



3/25/2015

VIA EMAIL

Arwen Wacht, Associate Planner  
City of Sacramento  
Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Heritage Park at Natomas MLRC (P15-002)**

Dear Ms. Wacht:

WALKSacramento reviewed the February 13, 2015 routing for Heritage Park at Natomas MLRC (P15-002) and offered comments on the site design in a letter dated March 15, 2015. We'd like to continue our review of the project with the following comments on the impact of the proposed land use on walking.

The Heritage Park at Natomas MLRC project proposes changing the use of 10.1 acres currently zoned SC-PUD (shopping center – planned unit development) to a residential care facility (60-unit assisted living and 45-resident memory care) and multi-unit dwellings (54 cottages). The project would amend the schematic plan and guidelines of the Heritage Park/Northborough Planned Unit Development and require a Conditional Use Permit for a residential care facility and multi-residential dwellings in the SC-PUD zone.

Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community's future. Trips made by walking and biking often replace trips made by vehicles. Reduced driving decreases overall vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions. More trips by walking and bicycling could help reduce the current expensive burden on the health care system of providing medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

The diversity of land uses in neighborhoods is also critical to enabling more walking and active travel. People need places to which they may walk, otherwise walking is purely for recreation. The more destinations in and around neighborhoods there are, the more opportunities and reasons people will have to walk.

The City of Sacramento General Plan recognizes the importance of a mix of uses within neighborhoods. LU 2.6.1 Sustainable Development Patterns includes ideas such as compact and mixed use development patterns that facilitate walking, bicycling and transit use. LU 4.1.1 Mixed-Use Neighborhoods requires a compatible and complementary mix of residential and nonresidential uses that address the basic daily needs of residents.

The proposed change to the land use will have a significant negative impact on the potential number of future walking trips in north-central North Natomas. The project site was entitled in 2004 for a shopping center with a grocery store and five shops and pads for uses such as restaurants and daily services. We estimate there are over 1300 single- and multi-family residences within a ½-mile of the site. If only 1% of those homes generated one walking trip to the shopping center per day, there would be an additional 130 people walking every day. Assuming every cottage unit in the proposed project generates a walking trip every day and the assisted and memory care units do not generate walking trips, there would be 54 walk trip per day.

Replacing a shopping center that could attract possibly more than 130 pedestrians per day with a senior residential complex that might have 54 people walk per day does not contribute to more walking. Also, the distance from the project site to the nearest existing grocery store is 1 ¾ miles and there are no other commercial sites large enough for a grocery store in the area. The 130 potential future daily walk trips to the shopping center would likely be replaced by vehicle trips because of the distance to grocery stores.

WALKSacramento recommends that the potential reduction in walk and active travel trips resulting from the proposed land use change be carefully considered by the City of Sacramento prior to approving the Heritage Park at Natomas MLRC proposal, and the health of residents and sustainability of North Natomas should be part of the consideration.

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 [cholm@walksacramento.org](mailto:cholm@walksacramento.org).

Sincerely,

Chris Holm  
Project Coordinator