



May 17, 2012

Zuhair Amawi, Associate Civil Engineer
City of Sacramento Department of Transportation
Engineering Services Division
915 I Street, Room 2000
Sacramento, CA 95814-2604

VIA EMAIL

RE: R Street Market Plaza Preliminary Design Plans

Dear Mr. Amawi:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the two preliminary design plans for the R Street Market Plaza. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the original (9/15/2010) and proposed alternative (1/5/2011) plans.

Neither design provides a full range of pedestrian amenities, but a mix of design features from each of the plans would provide a superior pedestrian design. The strengths of the original plan are the extra-wide sidewalk on the south side of R Street and the number of trees in the sidewalk and parking stalls, also on the south side. The arrangement of the trees should provide for both a pleasant walk on the south-side sidewalk and an attractive area for events that will use the parking area and sidewalk as a public plaza. The proposed alternative plan has the pedestrian feature of a parking "buffer" between the westbound traffic and the sidewalk on the north side of the street. It also has a few trees on the north side off the street, which needs trees due to its southern exposure.

We recommend revising the proposed alternative, the "hybrid" design, to replace with trees every third parallel parking space on the north side of R Street and every fourth diagonal parking space on the south side of R Street. Planting canopy-sized trees in these locations would provide shade for the sidewalks, parking, and travel lanes on both sides of the street. We would like to see all of the R Street crossing distances at 22'. The crossings at 17th Street and 18th Street in the original design and at 16th Street in the alternative design are 22'.

Revising the designs even more, the diagonal parking spaces could be moved to the north side of R Street which would allow for significantly more trees shading the sidewalk on the north side, while the sidewalk on the south side could be shaded by a combination of sidewalk and parking space trees and the taller building at the back of the sidewalk.

In the event our recommendations are not feasible, WALKSacramento requests the original design be retained for the R Street Market Plaza.

WALKSacramento encourages people to walk and bicycle in their communities. 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.

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.

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 cholm@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Analyst