



3/23/2018

VIA EMAIL

Daniel Abbes, Assistant Planner  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Artisan at The Cove (DR18-002)**

Dear Mr. Abbes:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for Artisan at The Cove (DR18-002) to construct single-family homes on 93 vacant lots. The routing includes floor plans for four front-loaded houses with three elevations. We note that 30 of the 93 vacant lots are alley loaded, so we assume about two-thirds of the homes in the neighborhood would be affected by this project. Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to offer the following comments.

It's disappointing to see that there are few windows on the first floor of the houses, that all of the house plans have the active living areas towards the back of the lot, and that two of the four house plans have the front door set back 14' to 20' behind the front of the house. Pedestrians' sense of safety will not be enhanced as there will be few occupants in rooms facing the street during times when people would be expected to be out walking; the active living areas in the back of the houses will not contribute to a sense of community in the neighborhood; and the front door out of view of much of the street may contribute to more property crime, especially if the adjacent house provides no surveillance opportunities through windows that are not behind the side-yard fence.

Two sections of the City of Sacramento Single-Family Residential Design Principles address these issues. The Porches/Entries/Courts section encourages houses that "have active use windows (i.e., living room, kitchen) facing the street" and "At a minimum, the front door should have the same prominence as the garage door." It discourages "Providing a garage door that protrudes forward from the front face of the house" or "Locating the porch or entryway in a location obstructed by the garage or side of the house." The Garage section of the Design Principles encourages design elements that "Recess garage back 5' from front house elevation entry," and it discourages "Prominent placement of garage door with respect to front door, entryway or front porch."

The proposed house plans generally fail at incorporating these design elements. Plan 1 has only an entryway window, Plan 2 has no windows and the front door is about 14' behind the garage, Plan 3 has a den window, and Plan 4 has a bedroom window and the front door is about 20' behind the front of the house.

It's interesting that the three street tree species chosen are of large, medium and small size. While the range of sizes provides flexibility to locate smaller trees near light standards so sidewalks are

illuminated as much as possible, we're concerned that smaller trees may be used too often. We recommend that the landscape plan identify only large and medium trees be specified as street trees, and smaller trees be allowed as street trees only when approved by public works.

We appreciate the use of walkways, rather than driveways, to provide pedestrian access to front doors. Not only does this provide a safer access route, but it may provide opportunities to locate ornamental trees where they will not interfere with locating street trees.

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.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm  
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](http://www.walksacramento.org)*

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