



8/30/2019

VIA EMAIL

Nicholas Sosa
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department
2729 Prospect Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Grantline 220 Large Lot & Small Lot TSM (DD9837) August 14, 2019 Routing

Dear Mr. Sosa:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the second revision of Grantline 220 Large Lot & Small Lot TSM (DD9837) routed on August 14, 2019. The revised project proposes to develop 126.4 acres as an active adult community with 606 single family units, a clubhouse/recreation center, a neighborhood green park and private streets. The project also proposes 338 high density residential units on two parcels, plus sites for a fire station site, a regional town center and a water quality basin. This revision has approximately 5% more residential units than the original project.

The proposed project steps backwards from the direction we believe it should take. The gated active adult community development will have diminished connectivity due to the inward focused street network. Even the streets within the gated areas are incomplete because every street may be missing the sidewalk on one side. Better access and mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists is needed to improve the physical and mental health of the future residents of Grantline 220 and Rancho Cordova, and to help the City and region reach sustainability and climate change goals.

The streets and single-family houses in the Grantline 220 subdivisions will be in place without significant change for decades. Future residents may accept the limitations on their walking and biking imposed by the project design as they buy into the community or rent, but as the "active adult" residents that desire to age in place get into their 70's and 80's, they will face greater hardships getting around, reaching services and making contact with other people in their neighborhood or the surrounding area.

Our previous letter, dated 7/11/2019, commented on neighborhood connections, grade separated crossing, multifamily residential parcels, neighborhood green parks, the school site location and block sizes. The revised plan maintains the same street section and landscape setback for the grade separated crossing, and it eliminates the school site. The park sizes and locations in the revised plan are about the same. We recognize that although there isn't a neighborhood green park in the original plan nor the first and second revisions of Grantline 220 East, the size of the park in the eastern area exceeds that of a large neighborhood green and remains central to its service area.

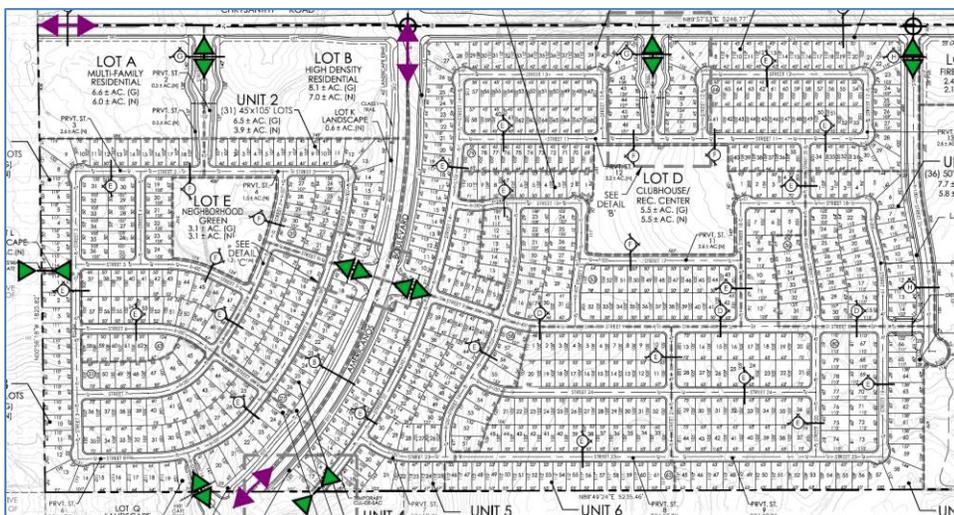
This letter comments on issues that persist with the revised project (lack of neighborhood connections, large block sizes, and location of multifamily residential parcels) and it comments on an issue introduced by the revised project (incomplete sidewalk network).

Neighborhood Connections

Travel between neighborhoods is important to creating and maintaining social relationships, reaching destinations for daily needs such as shopping, dining, services and parks, and improving mobility. The SunCreek Specific Plan (SCSP) requires the street system to provide convenient walking and biking travel to neighborhood destinations and between neighborhoods. The SunCreek Specific Plan (Figure 4-23) shows several local street connections to adjacent neighborhoods; three on the west side of Grantline 220, three on the south side, and four on the north side. The figure below identifies inter-neighborhood connections with green arrows. Arterial connections are shown with purple arrows.



The Grantline 220 project fails to provide adequate connections between neighborhoods to enable access for residents and visitors. The figure below shows the Grantline 220 tentative subdivision map using the connectivity symbols used in the SCSP figure above with the addition of green reversed arrows representing future connections dependent on other development. While there is some commonality of connections, the number of connections in Grantline 220 are fewer. The west boundary has two fewer connections, and the south, east and north boundaries each have one fewer. The inter-neighborhood boundary within Grantline 220, i.e. Americanos Boulevard between Grantline West and Grantline East, has one rather than two connections.



