



10/26/2018

VIA EMAIL

David Hung, Associate Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Natomas Aloft (Z18-192)**

Dear Mr. Hung:

Project-site pedestrian circulation and connections to the surrounding area will be important for the Natomas Aloft hotel. Millennials are a major demographic group for the hotel brand, and they are significantly more physically active than older generations. Hotel guests may appreciate opportunities for casual exercise in the form of walking to nearby destinations or using the stairs to get to the on-site Recharge room and the Remix or Refuel areas. Active transportation connections to the hotel site will be important to people from Natomas neighborhoods wanting to attend Aloft events that are open to the local community.

WALKSacramento makes the following five recommendations to improve the walkability and bikeability of the Natomas Aloft project.

- **Provide access to the freeway landscape buffer bike path.** A walkway along the bio-retention area #1 between could provide access for both the Aloft and the future hotel in the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> parcel. This bike path access way could connect to the two buildings via a new walkway as recommended in the next bullet.
- **Add a walkway between the Aloft lobby entrance and the future hotel building lobby entrance.** Not only does the Aloft intend to invite local community members into the hotel for entertainment and socializing, but guests of the future hotel on the 2<sup>nd</sup> parcel will likely be walking over to the Aloft. If the walkway isn't provided, a social trail through the landscaping will probably be created.
- **Locate the bike racks well behind the driveway curb and close to the walkway recommended above.** The bike racks, while in a prominent location within view of the lobby, are at the driveway curb and will not be safe to access. Placing the racks near a walkway will also provide greater natural surveillance from passersby.
- **Add windows to Stairwell #2.** Stairwell #1 has windows that can promote more stair use. Although the corridors on levels 2-4 have windows, the U-shape of the building will diminish their contribution to promoting stair use so making the stairwell environments more attractive could increase their use. There appears to be an opportunity to add windows to stairwell #2.

- **Increase the driveway entrance curb return radii.** Large radii on driveway curb returns may induce higher vehicle speeds that may be hazardous to pedestrians in the parking lot and on the sidewalk. The radii also create skewed curb ramp lip that is not as easy to negotiate as a more perpendicular ramp.

Although not a part of this project, please note the bike racks on the 2nd parcel may be inaccessible when a car is parked in the adjacent space, and car movements will be unsafe for cyclists accessing the racks.

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.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm  
Project Manager