



1/30/2015

VIA EMAIL

Matt Sites
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
Urban Design Staff
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Downtown Plaza Tower (DR14-318)

Dear Mr. Sites:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Downtown Plaza Tower revised site plan that we received on January 8, 2015. We previously offered comments last December regarding the driveway into the porte cochere and the pedestrian zone on the J Street sidewalk. We are pleased to see in the revised drawing that the angle of the driveway has been increased, which will result in vehicles crossing the sidewalk at lower speeds. However, the pedestrian zone in the revised site plan appears to be narrower at some places than it was in the original site plan.

The various uses in the Downtown Plaza Tower, the Sacramento Entertainment and Sports Complex and surrounding area should generate high pedestrian activity and, therefore, the pedestrian zone should be wide. The sidewalk in the dimensioned site plan in the January routing appears to be about seventeen feet wide at its widest point, while the pedestrian zone between planters within the frontage zone and tree grates in the public amenity zone appears to be about four feet wide at its narrowest point.

The Central City Urban Design Guide states that "Whereas sixteen (16) feet is the typical sidewalk width in the CBD, high activity areas should have sidewalk widths of 20 feet or more. Sidewalk widths in the CBD should not be less than 14 feet." Additionally, the Guide states that the pedestrian zone should be 50% of the sidewalk width or 6 feet, whichever is greater.

As the recommended high-activity sidewalk width is four feet wider than the typical Central Business District sidewalk, it follows that the minimum pedestrian-zone width for a high-activity sidewalk should be four feet wider than the six-foot minimum width. This leads to a minimum of 10 feet for the pedestrian zone. **WALKSacramento recommends reducing the planter widths along the project's J Street frontage and a pedestrian zone width of at least 10 feet be provided in order to allow adequate space for pedestrians during times of high pedestrian activity.**

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