



9/9/2014

VIA EMAIL

Evan Compton, Senior Planner
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811-0218

RE: 1500 S Street Mixed Use (DR14-194)

Dear Mr. Compton:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the proposed 1500 S Street Mixed Use. The following comments are based on the August 29, 2014 project routing.

The 1500 S Street Mixed Use project proposes a four story wood framed apartment community with 76 dwelling units, above a one story commercial concrete podium. The proposed project will include a large clubhouse and fitness center, exterior courtyard with outdoor kitchen, lounge, and swimming pool.

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. 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.

Using stairs instead of elevators can provide light to moderate physical activity as part of daily life. Factors associated with stair use include the distance from the stairs to elevators and to the nearest entrance, and the number of turns from the stairs to the closest entrance.¹ WALKSacramento recommends widening the door to the stairwell closest to the residential lobby. Stair use can be affected by the building occupant's awareness of the stairs and the environment of the stairwell. Consider installing a single extra-wide door and rotating the stairwell 90 degrees counter-clockwise so that residents have a direct approach from the lobby entrance to the stairs. Including windows on the east-facing wall could also increase use of these stairs. Providing an environment

¹ Ishak A. Mansi, MD, FACP, Nardine Mansi, AIA, Hayam Shaker, MD, and Daniel Banks, MD, MS, FACP, "Stair Design in the United States and Obesity: The Need for a Change", *Southern Medical Journal* 102 no. 6 (June 2009): 610-614.

similar to the hallways, including flooring, wall coverings, artificial lighting, and signs indicating the floor number could make stair use more desirable to building residents.

Consider rotating the western residential stairwell 90 degrees counter-clockwise and adding exterior windows to maximize the benefits of natural light. Substantial stairwell lighting may improve the safety of its users, and natural lighting could be more aesthetically pleasing to experience. Verify that the western residential stairwell exterior door is a working door rather than a fire escape so that residents may access the stairwell from the 15th Street gate and the parking garage.

WALKSacramento applauds the use of mechanized parking in the 1500 S Street Mixed Use project. Automated parking systems allow for greater vehicle density which minimizes the amount of land used for parking. This leads to less parking necessary on the street which can be used to create more complete streets, and any variety of facades can be more aesthetically pleasing for pedestrians on the street than a surface parking lot. In addition, automated garages have less light pollution than surface parking lots. Excessive lighting can present a strong contrast to the night, eliminating a pedestrian's night vision and making them vulnerable to potential criminals that may take advantage of concealment by deep shadows.

WALKSacramento also commends the project for its location as an infill development project. The potential for walking by future residents is very good, considering the proximity to desirable locations. In addition, the mixed use development creates new commercial destinations for existing residents.

The project design also promotes walkability in the community through its integrated window glazing and balconies. The glazing on the corner of 15th and S Street allows for residents to have more "eyes on the street" to promote natural surveillance and decrease criminal behavior. Furthermore, the resident balconies increase their connection to the street and community around them.

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 egerhart@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,

Emily Alice Gerhart

Project Coordinator

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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