



1/16/2018

VIA EMAIL

Michael Hanebutt, Assistant Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Railyards Lots 48 A & B (P17-069)

Dear Mr. Hanebutt:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for Railyards Lots 48 A & B (P17-069) and we offer the following comments to improve the walkability of the project and the developing Railyards District.

It's exciting to see a major residential mixed-use project proposed for the Railyards. The Railyards Lots 48 A & B project will construct 277 residential units in a six-story U-shaped building with a four-story parking garage and ground level open space courtyard between the building wings. The project site is located across Railyards Boulevard from the future 7th Street light rail stations, within a short walking distance of the proposed Major League Soccer stadium, and blocks from future parks, office space and other land uses in the Railyards.

This letter details concerns we have with two aspects of the project design. The first aspect is the design of the Class I trail within the 30' easement along the eastern and southern edges of the site and its interface with pedestrians and vehicles at adjacent intersections. The second aspect is the orientation of the building's circulation network to the adjacent light rail station and bus stop.

The Class I trail easement on the project site is part of the Railyards low-stress bicycle network north-south and east-west routes. The off-site Class I trail along the west side of 7th Street north of Railyards Boulevard and the off-site Class IV protected bike lanes along 6th Street south of Railyards Boulevard are connected by the easement trail and it's a low-stress alternative to Railyards Boulevard. The off-site Class II bike lanes on Camille Land and the off-site Class I trail along the south side of Railyards Boulevard east of 7th Street are connected by the easement trail and it's also a low-stress alternative to Railyards Boulevard. The Class I bike trail on the project site easement will be a very important segment of north-south and east-west travel for bicyclists and can be expected to carry a high number of bicyclists. However, because most of the building's pedestrian access points are along the Class I easement, the travelway will need to accommodate many pedestrians and bicyclists. We recommend that the 30' easement include a sidewalk separated from the bicycle trail by a landscaped planter with trees, possibly an 8' sidewalk, 10' landscape planter, and 12' bicycle trail.

Figure 1, below, shows a street view of North Alabama Street looking south towards E Ohio Street on the Indianapolis Cultural Trail where the environment is similar to the Class I trail easement on the

project site, with the exception that the bicycle trail is at the back of the street curb. The separated sidewalk provides access to townhomes, and the bicycle trail provides through travel and access to the townhomes via intermittent walkways between the sidewalk and the trail.



Figure 1 Separated Sidewalk and Class I Trail

The design of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the Class I trail project easement should also provide for safe and efficient mixing of pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles at the 6th Street-Camille Lane and 7th Street-Railyards Boulevard intersections. At these two trail segment termini, the environment changes significantly for bicyclists – the trail is bicycles only, but at the intersections there will be mixing with pedestrians on the sidewalk perpendicular to the trail, pedestrians from the parallel sidewalk, pedestrians in the crosswalks, and vehicles in the intersection making through and turning movements. The diagrams in Figures 2 and 3 show the pathways for pedestrians (sidewalks in solid pink and crosswalks in dashed pink) and bicyclists (Class I trails in solid violet and street crossings in dashed violet). Figure 4 shows separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings of an urban street in Indianapolis. The trail and street design must consider and accommodate for these issues.

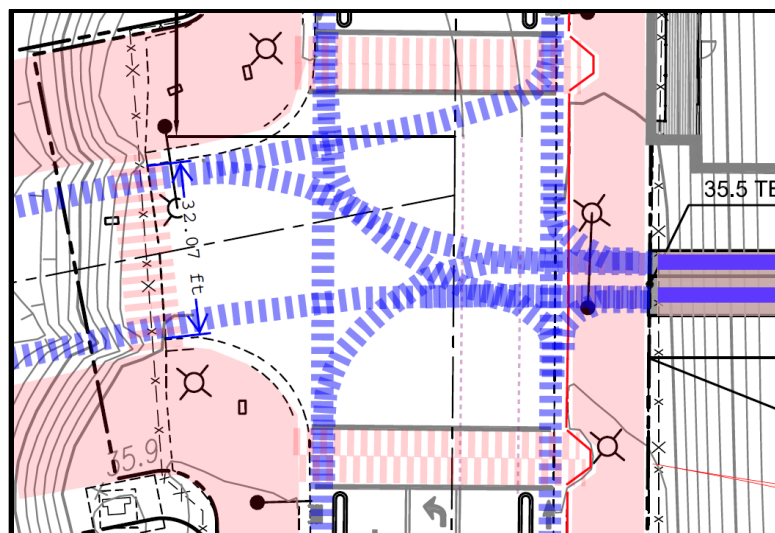


Figure 2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways
6th Street at Camille Lane

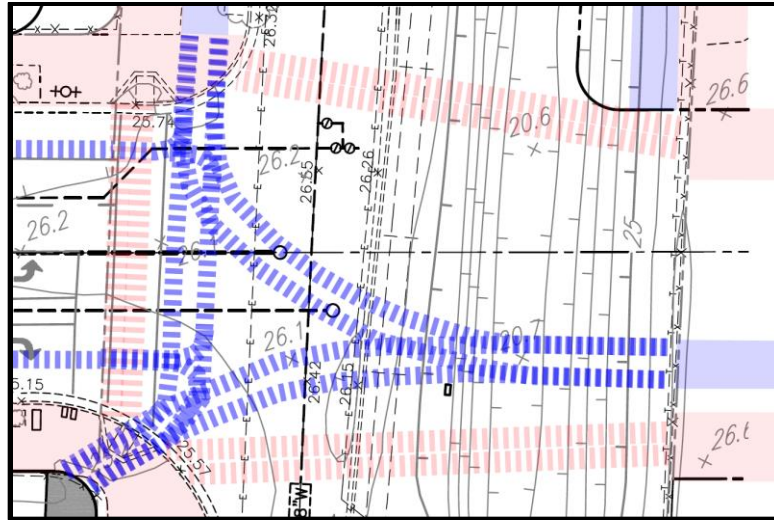


Figure 3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways
7th Street at Railyards Boulevard



Figure 4 Separated Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Crossings

Pedestrian design should facilitate walking within the project site and to local destinations. The building floor plans provide good internal circulation, though it's disconnected in the northwest corner on Level 1 by the garage and at the south end on Levels 2-5 by the courtyard on Level 1. There are four connections from the internal pedestrian circulation to the Class I trail on the south side of the building and two on the east side, and there are three connections to the 6th Street sidewalk on the west side of the building.

The north and northeast sides of the building don't have any pedestrian connections to the outside, though. The future 7th Street light rail station on the north side of Railyards Boulevard and the existing bus stop for future service in front of the building on Railyards Boulevard are not provided direct pedestrian access from the building hallways. Should the building floor plan undergo major revision, we would recommend that a pedestrian entrance and stairwell be included at or near the northeast

corner of the building that opens to the Railyards Boulevard and 7th Street intersection. Moving the secondary entrance to the corner would also highlight and maximize the transit orientation of the residences.

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. A 30-minute walk is about one and a half miles. If more people could obtain regular exercise by walking and bicycling to their regular destinations, in lieu of driving, it could yield significant health improvements to the resident population of this area. Reduced driving would also decrease 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.

WALKS Sacramento 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.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

cc: Denton Kelly, Downtown Railyard Ventures, LLC
Kevin Nagle, StadiumCo LLC

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

WALKSacramento
909 12th Street, Suite 203
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-9255

www.sacbike.org

Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
909 12th Street, Suite 116
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 444-6600