



3/5/2018

VIA EMAIL

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

RE: Northwest Land Park Phase 3 at The Mill (P17-056)

Dear Mr Abbes:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the updated routing for Northwest Land Park Phase 3 at The Mill (P17-056) and we offer the following comments.

We are happy to see some positive change to the project site plan in the updated routing. The shading for Setzer Run has increased to about 40%, although it's well below the 70% as required by the NWLP PUD Guidelines. There are also more trees shown on the site-wide landscape plan, although it remains that the sizes of the trees do not seem realistic given their proximity to houses and hardscape.

Unfortunately, there were no changes made to provide courtyard access or continuous walkways between the street sidewalk and many of the Cottages units. The park acreage has also not changed, although the March 1, 2018 staff report to the Parks and Recreation Commission states that Setzer Run within the project site will be maintained by Public Works; hence, the one-third acre Setzer Run segment may be considered park acreage by the City.

The location of Setzer Run relative to Crate Avenue and the park is the most significant problem with the project proposal. Whereas Setzer Run in the approved plan had street crossings only at two mid-block locations in Phase 3, it now has one mid-block crossing and one crossing at a T-intersection. We are happy to see the mid-block crossing is proposed to be raised, but the intersection crossing is problematic. The paths of travel for pedestrians and bicycles approaching and travelling through the intersection are undefined. There also appears to be numerous conflicts between the two modes at the intersection approaches and within the crosswalk. Further, the path of travel for bicycles using the street or the park path and transitioning to Setzer Run also appears to introduce bicycle conflicts with pedestrians and vehicles.

Since the bike path lines up with the crosswalk, will bicyclists dismount to walk within the crosswalk, or will they ride on the sidewalk to get to the street outside of the crosswalk? Will there be separate curb ramps for bicyclists and pedestrians? At the park side of the intersection, on which side of the bike path will pedestrians be walking? Is there room for both an ADA curb ramp and a bicycle ramp along the curb return at the park? Will bicyclists riding in the street be able to approach Setzer Run without riding the wrong direction on the street, and how would they get to the street with a landscape planter between the sidewalk and the curb?

We are concerned that the bike path may not function efficiently with these problems and will result in bicycle-pedestrian collisions. The illogical arrangement of pedestrian and bicycle travel paths may create antagonism between pedestrians and bicyclists; it may also diminish people's desire to walk or bike in Northwest Land Park. Setzer Run will likely be a popular route for cyclists to access the Sacramento River Bike Trail on the west side of I-5 via the repurposed rail tunnel. It would be unfortunate to create an environment that discourages use of the tunnel.

Although the proposed location for Setzer run and it's disconnect from the park path is undesirable, the new path is marginally acceptable. The updated routing for Northwest Land Park Phase 3 at The Mill doesn't include a cross section for Setzer Run, but the March 1, 2018 staff report to the Parks & Recreation commission identifies Setzer Run as a 12'-wide bi-directional bike path with a 3'-wide decomposed granite shoulder. Considering that there will be no pedestrian access from the homes to the south of Setzer Run except at the street sidewalk, it's prudent to place the pedestrian area on the north side of the bike path. However, Setzer Run is a transportation facility, not just a recreational trail, and it should, therefore, provide an accessible route to the homes in Phase 3A that's separate from the bike path. Setzer Run needn't be two facilities separated by landscaping. In this situation, it's appropriate for a paved pedestrian walkway to be attached to the bikeway.

To prevent conflicts between cyclist and pedestrians, the pedestrian and bicycle portions of Setzer run should be marked indicating the user, and there should be lines separating the two modes in addition to the proposed dashed line separating the directional bicycle lanes. We also recommend that the pedestrian area be at least 4' wide and paved.

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 don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

cc: Anis Ghobril, City of Sacramento Public Works
Jim Brown, SABA