



8/28/2014

VIA EMAIL
mdiaz@cityofranhocordova.org

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

RE: Anatolia IV 2014 Amendments (DD8471)

Dear Mr. Diaz:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Anatolia IV 2014 Amendments project routing dated August 13, 2014. We offer the following comments on the walkability of the project proposal.

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 Anatolia IV 2014 Amendments project proposes changes to the land plan that was approved in 2006. The changes that will have the greatest impact on pedestrians include increased block sizes, elimination of the north-south pedestrian paseo to Chrysanthy Road, reduction of pedestrian enhancements on the two-lane streets with detached sidewalks, and elimination of the "neighborhood greens" park.

The approved 2006 project has much better pedestrian circulation and connectivity than the proposed 2014 Amendments project. Smaller block sizes, based on pedestrian circulation, are best for pedestrians by providing shorter travel distances and more route choices. The approved 2006 Tentative Subdivision Map blocks range from about 0.6 acres to 2.9 acres, while in the 2014 Amendments blocks range from about 1.3 acres to 5 acres. The greatest reduction in pedestrian circulation results from the elimination of a paseo and a street. The loss of the north-south paseo from the U-shaped block in the northern two-thirds of the site combines two blocks into a single 5 acre block, changing

the distance from any home site to another one midway around the block from about 650 feet to about 1500 feet. The elimination of the north south street at the center of the southern one-third of the site also increases walking distances from any home site to another one midway around the block, in this case from a little over 400 feet to over 900 feet. **To improve the pedestrian circulation and connectivity, we recommend breaking up the two largest blocks by adding streets between Street A and Street B in the north area of the site and between Tours Way and Street C in the south area of the site.**

The block along Chrysanthy Road in both the proposed 2014 Amendments project and the approved 2006 project is about 850 feet long. The 2006 project included a pedestrian paseo that connected an interior street to Chrysanthy Road, creating two shorter pedestrian blocks. The 2014 Amendment project eliminates the paseo, which reduces pedestrian connectivity and creates longer walking distances. **To improve the pedestrian circulation and connectivity, we recommend restoring the pedestrian paseo between Chrysanthy Road and Street A.**

The 2014 Amendments project and the approved 2006 project each provide a pedestrian corridor between Rancho Cordova Parkway to the east and the Montelena subdivision to the west. The 2014 Amendments, however, include a “25’ Pedestrian Paseo” on the north side of Tours, while the approved 2006 project provides the pedestrian facility and “side-on” house plans on both sides of the street. The pedestrian paseo on the north side of Tours Way is broken by several streets, while the south side is continuous. The pedestrian corridor will function better if each side of Tours Way has a pedestrian paseo. We assume that such a “side-on”, or corner house, has active living space on the side of the house facing the street and fencing only on the back yard. Compared to a standard street fronting house that has a fence along the side yard setback from the rear of the lot to the front of the house, the “side on” house will have much better “eyes on the street” and provide a more comfortable and safe environment for pedestrians. The longer runs of fencing along the side of houses that aren’t “side on” will also diminish the attractiveness of the pedestrian paseo. **To improve pedestrian comfort and convenience, and to increase “eyes on the street” surveillance we recommend that “side on” lot and house plans be required on the north side of Tours Way and that the “25’ pedestrian paseo” be provided on both sides of Tours Way.**

The last change to the Anatolia IV project proposed in the 2014 Amendments is the elimination of the “neighborhood greens” park site. The park would have been within easy walking distance of all homes in the Anatolia IV subdivision, making it more likely that future residents would walk to their neighborhood park and create stringer social bonds among neighbors. **We recommend that a park site that could provide a social gathering spot be added to the project.**

Finally, it is unfortunate that with the decrease in residential density the width of attached sidewalks was not increased to at least five feet. The attached sidewalks in the approved 2006 project are four feet wide, which was the width specified in the Sunridge Specific Plan. The Rancho Cordova Pedestrian Master Plan standard width for attached

sidewalks on minor pedestrian streets is five feet. This width is needed to allow two pedestrians to walk side by side or pass each other without having to step off the sidewalk. A four foot wide sidewalk is inadequate when it's detached, but it's unsafe when attached because of the likelihood that pedestrians will step into the street when walking side by side or passing. While the proposed typical lot size is almost 100% larger than the approved lot sizes, increasing the sidewalk widths to five feet would be an increase of only 2% over the approved lot sizes, or expressed in another way, only about 0.1% of the proposed typical lot size. **We recommend that all attached sidewalks on the residential streets be at least 5 feet wide.**

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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