



12/31/2015

VIA EMAIL

Michael Hanebutt, Assistant Planner  
City of Sacramento  
Community Development Department  
300 Richards Blvd, 3rd Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Fort Sutter Hotel (P15-067)**

Dear Mr. Hanebutt:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routings for the Fort Sutter Hotel (P15-067) proposed for the southwest corner of Capitol Avenue and 28<sup>th</sup> Street in Midtown. The application proposes a mixed-use project with a restaurant, bar, hotel lobby, and services on the ground floor and five floors of guest rooms.

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. Just over one-third 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.

Although the Fort Sutter Hotel will be occupied mainly by short-term guests from outside the Midtown community, the bar and restaurant are sure to attract locals as well. Several features of the project can help hotel guests maintain their healthy lifestyles and incorporate walking and bicycling to their destinations or to transit, instead of driving while also supporting local pedestrian activity in and around the project site.

First, Fort Sutter Hotel is located within the Midtown district; the center of the City's art, music, and food scene. It is centrally located and will provide convenient access to transit. The project site is within walking distance of shops, restaurants, office buildings, a hospital, and state historic park, making it convenient for hotel guests to walk or bike to nearby destinations.

Second, the smaller building setback, shade trees, sidewalk dining areas, activated facades, and streetscape design are pedestrian oriented, improving walkability and the pedestrian experience. The building façade along Matsui Alley and the alley itself lack the pedestrian features and streetscape design that activate the building fronts along 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Capitol Avenue, and the pedestrian walkway. **WALKSacramento recommends activating the eastern portion of the**

**project along Matsui Alley with pedestrian oriented lighting, pedestrian walkways, and stairwell enhancements.** Stairs are associated with light to moderate physical activity and can provide users a more active alternative to elevators. WALKSacramento recommends providing handrails, signage, wall art, windows in stairwell doors, and carpeted floors in stairwells to make the stairwells an extension of each floor. Stairwell enhancements can make the stairs more attractive to guests. **WALKSacramento recommends providing windows in the stairwell to bring in natural light and provide a passive view of the street.** Hotel guests using the stairwell will be the “eyes-on-the-street”, providing natural surveillance of the Alley and improving the safety of the space.

Third, pedestrian access and connectivity is provided along and through the site with a pedestrian walkway on the project site and sidewalks along 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Capitol Avenue. The pedestrian walkway connects the project site to the parking garage to the east and future theater to the south. Hotel, bar, and restaurant guests will be able to make short and safe walking trips to adjacent sites. There are no symbols on the site plan that depict lighting fixtures on the site. **WALKSacramento recommends adding pedestrian scale lighting along 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Capitol Avenue, the pedestrian walkway, and through Matsui Alley.** Lighting for pedestrians will improve safety during nighttime trips especially to and through the Alley which will have vehicle access for hotel check-in and drop-off. **WALKSacramento recommends providing a pedestrian connection from the pedestrian walkway to the parking garage.** A marked pedestrian walkway in Matsui Alley will signal to motorists to expect pedestrians. Guests visiting the project site or future movie theater will have safe and convenient access through the site to the parking garage.

Fourth, the site plan depicts two locations for bicycle parking each with two bicycle racks. Each bicycle rack is located in an easily accessible area within view of bar or restaurant guests. There appears to be no area provided for long-term bicycle parking. **WALKSacramento recommends providing sufficient, safe, and convenient long-term bicycle lockers on-site for employees and hotel guests.**

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling 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 [mtomuta@walksacramento.org](mailto:mtomuta@walksacramento.org).

Sincerely,

Mihaela Tomuta  
Project Manager

Attachment: 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

*www.walksacramento.org*

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