



4/2/2019

VIA EMAIL

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

RE: River Oaks Marketplace (P19-012)

Dear Mr. Quintanilla:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for River Oaks Marketplace (P19-012) and we offer the following comments.

The project proposes a 4-acre commercial center within the Park El Camino PUD at the northwest corner of W El Camino Avenue at Orchard Lane in South Natomas. The existing 7.5-acre C-2 (PUD) parcel is bounded by a freeway on ramp to the west, The CORE (300 apartments under development) to the north in the Park El Camino PUD, The Cove (490 single family homes under construction) to the east in the River Oaks PUD, a partially developed commercial center to the south, and the existing Willowcreek community to the south and southeast.

The project goals to create a sense of place and serve the immediate residential neighborhood are well intentioned. Creating walkable communities with access to shopping and dining is critical to the health of our residents and the sustainability of our City. There is housing under construction for close to 2,000 people that will be able to walk and bike to the project site without crossing a major street. River Oaks Marketplace has a significant opportunity to benefit the local residents.

Since there is 20 acres of C-2 property directly accessible by two collector streets from Willowcreek south of W El Camino Avenue, the River Oak Marketplace will serve primarily the residents on the north side of W El Camino Avenue in The COVE and The Core. The City's General Plan designates the project site as Suburban Center and views existing auto-oriented suburban centers as opportunities for transformation and enhancement. More than half of the key urban form characteristics of suburban centers are pedestrian oriented. River Oaks Marketplace should not be designed to be the type of commercial center the City aims to transform.

A primary focus of the project should be providing a pedestrian-oriented site serving people that arrive walking or biking via 'A' Court and Orchard Lane. The River Oaks Marketplace project proposes primarily drive-through uses, and the uses that may be attractive to pedestrians are not located with pedestrians in mind. The site plan needs major revisions in order to serve pedestrians and bicyclists in addition to drivers. Features that are missing from the proposal include pedestrian-oriented buildings facing the street with parking behind the buildings, direct pedestrian access, and no or limited pedestrian crossings of driveways and drive aisles.

Other site plan issues include:

- Pedestrians must cross the driveways that provide primary auto access for the car wash and the drive-through coffee shop.
- 'A' Court is the primary street for pedestrian access and the primary access street for drive-through uses.
- Once on site, pedestrians arriving from the west end of The Core must cross the major auto path to Dutch Bros three times.
- The patio/seating area north of the Quick Quack will be exposed to high noise levels from the car wash exit.
- The sidewalks on 'A' Court and the outdoor space on the south end of The Core apartments will be exposed to high noise levels from the car wash exit.
- The patio/seating area at Dutch Bros will be exposed to high noise levels from the vacuums at Quick Quack.
- Pedestrians on W El Camino must cross a major driveway and then cross the primary exit drive aisle for two drive-throughs and a primary or secondary exit aisle for the car wash.
- The C-2 land use has a minimum FAR of 0.15 but the project is about half that ratio.
- The site plan doesn't meet the Park El Camino PUD minimum landscape setback requirements for 'A' Court and W El Camino Avenue.

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