



9/8/2017

VIA EMAIL

Michael Hanebutt, Assistant Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, Ca 95811

**RE: Natomas Meadows (P17-047)**

Dear Mr. Hanebutt:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for Natomas Meadows (P17-047). We understand the project site plan is undergoing revisions that will, among other things, incorporate pedestrian paseos within the interior blocks. We make the following recommendations based upon the August 14, 2017 routing.

The project proposes streetscapes and house plans for Juneberry Drive, Scarlet Ash Avenue, Blackrock Drive and N Breezy Meadow Drive that will provide a very good pedestrian environment on the outside perimeter of the project site. Pedestrian supportive design elements include alley loaded houses, detached sidewalks, shade trees at about 30'-35' spacing, and house floor plans that feature primarily active living space with numerous windows at the front of the house facing the street.

While the perimeter of the project is pedestrian friendly and will promote physical activity, the interior design fails in those respects. The project's deficiencies include

- Private streets are missing sidewalks for safe pedestrian access;
- Small ornamental trees for each lot will not shade the private streets and, therefore, will not lower local temperatures or provide pedestrians protection from summer sun;
- Floor plans for the houses along Private Street Lots C, D, E and F provide limited "eyes on the street" as front windows are primarily bedrooms and bathrooms; and
- Floor plans for houses along Private Street Lots G and H provide very little "eyes on the street" as only about one-in-five have windows for active living areas facing the street – only the interior front loaded house plan that has kitchen windows on the side elevation facing the street will provide "eyes on the street;" the other interior front loaded house plan has no first floor windows on the side elevation facing the street, and the rear loaded perimeter house plans have only garages and bedrooms facing the street.

The landscape plan shows fewer trees in the southeast corner of the project site than for the rest of the perimeter. This is probably a result of the existing planter near the corner necking down to between 2' and 4' wide. We request the applicant consider a change in the lotting that would

provide adequate room to plant shade trees behind the sidewalk on Blackrock Drive and the transition to N Breezy Meadow Drive.

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.

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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