



10/6/2014

VIA EMAIL

Antonio Ablog
Planning Department
City of Sacramento
300 Richards Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Design Review for Delta Shores Regional Commercial Center (P14-025)

Dear Mr. Ablog:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Delta Shores Regional Commercial project on 130 acres east of Interstate 5 at the Cosumnes River Boulevard interchange.

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 and bicycling, for about 30 minutes a day in order to prevent the development of chronic disease and obesity. Only 38% 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. A 30-minute walk is about one and a half miles. If more people could obtain regular exercise by walking and bicycling to their regular destinations, in lieu of driving, it could yield significant health improvements to the resident population of this area. Reduced driving would also decrease vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions. More trips by walking and bicycling could help reduce the current expensive burden on the health care system that provides medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

In WALKSacramento's review of the 2014 project plans we were disappointed by the apparent departure from the pedestrian friendliness in the 2008 draft PUDG plans. We feel it worth commenting that that the 2008 plan with a village center and pedestrian bridge made possible many of the built environment public health goals that WALKSacramento strives to accomplish. The plan highlighted and encouraged foot-traffic with a more straightforward pedestrian circulation network,

a substantially sized plaza, and a centrally located theater and pedestrian bridge. This design would certainly have deemphasized the role of vehicles and encouraged healthy, active transportation choices from the neighboring community. What remains today of the original pedestrian oriented commercial center is a far less walkable, highly vehicle dependent destination that considers pedestrians only as an afterthought.

After reviewing the current project's site plan and drawings we offer the following comments and recommendations:

Relocate the theater to a more central location

Relocating the theater and the perpendicular east-west internal street to the center of the South Site would result in a safer pedestrian place with slower vehicular speeds, improved connectivity to residential areas, and more patronage of surrounding businesses. The street linking Delta Shores Circle South to the theater is not connected to the proposed high density residential uses to the east. The internal street, clearly designed to accommodate pedestrian traffic with a traffic calming roundabout, walkways, and wide plaza-like sidewalks between shops 1-4, would benefit from the provision of pedestrian access to and from the proposed residential uses. To better take advantage of potential walkability and to provide for even greater foot-traffic, move the theater, associated shops, pads, and internal street further south to link with the proposed signalized intersection on Delta Shores Circle South. Doing so would move a dense pedestrian area away from the main site entrance nearest to the Interstate 5 off-ramp, resulting in slower traffic speeds and improved pedestrian circulation. Finally, by relocating the theater from the northwest corner of the South Site to a more central location, patrons may be more likely to visit surrounding stores with greater frequency due to their proximity.

If the theater and adjacent avenue can be moved but not to link to the signalized intersection, we recommend providing a pedestrian bridge at this location. The heavy flow of traffic along Delta Shores Circle South combined with the sheer amount of foot traffic created by this area establishes it an ideal location for a grade separated crossing.

If it is infeasible to relocate the theater and the internal street, it is imperative that a pedestrian bridge over Delta Shores Circle South be constructed. Not only are there no pedestrian connections from the proposed high density residential uses, but the entrance to the avenue from Delta Shores Circle South is unprotected and the closest site entrance from the high trafficked Cosumnes River Boulevard intersection. Considering the significant amount of pedestrian traffic that this segment of the site will create, this is the ideal location for a pedestrian bridge.

Concentrate the drive-thru uses along Delta Shores Circle South to the north end of the South Site and provide pedestrian access from main streets.

By concentrating most of the drive-thru facilities to a single area, circulation can be improved to benefit both pedestrians and drivers. Currently, planned walkways cross drive aisles in 16 different locations. Excessive pedestrian and vehicular conflicts would be avoided by concentrating drive aisles away from main pedestrian circulation routes.

Regardless of the location of the drive-thru restaurants, pedestrian access to restaurant frontage should be provided from adjacent streets. Reorient drive-thru aisles so that pedestrians are not required to cross queues to access building entrances. At all drive-thru locations along Delta Shores Circle South, a pedestrian is unable to directly access the restaurant's entrance without crossing a drive aisle and/or walking along three sides of the building first. Most importantly, pedestrians should not have to cross drive aisle egress points where drivers are the most distracted after receiving their orders. Pedestrian walkways on both sides of Pad 18 should continue to sidewalks along CRB to foster access to store entrances especially if drive-thru facilities are relocated.

Pedestrian friendly infrastructure along Delta Shores Circle South would improve accessibility for residents and improve walkability

To make crossing Delta Shores Circle South at all points safer, more convenient, and more attractive to nearby residents, provide high visibility, colored, or stamped crosswalks, refuge medians, curb bulbouts at intersections, and detached sidewalks along the entire street. By creating a pedestrian friendly streetscape, residents will more easily (and safely) walk to commercial destinations.

