



6/3/2015

VIA EMAIL

Teresa Haenggi, Associate Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811-0218

**RE: California Brownstones (P15-023)**

Dear Ms. Haenggi:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the May 13 routing of the proposed California Brownstones. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the project.

The California Brownstones project proposes subdividing one site into 12 dwelling units. The project site is located at 17<sup>th</sup> and Q Streets, and would infill an existing vacant lot currently used for surface parking. The potential for walking by future residents is high because the infill project is located a short walk from local restaurants, Fremont Park and 16<sup>th</sup> Street Light Rail Station.

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.

Based on the proposed project plans, WALKSacramento offers the following comments.

**Consider improving the 17<sup>th</sup> Street façade to be more aesthetically pleasing at a pedestrian scale.** The west elevation of 17<sup>th</sup> Street depicts blank brown walls that are monotonous and lack visual interest for people walking past. Consider landscaping the brown walls to reduce the amount "dead space." Constructing small windows on the west side of the garages could help to improve the aesthetics of the wall. This would also improve energy efficiency as the daylight will allow residents to use their garage in the day time without resorting to using electric lights.

**Promote natural surveillance through adequate lighting throughout the site and surrounding area.** The intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> and Q lacks adequate lighting for pedestrians traveling at night. There are marked crosswalks on the south and west legs of the intersection, but the closest streetlight is beyond the northeast corner. Residents that choose to walk to Fremont Park or local restaurants and bars located near 16<sup>th</sup> and Q may risk being hit by a motorist that cannot see them while returning to their home at the California Brownstones. In addition, 17<sup>th</sup> Street and the drive aisle should be well lit to improve perceived safety for residents and guests.

Exterior lighting should be directed downward, with luminaries to prevent unnecessary glare. WALKSacramento recommends that the City of Sacramento funds the installation of streetlights.

**The project's windows, balconies, and roof decks adequately promote "eyes on the street" to promote natural surveillance and decrease criminal behavior.** Furthermore, the resident balconies increase their connection to the street and community around them.

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 contact me at (916) 446-9255 or [egerhart@walksacramento.org](mailto:egerhart@walksacramento.org).

Sincerely,

Emily Alice Gerhart

Project Coordinator

Enclosure: 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

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