



July 7, 2014

VIA EMAIL

Scott A. Johnson, Planning Manager
City of Folsom
Community Development Department
50 Natoma Street
Folsom, CA 95630

RE: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Russell Ranch Project

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Russell Ranch Project. The project proposes to develop 364 residential units, a private recreation center and roadways on approximately 430 acres within the Folsom Plan Area Specific Plan (FPASP). The Russell Ranch project also proposes to amend the Folsom General Plan and portions of the FPASP Land use designations.

The Russell Ranch project proposes several changes to roadways that may impact pedestrian circulation and safety. The FPASP specified bike lanes and detached sidewalks on both sides of Entry/Gateway roads and Empire Ranch Road, whereas the Russell Ranch project proposes to construct bike lanes and detached sidewalks on only one side of the identified roadways.

Entry/Gateway roads are important pedestrian connections to future adjoining communities, especially since they are the only roadways making connections to Placerville Road and future development to the west. Empire Ranch Road will provide connections between neighborhoods and to future adjoining communities, and it will provide the very important function of access to the elementary school site for residents east of Empire Ranch Road.

Impacts to pedestrian safety and mobility created by changes to roadway cross sections, including but not limited to Entry/Gateway roads and Empire Ranch Road, should be analyzed by the EIR. Additional crossings of roadways, especially where traffic volume is higher or the number of lanes is greater, may contribute to additional pedestrian collisions. Longer travel times for pedestrians resulting from additional and inconvenient crossings may also discourage walking trips, leading to more auto trips and fewer transit trips. The lack of sidewalks on arterial roadways is a major factor in walking-along-the-roadway pedestrian collisions.

Figure 8 Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation in the Russell Ranch NOP indicates there are limited pedestrian connections to surrounding land uses. The EIR should analyze the proposed pedestrian circulation network to ensure it conforms to the FPASP, including the policies in section 7.9 Sidewalk, Trail and Bikeway Network. Limited connections to adjoining land uses may lead to fewer walking trips, pedestrian use of roadway facilities that are not intended for pedestrians, and more auto trips creating a more dangerous environment for pedestrians.

WALKSacramento encourages people to walk and bicycle in their communities. 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. 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.

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 cholm@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Analyst