



6/29/2017

VIA EMAIL

Arwen Wacht
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Westshore - Lot B (P16-003)

Dear Ms. Wacht:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the revised routing for Westshore – Lot B (P16-003). The project proposes changing the land use of 6.8 acres in the age-restricted portion of Natomas Central PUD and constructing 53 single-family homes. The land is currently zoned Multi-Unit Dwelling (R-3) and designated Suburban Neighborhood High Density. The proposed zoning and designation is Single-Unit or Duplex Dwelling (R-1A) and Suburban Neighborhood Medium Density.

It is disappointing to see more residential development proposed without sidewalks on one or both sides of some of the streets, even though the streets are private. Sidewalks provide a path for people to walk along the street where they aren't mixing with traffic moving at speeds of 25-mph or more. Sidewalks also provide a level, unobstructed pathway to street corners where curb ramps provide an accessible transition between the sidewalk and street. Where homes have the driveway as their only means of access, rolled curbs can be difficult to traverse for people with diminished mobility, such as elderly, injured or frail people, or people with strollers or assistive devices such as walkers or wheelchairs. Allowing residential development without sidewalks on one or both sides of a street can create an environment where residents must travel in the street to get anywhere, and it can discourage or prevent people from leaving their home.

Lots 39-53 on Streets '3' and '4' have rolled curb with no sidewalk on some or all of their frontage, and Lots 20 and 21 have rolled curb with no sidewalk on their Street '4' frontage. Seventeen of the fifty-three homes in Westshore – Lot B will have diminished pedestrian access. While the neighborhood is within an age-restricted community, it would be nice if the residents could age in place for longer than just the time they're physically fit and fully independent.

Access to the street for occupants of the seventeen homes without sidewalks could be improved by using driveways with dropped curbs having lips that are easily mountable by a pedestrian using a walker. The safety of pedestrians on the street should be addressed with multiple street design elements, including traffic calming that encourage vehicle speeds less than 20 mph, street

furniture and spaces that imply and encourage use by pedestrians, street surface materials that delineate pedestrian areas, and signage that informs drivers they're in a special environment.

The effectiveness of the shared street can be further improved with houses that have a strong "eyes on the street" element. This establishes a sense of ownership for residents and creates a connection between home occupants and pedestrians. Residents may be more likely to self-enforce safe vehicle speeds or demand the HOA resolve issues. Residents may also be more inclined to spend time walking, sitting or socializing along the street if they don't feel they're unseen and isolated from everyone else occupying the rear spaces of their homes and unaware of the street activity.

None of the proposed house plans have active-living space facing the street, i.e. kitchens and great rooms actively used throughout the day and evening. Each of the plans have a bedroom at the front, and two have a den in addition to a bedroom at the front. These rooms are likely to be occupied infrequently during the day – hence there is very little "eyes on the street."

The walking environment in Westshore – Lot B is also diminished by a lack of shade trees. The interior streets appear to have an average setback of less than 12' and the landscape plan indicates each standard lot will have one 15-gallon tree and each corner lot will have two 15-gallon trees. Since the corner lots are proposed to have a tree planted near the lot line next to the driveway, we hope it would also be possible to plant a tree near the lot line between driveways of adjacent standard lots.

The 12' setback leaves little room for a large tree canopy, but since all of the house plans are single story and the height of the front facades are in the range of 12' to 16', it may be possible to maintain a medium tree canopy in a way that it clears the roof and doesn't present a hazard to the structure. Requiring the HOA to maintain front-yard trees and/or including maintenance and replacement language in the CC&Rs would provide assurance that the tree potential mature tree canopy is achieved.

In summary, WALKSacramento makes the following recommendations.

- **Design the interior streets to be "shared streets" that include traffic calming that encourages vehicle speeds less than 20 mph, street furniture and spaces that imply and encourage use by pedestrians, street surface materials that delineate pedestrian areas, and signage that informs drivers they're in a special environment.**
- **Introduce some house plans that can provide "eyes on the street."**
- **Add additional trees between standard lots, and require the trees to be maintained and replaced by the HOA or the homeowners.**

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. Only 30% 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. A 30-minute walk is about one and a half miles. If more people could obtain regular exercise by walking and bicycling to their regular destinations, in lieu of driving, it could yield significant

health improvements to the resident population of this area. Reduced driving would also decrease vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions. More trips by walking and bicycling could help reduce the current expensive burden on the health care system of providing medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

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

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

WALKSacramento
909 12th Street, Suite 203
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-9255

www.sacbike.org

Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
909 12th Street, Suite 116
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 444-6600