



7/26/2017

VIA EMAIL

Daniel Abbes, Assistant Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: New Apartment Building at 16th And H Streets (DR17-221)**

Dear Mr. Abbes:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for the New Apartment Building at 16th and H Streets (DR17-221) project. The proposal calls for constructing a four-story building and surface parking lot on the parcel at the northeast corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and H Street.

The project has several features that will promote active living, an important aspect of community design for our region. Less than a third the Sacramento region population is physically active at the 30-minute minimum level needed to prevent chronic disease and overweight, often because of limitations imposed by the built environment. Incorporating moderate physical activity as part of daily life can start with walking and biking for local trips and using stairs instead of elevators.

Bicycling is promoted by the project with the inclusion of a dedicated 51-bike storage room and bike repair stand. The room is located near the corner lobby and it has a double-door entrance from the sidewalk. The pedestrian experience on the sidewalk will be enhanced by the landscaped individual patios for the ground floor residential units on 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the landscaped setbacks at the live-work units on H Street, and the trees and landscaped planting strips between the sidewalk and curb. The project also includes a fitness center that can be used by residents for weight-bearing activity and additional movement.

There are several aspects of the project design that, if changed, could help increase the physical activity of future residents of the project even more. These include “eyes on the street” and stairwell design.

The potential for “eyes on the street” is good since all of the apartment windows face either the street or the project’s parking lot. This provides the opportunity for tenants to see, and be seen by, people on the street and within the private parking lot and adjacent landscaped areas. This natural surveillance helps people on the street to feel safer, discourages potential criminal behavior, and helps establish a sense of community membership and ownership for the residents.

Floor plans weren't provided in the routing so we don't know if active living spaces, such as kitchens and living rooms, are at the windows or if bedrooms are at the windows. Placing active living spaces at the windows can increase the likelihood that residents and guests will be near a window. Regardless of the type of room the window is in, incorporating more balconies would facilitate more people being where they can see and be seen, thereby improving the "eyes on the street."

Incorporating more balconies would also help the project to meet the private open space area required by the City ordinance. The project documentation indicates there is 2,530 square feet of common open space in addition to the 2,640 square feet of balcony and patio private open space, but it appears there may be only four- or five-hundred square feet of landscaped area with turf where one might be able to stand or sit.

Stairwell windows can add to "eyes on the street" when the stairwell is in an appropriate location. In addition, windows can make the stairwell environment more pleasant and attractive, which can motivate residents to use the stairs more frequently. The north stairwell has an exterior wall, so there may be an opportunity to add windows. Another change that could lead to more stair use is holding doors open or placing windows to the stairwell in the hallway. These features allow people to better see the stairs, which can draw people to use them.

The south stairwell doesn't have an exterior wall, so we see no opportunity for improvement there. If the floor plan of the building should be revised significantly, we suggest that swapping the locations of the south stairwell and elevator be investigated. Placing the stairwell, rather than the elevator, closest to the lobby would locate the decision point (stairs or elevator?) at the stairs and could lead to more people choosing the stairs over the elevator.

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.

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

*www.walksacramento.org*

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