



12/30/2013

VIA EMAIL

Bill Campbell, Principal Planner
City of Rancho Cordova, Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Grantline 208 (04-064 Amended)

Dear Mr. Campbell:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the October 11, 2013 Tentative Subdivision Map for the Grantline 208 project and would like to offer the following comments and recommendations.

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 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 of providing medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

The Grantline 208 project offers walking opportunities to the elementary school and recreational walking around the neighborhood and to the community park and nearby open space. The Cordova Hills project on the east side of Grant Line Road could provide retail and commercial destinations to which Grantline 208 residents could walk, assuming Grant Line Road has a pedestrian friendly crossing at Street 8.

The nature of vehicle traffic on local urban streets presents an environment that requires sidewalks for pedestrian safety and comfort. Detached sidewalks provide pedestrians with more safety and comfort than attached sidewalks – there's more space between the sidewalk and the vehicles, trees in the landscape buffer shade the sidewalk, and trees and vertical curbs provide protection from cars. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide so that room is provided for two people walking side-by-side or for two people to

pass one another. Sidewalks that are attached to the street should be slightly wider to provide additional separation from the street traffic or to allow pedestrians to pass by vehicles that have rolled up the curb.

To improve the walkability of the Grantline 208 project, we make the following recommendations.

1. Widen sidewalks on Minor Residential w/ Attached Walk (cross section D) streets to 5-foot minimum

The sidewalk widths proposed are too narrow to accommodate two people side by side. We recommend that sidewalks be at least 5 feet wide.

2. Widen school-adjacent sidewalks to 8-foot minimum and 10-foot minimum near drop-off/pick-up areas

Sidewalks adjacent to school properties often have much higher numbers of pedestrians and larger groups of pedestrians walking together than do residential-only streets. Sidewalks at schools should be at least eight feet wide to provide a walkway where groups of school children are less likely to extend into the street.

Drop-off and pick-up areas at schools require even wider sidewalks because the density of pedestrians is higher and there's a high prevalence of cars with open doors at the sidewalk as children enter and exit the cars. Directly in front of school entrances and in areas where pick-up and drop-off are likely to occur should have sidewalks that are at least 10 feet wide.

3. Eliminate residential lots abutting the school site.

The homes on lots 27-37 (west side of Street 5 between Street 13 and Street 9) have their backs to the school site. This reduces the surveillance of activity on the school site and excludes access to the school grounds from one side of the site. The Community Design section of the City's Design Guidelines promotes "eyes on activities." This can be best achieved with homes facing the school. If the homes are to remain as shown on the proposed tentative subdivision map, then be open view fencing at the rear of the lots would provide some "eyes on activities."

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 cholm@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,
Chris Holm
Project Analyst

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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