



1/2/2019

VIA EMAIL

Jose Quintanilla, Assistant Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Arden Way Affordable Housing (DR18-390)

Dear Mr. Quintanilla:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for Arden Way Affordable Housing (DR18-390) and we offer the following comments and recommendations. The project will provide affordable housing units close to public transit and an elementary school. Walking distance from the project's pedestrian entrance to Royal Oaks Station is less than 1/8-mile, while a rear corner of the project site is about 60' from the station. Bus stops for Routes 22 and 23 are 300' to 850' from the pedestrian entrance, and Woodlake Elementary School is less than 1/2-mile.

The project proposes to reconstruct the Arden Way sidewalk along the site's frontage. The new 6'-wide sidewalk will be separated from the street by either parallel parking spaces or landscape planters. This will improve pedestrian safety and comfort in front of the project site. Unfortunately, the sidewalks along the rest of the block is an attached 5'-wide sidewalk that will be much less comfortable.

The pedestrian routes to the light rail station will involve walking on the existing attached sidewalk along Arden Way and crossing two 2-way driveways for the adjacent Chevron gas station/convenience store. **The distance, safety and convenience of the walking trip between Arden Way Affordable Housing and Royal Oaks Station would be considerably improved if a pedestrian gate and walkway were added at the southwest corner of the project site.**

If a direct pedestrian connection is added between the project site and the light rail station platform, please keep in mind that elementary-aged children will want to use this pathway to get to and from school. **Design elements should be incorporated to keep children safe from trains and from people that may congregate behind the Chevron.**

Pedestrian access is provided only on the east side of the main driveway that's opposite Boxwood Street. We expect that pedestrians will be walking primarily to or from the west, so most walking trips will require crossing the project's driveway at Arden Way. It would be safer if these driveway crossings could be made just inside the vehicular gate rather than at the street entrance. Vehicles would be moving more slowly and the drivers' focus would be on the vehicle and pedestrian activity on the driveway rather than the high speed traffic on the street. **We suggest adding a sidewalk on the west side of the driveway with a crossing just outside of the vehicle gate, if possible.**

We're pleased to see the stairwells are open with decorative screening. The stair landings will be apparent and the stairs next to elevators will be prominent. People will see the stairs as always available even while they're waiting for the elevator doors to open. Residents will likely get more daily physical activity than if the stairwells were enclosed with a vestibule blocking direct views and access to the stairs. **We recommend that smoking on the stairs be prohibited so that all residents may feel comfortable using the stairs.**

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. 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.

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. Additional benefits of walkable communities include a stronger sense of social cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Analyst