There are three caveats to this assessment, though. First, the connection on the west boundary depends on the successful implementation of bi-directional pedestrian easements on the Grantline 220 and The Ranch properties. Second, the south boundary connections could be equivalent if there's adequate right-of-way allocated between Unit 7 housing and Lot F Water Quality Basin to extend Street 25 south should development occur within the Grantline North Planning Area to the south. Third, the utility of the connection(s) between Grantline West and Grantline East is partially dependent on theAmericano Boulevard intersection design. If there's no signal(s) or no curbed median with pedestrian/bicycle refuge area to enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross the arterial, then there's little connectivity from side to side.

There are four circulation objectives of the SunCreek Specific Plan that respond to issues in the General Plan.

Reduce the use of automobiles. Reducing the use of automobiles in everyday life is accomplished by providing convenient, safe, and attractive alternatives. The SCSP emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle use, access to public transit, and use of alternative vehicles as viable options to use of automobiles.

Routes for pedestrians must be convenient to encourage people to walk or bike rather than drive. The limited number of connections may not be viewed as inconvenient by drivers, but pedestrians and bicyclists will not find out-of-way travel convenient to access connections between neighborhoods or to the adjacent commercial centers.

Coordination of land use and circulation. Trip destinations such as schools, parks, jobs, shopping and commercial services are located where they are convenient to the residences to facilitate walking or bicycling. Higher density residential uses and major trip destinations are located along potential transit routes.

The Regional Town Center in Grantline 220 is located in a convenient location from a regional perspective, but the location and the connection to it will not be convenient for many residents of Grantline 220 and the greater SunCreek Specific Plan area. The commercial/office center in Arista del Sol is also in a convenient location for drivers living in Grantline 220, but it will not be convenient for many of the residents that may want to walk or bike.

Direct routes and connectivity. The street and pedestrian/bikeway network provides a convenient, reasonably direct, safe, and attractive route to major destinations.

In addition to the impact the circulation network imposes upon walking and biking to the commercial destinations, the uncertain design of theAmericano Boulevard intersection will impact the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists traveling from Grantline West to the clubhouse/Rec Center in Grantline East. Safe crossing ofAmericano Boulevard will require pedestrian or traffic signals if there are left turn lanes, or there will need to be refuge areas within the curbed medians if there are no left turn lanes.

Transportation diversity. The SunCreek Specific Plan will accommodate the transportation options available to residents.

As detailed above, the walking and biking options available to residents will be limited by the circulation network.

There are two SunCreek Specific Plan policies and one development regulation supporting the above objectives.

SunCreek Specific Plan Policy C 5. The trails, pedestrian paths and local pedestrian streets shall be an interconnected system of recreational and travel routes.

Although there is interconnectivity for vehicles, the street connections will not serve pedestrians and bicyclists very well.

SunCreek Specific Policy C 7. The SunCreek Plan Area shall provide on-street bike lanes along all connector roadways and on local and major roadways.

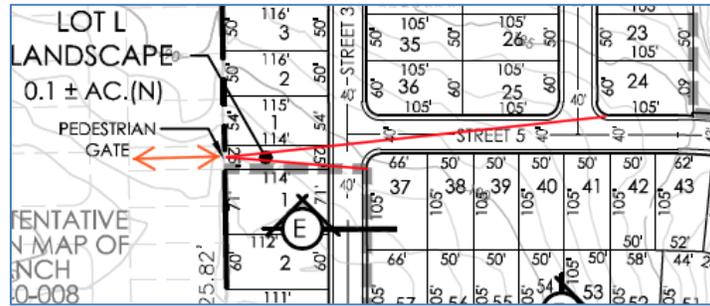
Whereas the December 2018 and June 2019 plans for Grantline 220 had bike lanes on all connector roadways and major roadways, the August 2019 plans do not include bike lanes on any of the collector roadways.

SunCreek Development Regulation DS 4. The internal streets and pedestrian ways in each neighborhood shall be designed so that residents can easily walk or drive from one neighborhood to another.

Before one can walk from one neighborhood to another, one must be able to get to the point of inter-neighborhood connection. It's not clear if the current Grantline 220 project proposes sidewalks on both sides or only one side of all streets inside the gated areas with the exception of the entry streets. The tentative subdivision map appears to show sidewalks on both sides of all streets, whereas the street sections show sidewalks on one side of primary residential and minor residential streets. Sidewalks on one side of the street requires residents on the side without sidewalks to either walk in the street or cross midblock to get anywhere in or out of the development. It can also require pedestrians to negotiate rolled curbs which can be difficult for people with mobility impairments or pushing strollers. Local destinations, such as the Clubhouse/Rec Center and the Neighborhood Green could be challenging for residents to access from their homes.

We are pleased to see the addition of a pedestrian paseo on Lot L, which has split the long block along the western boundary of Grantline 220 into two shorter L-shaped blocks. We have two concerns about the paseo, though. First, the paseo is proposed to line up with a similar paseo on The Ranch's side of the project boundary line. If The Ranch project is approved with a gated active adult community at the project boundary, how will the gating be implemented? There will be two different groups of residents needing to pass through the gate. Will the locking mechanism have multiple means of access? Will there be two gates, one for each community? Who will be responsible for maintenance and continued functionality of the gate(s)?

