



6/25/2014

VIA EMAIL

Scot Mende, AICP
Principal Planner, City of Sacramento
300 Richards Blvd., 3rd floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Sacramento Commons (P14-012)

Dear Mr. Mende:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Development Project Routing (April 4, 2014) and Draft PUD Guidelines (May 28, 2014) for Sacramento Commons. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations that we hope will result in a more walkable 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 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 Sacramento Commons project will add more than 1,200 new residential units to the site, which is surrounded by many mid- and high-rise office buildings, three light rail lines and more than eight bus routes, and is within easy walking distance of much of the Central City and the R Street corridor. Future residents of Sacramento Commons will have the opportunity to make all of their daily trips on foot, bike or transit. To maximize convenient and safe walking in and around Sacramento Commons, we recommend the following.

Sacramento Commons proposes to open up the four square block area bounded by N Street, 5th Street, P Street and 7th Street by incorporating east-west and north-south pedestrian promenades, roughly where O Street and 6th Street would be. This will

improve the travel network for residents of Sacramento Commons and pedestrians in the surrounding area. These central promenades will shorten walking distances for many trips and will make it more convenient for people to access the light rail stations just east of the project site. To maximize the utility of the central promenades, it must be obvious to pedestrians from off-site that they are welcome and the promenades can shorten their walk trip. **WALKSacramento recommends that landscaping and signage at the N Street, 5th Street, P Street and 7th Street entries to the central promenades provide prominent cues and explicit messages emphasizing the pedestrian easement and wayfinding.**

Residential density on the east side of the project site will increase significantly, which will mean higher pedestrian flows on the sidewalks on the project sides of N Street, P Street and 7th Street. The bus stops on 7th Street and the light rail stations one block east of the project site on O Street may attract an especially high number of walk trips from Sacramento Commons. The width of the sidewalk on the west side of 7th Street and the width of the curb ramp at O Street may be inadequate to accommodate the future pedestrian flows. Additionally, the 7th Street pedestrian crossing is long: three one-way lanes, parking on both sides of the street, and added distance due to the large-radius curb return on the northeast corner. **WALKSacramento recommends: 1) widening the west-side 7th Street sidewalk between N Street and P Street, and 2) widening the curb ramp and adding a curb extension at the northwest corner of 7th Street at O Street.**

The Conceptual Pedestrian/Circulation Diagram (Figure 1.5) in the Draft May 2014 Sacramento Commons PUD Guidelines shows a right-in/right-out driveway on N Street. **Please do not duplicate the geometry of the existing driveway on south side of N Street near 7th Street.** The skewed alignment and wide flare allows ingress at speeds that are dangerous for pedestrians.

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

www.walksacramento.org
Teri Duarte, Executive Director
WALKSacramento
909 12th Street, Suite 203
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-9255
tduarte@walksacramento.org

www.sacbike.org
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
909 12th Street, Suite 116
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 444-6600