



11/29/2017

VIA EMAIL

Daniel Abbes, Assistant Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
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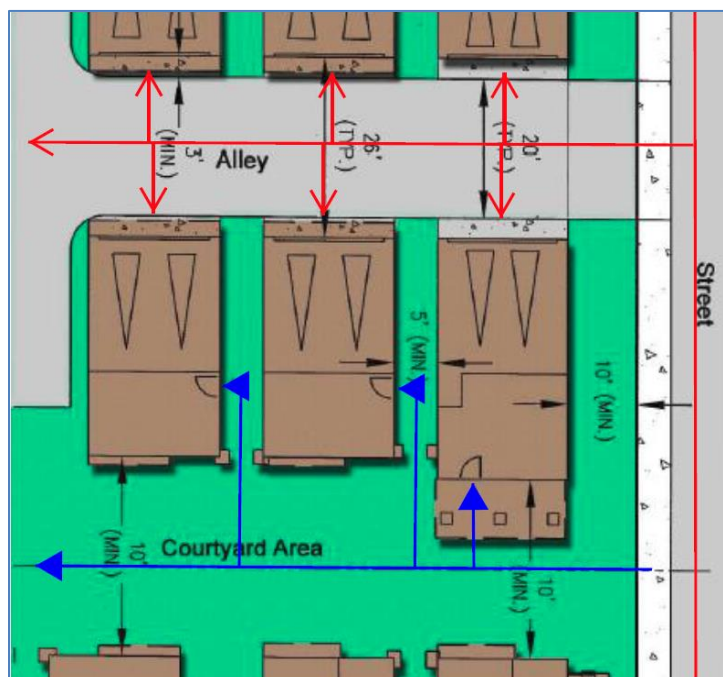
**RE: Northwest Land Park Phase 3 at The Mill (P17-056)**

Dear Mr. Abbes:

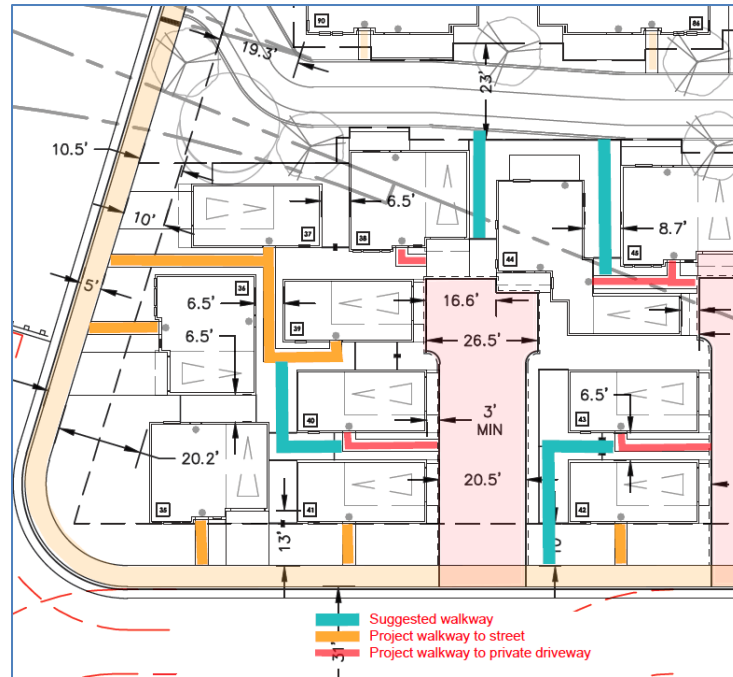
WALKSacramento has reviewed the routing for Northwest Land Park Phase 3 at The Mill (P17-056) and we offer the following comments. The project proposes 185 condominiums on approximately 7.9 acres. Our comments are concerned with limited pedestrian access to the Cottages fronting private drives, a significant change to the alignment, configuration and shading of Setzer Run Trail, reduction in park space, and lack of trees for individual condos.

