



3/7/2016

VIA EMAIL

Daniel Abbes, Junior Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: 15Q Mixed Use Building (P16-010)

Dear Mr. Abbes:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for 15Q Mixed Use Building (P16-010) and we offer the following comments.

The project proposes an 8-story building with 73 residential apartment units, parking for 97 vehicles and approximately 8,550 square feet of ground-level retail space. The project location at the southwest corner of Q Street and 15th Street is within a neighborhood with many daily destinations, including restaurants, services, parks and transit nearby. In such a walkable area, the design of buildings can significantly affect the walking rates of their occupants.

The proposed outdoor seating near the bus stop will provide not only “eyes on the street,” but “eyes on the bus stop.” This can be important for reducing criminal activities at the bus shelter, but increase the sense of safety for transit riders waiting at the bus stop during late evening hours when the sun is down. However, while the sidewalk width has been increased, the bus shelter doesn’t appear on the site plan and space for the buses at the curb appears to have been replaced by on-street parking and landscape planters. Convenient transit access, such as the bus stop on 15th Street, could have a significant impact on the percentage of 15Q residents that use transit, and it could also be important for patrons of the 15Q retail. See the commercial space at the northwest corner of 15th Street and R Street, which has two parking spaces on 15th Street and a similar street frontage. **WALKSacramento recommends retaining the 15th Street bus stop.**

Integrating physical activity throughout one’s day is vital to improving public health outcomes. Stairs are associated with light to moderate physical activity and provide visitors a more active alternative to elevators. There are several elements that should be incorporated in the stairwells design to encourage greater stair use by future residents of 15Q Mixed Use.

The 15Q Mixed Use Building floor plan for the residential levels are well designed to encourage physical activity. Hallways lead directly to the stairwells and since the elevators are a short distance off the hallways, the stairwells will be more conspicuous than the elevators. Stairwells entrances with open doorways or doors with large windows can take advantage of this view line in the hallways to draw people towards the stairs rather than the elevator. Once people are within view of the stairwell interior, they can be motivated to use the stairs by finish work that’s comparable to that in the hallways. The level of detail in the routing drawings is insufficient to determine whether

these elements are incorporated. **WALKSacramento recommends that stairwells have finish work and lighting comparable to the hallways, and stairwell doors are either kept open (except in emergencies) or stairwell entrances have windows in the doors and hallway walls.**

While the residential floor hallways have good orientation to the stairwells, the ground floor layout will not contribute to stair use. The lobby has direct access to the elevator, mail boxes and a doorway leading to the bike parking and garage, but there is no access to the stairwell without exiting and re-entering the building. The number of turns required to access a stairwell is a major factor in stairwell use;¹ having to exit and enter the building will compound the reduction in stair use do to the number of turns. Bicyclists and drivers may be discouraged from using the stairs after cycling because of the inconvenience of access the stairwell. **WALKSacramento recommends adding a doorway to the northwest stairwell from the lobby to encourage stair use.**

Stair use can also be made more aesthetically pleasing and safer with natural light illumination from windows. The stairwells in the 15Q building have an exterior wall facing west, so there may be an opportunity to incorporate stairwell windows to promote stair use. **WALKSacramento recommends that exterior windows be added to the stairwells and that windows be added to the stairwell doors.**

Incidentally, not only will increased use of the stairwells provide health benefits to the residents, but there could be energy savings that are passed on to the residents. In a report by the U.S. Department of Energy, the energy use for elevators is typically about 4-10% of a buildings energy expenditure.² The replacement of electro-mechanical elevator energy with biological human energy on stairs could be significant to operational costs.

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.

Sincerely,
Chris Holm
Project Manager

Attachment: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

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.

² Greening Federal Facilities: An Energy, Environmental, and Economic Resource Guide for Federal Facilities Managers. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Energy, 1997

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

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