Second, although the 25'-wide Lot L, through which the connection is made, will be wide enough to allow adequate surveillance from the street and neighboring houses, the orientation of the lots across Street 3 from the entrance won't easily facilitate "eyes on the paseo." Lot 37 is directly across from the paseo, but the line of sight to the far end of the Grantline 220 portion of the paseo will be within the front setback area. The side-facing orientation of the house could further diminish the potential for "eyes on the paseo." The next closest lot on the east side of Street 3 is Lot 36, but it has no line of sight to the paseo interior. In fact, the next closest house with direct line of sight is one block to the east on Lot 24.



Block Sizes

The August 14, 2019 revision has a greater number of walkable-sized blocks, but the pedestrian connectivity hasn't improved because there are more long blocks wrapping around the walkable blocks in Grantline 220 East, and connections to Chrysanthy Road and Americans Boulevard are infrequent.

The Grantline 220 project fails to conform to the following SunCreek Specific Plan Development Regulations.

SunCreek Development Regulations DS 2. The neighborhood street system shall be designed to provide multiple, direct and convenient traffic routes that make it easy to walk or bike to nearby homes, parks, schools and commercial areas.

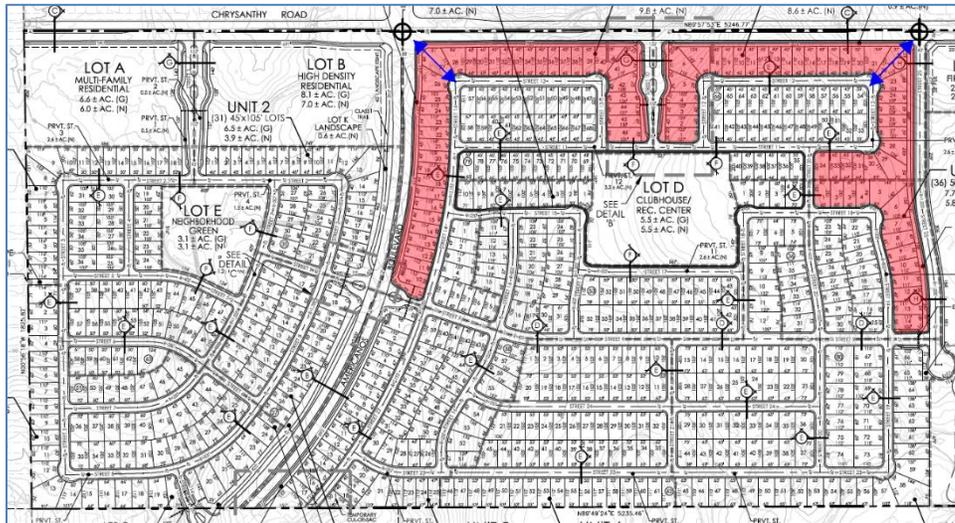
The few connections between neighborhoods will not make it easy for many residents to walk or bike to places other those within their immediate neighborhood.

SunCreek Development Regulations DS 5. Access to the sidewalk along an arterial or local streets from the interior of neighborhoods will be provided at intervals of not more than one thousand (1000) feet and an average of eight hundred (800) feet.

The distances between pedestrian entryways into Grantline West and Grantline East from arterials ranges from almost 1000' to over 2000', with an average over 1450'.

SunCreek Development Regulations DS 6. Pedestrian circulation will typically be provided along residential streets that intersect with the collectors. However, where the road system does not provide sufficient pedestrian connectivity along an arterial street, access will be provided by a pedestrian walkway connection (paseo) between an interior street and the arterial street sidewalk.

There are several long blocks that impede pedestrian connectivity along the arterial streets. The figure below illustrates the lack of connections created by long blocks. Blue arrows identify pedestrian connections that should be provided.



SunCreek Development Regulations DS 7. Pedestrian access shall be provided from the interior of neighborhoods to the arterial street sidewalk within 400 feet of a transit stop.

There are no residential lots less than 400' from any point on Chrysanthy Road.

Multifamily Residential

The SunCreek Specific Plan illustrative plan (see figure below) placed the larger of two high density residential land uses near the regional town center. One of the benefits to this location is there's a greater number of people close to the regional town center and a greater percentage of trips to the center from the local area could be made by walking or biking. The location proposed in the Grantline 220 project will make reduce the number of people walking or biking to the center. Although travel by transit, when it's available, could reduce the number of vehicle trips to the center, it will also reduce the number of people using active transportation.



Sidewalk Network

The proposed Grantline project appears to have eliminated sidewalks on one side of all residential streets. This conflicts with policy C 6 of the SunCreek specific Plan.

SunCreek Specific Plan Policy C 6. The following table establishes the minimum widths for sidewalks in the SunCreek Plan Area. The City may adjust or increase these to

accommodate special circumstances of individual projects. Meandering sidewalks are acceptable in wide landscaped areas and should follow a natural shifting alignment rather than an un-natural oscillating alignment.

MINIMUM SIDEWALK STANDARDS

<u>Street Classification</u>	<u>Sidewalk Width</u>
Residential	5-6 feet
Commercial	7 feet
Major Arterial	7 feet

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 Analyst