Where vehicular traffic crosses pedestrian walkways, create a raised crosswalk

Raised crosswalks would be appropriate for high pedestrian activity areas, walkway crossings over drive aisles, and entrance and exit driveways. For example, between the 8,500 sq. ft. shops: 1, 2, 3 and 4, a raised crosswalk would serve to alert drivers to pedestrians earlier and calm traffic throughout the site. Other locations where raised crossings would be appropriate are along the main drive aisle adjacent to store frontages, and at the crosswalk between Pad 6 and lot 3.

Enhance the pedestrian crossing at the north entrance of the South Site.

The entrance into the South Site from Cosumnes River Boulevard is a free right turn and the first driveway east of the I-5 off ramp. Placing a pedestrian crossing just south of the driveway without appropriate precautionary measures would

expose pedestrians to periodic heavy flows of fast moving traffic. Provide a high visibility, stamped, or colored crosswalk with signage at and before the crossing to direct drivers to reduce their speed.

Extend proposed pedestrian walkways to complete the circulation network

- The pedestrian walkway through lot 9a ends abruptly in the middle of a parking lot. Connect this walkway through lot 7 to improve circulation throughout the site.
- The theater and shops 5 and 6 are isolated on both sides from planned walkways. Continuing the walkway in front of the theater to the north and south would provide safe and convenient connections for pedestrians visiting other locations.
- The walkway between Anchors 2 and 3 is unnecessarily circuitous. Connect the two stores diagonally from the southeast corner of Anchor 2 to the northeast corner of Anchor 3 via the existing island to foster the most direct pedestrian route.
- Connect the walkway adjacent to Pad 6 west along the drive aisle to Majors 5 and 6.
- The north – south pedestrian crossing between Majors 9 and 10 is not in the line of travel. Reorient the crosswalk to match the alignment of the crossing between Anchor 2 and Major 5.

Use truncated domes and/or tactile guide strips to visually alert drivers to pedestrians and to improve safety for those with disabilities throughout the site.

Truncated domes improve the visibility of pedestrian walkways and act as a physical warning for visually impaired pedestrians entering a parking lot. If internal walkways are not separated by curbs between pedestrian and vehicular uses, install tactile guide strips between them.

Increase the size of tree wells

The pedestrian environment is improved with a greater amount of parking lot shade. The near-surface air temperature is lowered by shading the parking lot hard surfaces, making walking on hot days more enjoyable. Hot soak emissions from parked vehicles is reduced by shading parked vehicles, and there will be less air pollutants contributing to health problems. Therefore, we recommend larger tree wells to allow trees to grow to their maximum canopy size.

Use stamped and/or colored paving to alert drivers to pedestrians

Parking lots are busy spaces where pedestrians and vehicles share the right of way. Highlight pedestrian activity by using colored or otherwise different styles of paving that help alert drivers to slow down via sight and/or feel. Parking lots 3, 5, 7, and 13 are ideal sites for such treatments considering their expansive and thus dangerous nature.

Pedestrian enhancements are necessary at the intersection of Delta Shores Circle and Cosumnes River Boulevard

This intersection is exceptionally wide and would carry heavy and rapid traffic due to its proximity to the I-5 on/off ramps. WALKSacramento suggests timing traffic signals to allow for pedestrians (especially the elderly and those with disabilities) to comfortably cross. Again, high visibility painted crosswalks along with appropriate signage would further serve to identify pedestrian presence.

Include pedestrian infrastructure in the Commercial North Site

It appears that no pedestrian infrastructure has been proposed for the Commercial North Site. WALKSacramento suggests pedestrian walkways linking the hotels to sidewalks along Cosumnes River Boulevard, north – south directing walkways linking sidewalks along Cosumnes River Boulevard through the parking lot to store frontage, speed calming infrastructure (undulations or likewise) near vehicular ingress points, and pedestrian cut-throughs along parking aisles to better facilitate foot-traffic throughout the site.

Relocate the hotels to a more central location

The siting of the hotels leaves guests isolated from the rest of the development with little ability to take advantage of the walkability and place making that would be created elsewhere. Siting the hotels within the South Site or closer to pedestrian amenities would allow guests to more safely and conveniently access commercial uses as pedestrians.

Accommodate pedestrian traffic to uses within the North and South Satellites.

Pharmacies and gas station markets are often well trafficked destinations by pedestrians. To better facilitate pedestrian traffic in the satellite parcels, provide infrastructure such as painted walkways from both Delta Shores Circle North and Cosumnes River Boulevard to store entrances. More specific locations for these improvements are from Cosumnes River Blvd. through the parking lot to the pharmacy, from Delta Shores Circle North to the gas station entrance, and from Cosumnes River Blvd. to Pad 1 and across the parking lot to the restaurant.

WALKSacramento has worked 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, a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods, and greater economic returns. We feel that by incorporating the suggestions that we have offered about the Delta Shores Commercial Project, many of these benefits can be realized. There is strong potential here to develop a highly active pedestrian friendly commercial destination.

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 Assistant

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

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