lane capacity
- STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
 - Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist safety
 - Sidewalks buffered by trees and landscaping on major arterials
 - Vertical curbs
 - 5' minimum sidewalk widths, 8' in front of schools
 - 6' minimum bike lanes on busy streets

INTERSECTIONS

- Median refuge islands for pedestrians
- Signal timing to enable safe passage
- Signal detection for bicyclists
- Crossings on all 4 legs of intersections

- ELIMINATE BARRIERS
 - Freeway, railroad, river and creek crossings
 - Obstructions in sidewalks and bike lanes

NEW DEVELOPMENT – REQUIRE

- Walking & bicycling circulation plans for all new development
- Direct and convenient connections to activity centers, including schools, stores, parks, transit
- Mixed uses and other transit supporting uses within ¼ mile of light rail stations or bus stops with frequent service
- Minimum width streets
- Maximum block length of 400'
- 4-lane maximum for arterials; Recommend 2 lanes wherever possible

NEW DEVELOPMENT – DISCOURAGE

- Cul-de-sacs (unless it includes bike/ped connections)
- Gated and/or walled communities
- Meandering sidewalks
- Inappropriate uses near transit (gas stations, drive-thru restaurants, mini storage and other auto dependent uses)

BUILDINGS – REQUIRE

- Direct access for pedestrians from the street
- Attractive and convenient stairways
- Bicycle parking – long & short term
- Shower & clothing lockers

OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS

- Improve street crossings
- Reduce speeds
- Provide new connections
- Create short cuts for walkers and bicyclists by purchase of properties or other means
- Provide sidewalks on both sides of major streets

Policy Review and Comment

ENFORCEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- ❑ Enforce speed limits
- ❑ Enforce crosswalk rules – conduct crosswalk sting operations
- ❑ Enforce restrictions against parking on sidewalks
- ❑ Enforce bicycle rules including riding with traffic, lights at night, stopping at red lights
- ❑ Implement CVC 267 setting speed limits based on pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- ❑ Sweep streets and fix hazards
- ❑ Repair and replace broken sidewalks

EDUCATION

- ❑ Train staff on pedestrian and bicycle facility design.
- ❑ Train development community about pedestrian and bicycle planning and safety issues
- ❑ Bicycle skills training

FUNDING

- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in capital improvement programs
- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a part of roadway widening and improvement projects
- ❑ Support Measure A pedestrian and bicycle facility allocation
- ❑ Set priorities based on safety and latent demand
- ❑ SACOG Community Design grants & Bike/Ped grants
- ❑ California Bicycle transportation Account
- ❑ Safe Routes to School

www.walksacramento.org

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