



8/16/2015

VIA EMAIL

Teresa Haenggi, Associate Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Railyards Specific Plan Amendment (P15-040)

Dear Ms. Haenggi:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Railyards Specific Plan Amendment (P15-040) project routing. We offer the following comments and questions regarding the street cross sections in the routing.

5th Street (between Stevens St. + Park St.)

Parking on the east side has been eliminated and both sides have a buffer with a physical barrier. Is the barrier flexible bollards or K-rail? The width of the symbol shown in the diagram looks like bollards.

Each side of the street has an 11.5'-wide sidewalk plus planter. What are the widths of the sidewalk and planter? The sidewalks at the south end of the West End District, especially on the west side of 5th Street adjacent to the Central Shops District, may need to handle higher volumes of pedestrians than the north end. Will there be enough space for a wide sidewalk plus a planter for canopy trees?

5th Street (between H St. + Tracks)

The project removes parking on the west side and adds a buffer with physical barrier between the travel and bike lanes on both sides. If the additional 1' width of the east side (north bound) bike lane isn't critical for safety, we recommend making bike lanes on both sides 5-1/2' wide.

Typical Local Street w/ Bike + Turn Lane

The map inset indicates this street cross section is 6th Street between Railyards Boulevard and North B Street. What does the designation "Typical" mean? Are there other streets to which this cross section applies?

The project widens the bike lanes on both sides from 5' to 6'. Consider retaining 5' bike lanes and adding a 1' marked buffer between the bike and travel lanes on each side.

7th Street (at the Transit Station)

This street segment is likely to have high pedestrian activity because of the transit station, yet both sides have 10' width for both sidewalk and planter. Even 12', which would allow for a 6' sidewalk and 6' planter, may not be adequate for the number of pedestrians and for the health of the trees. Consider incorporating the sidewalks and planters with the station platforms to provide greater sidewalk and planter width without increasing the Right of Way.

7th Street (between Tracks + Railyards Blvd.)

The multi-use path width is not specified. We recommend that it be at least 16', rather than 10' as shown in the approved cross section. The additional width may be needed to safely accommodate higher volumes of pedestrians and bicyclists that may use the path to access the proposed soccer stadium.

South Park Street (west of Vista Park)

South Park will be more pedestrian-friendly with the proposed removal of one travel lane in each direction, the addition of street trees between the street and the sidewalk, the addition of parking on the north side, and the addition 1-1/2' to the sidewalk on the south side. However, the bike lanes have been removed on both sides of the street. Even with the multi-use path on the north side of South Park Street, access to the proposed hospital on the south side may be inadequate if safe and convenient crossing opportunities aren't provided. Also, the multi-use path, which has no dimension specified in the proposed cross section, should be at least 16' wide to accommodate all users, including pedestrians that have parked on the north side of the street.

South Park St. (at Vista Park)

The comment above, for South Park Street west of Vista Park, also applies to the segment alongside Vista Park.

It's not clear, especially since the application routing didn't include a bicycle circulation map, how the upper "ped/bike" path shown in the proposed cross section connects to other facilities.

North B Street

The proposed cross section is essentially the same as the existing, except that the planter widths on each side are not specified and the space between the south side of

the Right of Way and the levee is shown in concept. Our comments are related, then, to the approved cross section and the proposed cross section.

The 2035 General Plan circulation diagram shows North B Street as an arterial with 2 lanes east of Bannon Street and 4 lanes west of 12th Street for the year 2035. However, the existing roadway is 2 lanes between Bannon and 7th, 3 lanes (2 westbound and 1 eastbound) between 7th and 10th, and 4 lanes with bike lanes on both sides between 10th and Dos Rios.

The Railyards DEIR indicated the Initial Phase would convert North B from 2-way to east bound only between 5th and 7th, and the Full Project would extend the one-way eastbound design between 7th and 12th. If Bannon and Richards comprise an eastbound and westbound one-way couplet, why is North B also converted to one way?

The DEIR also estimated LOS A, B, and C for segments of North B Street from west to east with 2, 3 and 4 lanes. The highest average daily traffic (ADT) for North B Street was estimated to be 16,100. It appears that North B Street is a moderate access control arterial. If true, and North B Street was to be reconstructed as a 2-lane arterial between Bannon street and 12th Street, the LOS might be predicted to be LOS D or better, which is allowed by the 2035 General Plan.

Since a two-way street typically has lower free-flow traffic speeds than a similarly sized one-way street, and since lower traffic speeds result in less severe injuries to pedestrians in the event of collisions, we recommend that North B Street be redesigned for two-way traffic.

The existing and proposed cross sections show parking on the south side adjacent to the levee. Is there a reason to pave this additional space when there are no destinations adjacent to the south side of the roadway?

Does the Class I bike path follow the levee when it splits from North B Street? If it were to do so, an excellent connecting route could be made from the 12th Street corridor to 5th Street to Vista Park and South Park Street to Bercut Street and then to the Sacramento River bike trail.

Railyards Blvd. (East of 7th St.)

Railyards Boulevard is approved for 3 lanes eastbound with bike and parking lanes on south side. The proposed cross section has one lane each direction with a two-way left-turn lane plus bike lanes and parking/planters on each side. This change will make a more pedestrian-friendly and safe street.

Camille Lane

The project proposal reduces the Right of Way from 80' to 60', reduces the overall sidewalk and planter width from 22' to 12' on each side, and eliminates the bike lanes. Is the projected demand for pedestrian and bicycle travel expected to be so much less that these changes are justified?

Typical Local Street w/o Bike

Is this a "typical" local street, or does it refer to only Judah Street? This information is needed in order to evaluate other locations, if any.

The sidewalk is 11', which is substantial for the area. Will there be demand for bike travel along this street, or others like it? If so, bike lanes may be needed as the sidewalk may be inappropriate for bicycle riding on such blocks.

Box Car Parks

Park acreage along this corridor appears to be reduced from about 12 acres to 1.8 acres. The Box Car Parks corridor remains at the core of the residential area. While the project proposes to reduce the number of residential units overall, the demand for parks in the Central City on a per resident basis may still be well in excess of required acreage. The Box Car Parks, as approved, would have provided an inviting and pleasant walking space for residents and an excellent route to transit.

South Park/North Park Couplet

The Specific Plan identifies South Park and North Park as an important couplet and pedestrian and bike corridor. What replaces its function with its removal?

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 Manager

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

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