**Pedestrian Access to Cottages**

Buildings 38, 44, 45, 46, 47, 53, 54, 55, 56, 62, 63, 64 and 65, and 40, 43, 48, 52, 57, 61 and 66 have pedestrian access via driveways instead of sidewalks or courtyards. This in conflict with the Northwest Land Park PUD Guidelines (Sections 2.6.1 and 3.5) and it may, depending on the design of the walkway-private alley transition, preclude universal access to the homes. As we mentioned in our letter on Phase 2B, there are no well-defined pedestrian pathways to the interior condos – this includes connections to the condos from the street and from Setzer Run Trail. Below is a portion of the single family condos plot plan in the PUD Guidelines that we've marked up to indicate expected travel ways by pedestrians (blue lines) using courtyards and vehicles (red lines) using alleys.



Although the separation distances between Cottages buildings are small, we request that the site plan be closely reviewed to determine the feasibility of including walkways to each of the buildings. Our initial review of the façades that face each other suggests walkways to every house could be implemented without a lack of “eyes on the walkway” or creating privacy concerns. Below is an illustration of one section. Suggested walkways are aqua colored, project walkways to the street are orange, and project walkways to private drives are red.



### Setzer Run Alignment

The alignment for Setzer Run is significantly different from the approved Northwest Land Park land use schematic plan, PUD Guidelines figures, and AQMP graphic plans for circulation. The approved alignment keeps the trail off street until near the center of the Phase 3 area; the proposed project has it cross a T-intersection at the east edge of the Phase 3 area created by the proposed extension of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street at Crate Avenue. The trailhead design should ensure minimal conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles. However, the proposed trailhead on the Phase 3 side of the intersection is partially aligned with the crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection and this could lead to confusion about where pedestrians and bicycles should be crossing the street.

### Setzer Run Trail Cross Section

The drawings in the project routing appear to show Setzer Run Trail as a two-way 12-foot-wide bike trail with an attached 4-foot-wide side path. We recommend using the cross section specified in the PUD Guidelines (sections 3.4 and 4.5) consisting of a 12-foot wide trail with 2-foot wide shoulders on each side. There are numerous connections to the trail from adjacent residential houses and courtyards that will create frequent cross flow and contribute to mixed flow, even if the trail is marked for separated flow. A multi-use trail will function best overall for bicyclists and pedestrians.

### **Setzer Run Tree Shade**

The Northwest Land Park PUD Guidelines (Section 3.4) states that 70% shading of Setzer Run shall be included. The landscape plan appears to incorporate only 10% or less shading, though. Considering that the corridor width for Setzer Run is shown to be 23 feet to 29.5 feet, there may be room for a median landscape planter that includes shade trees. This would not only provide greater shade of the path with fewer trees compared to planting trees at the outside edges of the path, but it would provide the physical separation of the modes we recommended above.

### **Park Acreage**

The community park was an important element of the Northwest Land Park project when it was approved. It appears that Phase 3 proposes to reduce the park acreage by over 20%; about 0.9 acres of the 4.3 acre park is proposed to be residential and streets. Parks and open space that are close to residents have been found to improve physical and mental health and increase physical activity. Unfortunately, the first two phases of Northwest Land Park have reduced the amount of semi-private open space by eliminating or downsizing courtyards. The park space in Northwest Land Park is important to retain for the health and enjoyment of community members. We recommend that Phase 3 not encroach upon the park space.

### **Tree Plantings on Condo Lots**

Most buildings in Phase 3 do not have trees within their unit areas. There's not much room for trees, but the landscape plan "looks" like there's a lot of trees. However, we question whether the plan is realistic. For example, many of the Tulip trees are about 6 feet from buildings and 3 feet from sidewalks, yet the Sacramento Tree Foundation recommends 15 feet and 8 feet, respectively. For trees to provide the expected environmental benefits and create a pleasant pedestrian space, the trees need to have room to grow their canopies and root systems to maximum size. We recommend significant adjustments to the landscape plan to ensure The Mill Phase 3 contributes to the green canopy we expect in Sacramento.

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 don't hesitate to 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](http://www.walksacramento.org)*

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