



3/20/2015

VIA EMAIL

Teresa Haenggi, Associate Planner
Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Ice Blocks (P14-062)

Dear Ms. Haenggi:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the routing for the Ice Blocks project. Our comments refer to drawings dated 11-05-2014.

The Ice Blocks project proposes a mix of residential and commercial uses in seven buildings on three block faces of R Street between 16th Street and 18th Street. Block 1 includes four buildings with adjoining walls and connecting common-area hallways with office space on two levels comprising a single structure. Block 2 includes a single-story restaurant, one 4-story residential building and one 6-story residential building. Block 3 includes one 2-story mixed-use building and two single-story retail buildings with mezzanines. All seven buildings provide good access from the street and it appears there will be sufficient “eyes on the street” provided by windows in existing and new window wells.

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. About a third 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.

The Ice Blocks project, which includes a mix of uses that are close to services, retail and office, is less than three blocks from a light rail station and on a bus stop, can be expected to have tenants and residents that walk more than average on a daily basis. More trips by walking can reduce driving and decrease vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions.

All multi-level buildings in the Ice Blocks project have either interior or exterior stairwells. The 4-story and the 6-story buildings each have an elevator in addition to stairwells. Stair use, as opposed to elevator use, can help building occupants meet their daily physical activity needs. To maximize use, the stairwells should be at convenient locations and they should be useable for both ingress and egress.

The drawings do not specify whether certain of the stairwells provide ingress in addition to egress. Specifically, the Block 1 building has one stairwell with doors onto the R Street dock and one stairwell with doors onto the alley dock patio, and the 4-story and 6-story Block 2 buildings have external stairs at each end of the buildings and it's unclear whether ingress to any or all of the stairs in the Block 1 and Block 2 buildings is provided.

To encourage and facilitate daily stair use by building occupants, WALKSacramento recommends that all stairs in all buildings provide the opportunity to enter at ground level and access all levels of the buildings.

None of the site plans for the project indicate the presence of a crosswalk between the northeast corner of Block 2 and the southeast corner of Block 3. As more pedestrians use R Street and as the dilapidated properties between 17th Street and 18th Street are developed, the need for a marked crosswalk and curb ramps will increase immensely. Although the crosswalk and two curb ramps were omitted in the design of the R Street Market Plaza streetscape currently under construction, we believe they should be added prior to occupancy of the Ice Blocks project. **WALKSacramento recommends the design of the Ice Blocks project not preclude or interfere with future construction of curb ramps and a crosswalk at the east end of Blocks 2 and 3.**

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 Coordinator

Attachment: 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 122
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