



9/20/2018

VIA EMAIL

Nicholas Sosa  
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department  
2729 Prospect Park Drive  
Rancho Cordova, California 95670

**RE: Grant Line 208 Lennar Homes (DD9818)**

Dear Mr. Sosa:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the project routing for Grant Line 208 Lennar Homes (DD9818) major design review of 502 lots. The following comments are provided with the intent of improving the walkability of the subdivision and the creating the opportunity for a greater sense of community for future residents.

Trees play an important part in walkability so we've looked closely at the landscape plans for Lennar Homes. Most of the residential streets have attached sidewalks, so with front setbacks at or near the minimum there is space for only medium-sized or smaller trees in the front yards of the houses. To maximize the sidewalk shade, we recommend that street trees be planted as close to the sidewalk as practicable.

The landscape plans specify that one small accent tree is to be planted between driveways. We recommend that cultivars selected from the street tree list be used so that sidewalk shade is provided. Using the small accent trees between driveways will result in large gaps between sidewalk-shading tree canopy.

A significant portion of the Grant Line 208 land area is devoted to open space - two parks, an elementary school, two detention basins and two wetland preserves make up about 1/3 of the subdivision. This is a lot of outdoor space that may be underutilized if the neighborhood residents do not feel comfortable or safe using the spaces. Providing "eyes on the street and open space" promotes a sense of safety for pedestrians and park users, discourages illegitimate use of the space, and can motivate occupants of the houses to take greater ownership of the outdoor space.

The best floor plan for providing "eyes on" has active living space with windows facing the outdoor public space. Kitchens and family/great/living rooms are active living spaces where there are likely to be occupants and they're able to see the public space, whether it's the street, a park, a school or other open space. Unfortunately, of the nine house plans in the proposed product lines, there's only one front elevation with active living space.

There are 101 lots that are across the street from, or border, the open space in Grantline 208. Twelve lots have a side that faces the open space and these could likely have "eyes on." Thirty-four lots have their rear yard fence bordering open space; these will provide no "eyes on." Although there are 55 lots facing open space: fifty lots in the Viridian collection which has no front-facing active living space; and five lots in the Ventana collection which has one floor plan

with front-facing active living space. If placing like models next to each other is precluded, there could be at most three street-facing houses with "eyes on." This implies there will be only 9 to 12 houses with "eyes on" out of the 101 open-space-facing lots. We recommend that several floor plans with front-facing active living space be added to the Viridian collection so that some of the fifty houses facing the open spaces provide "eyes on the street and open space."

In summary, the recommendations we make for greater walkability and sense of community are:

- **Plant street trees as close to the sidewalk as practicable.**
- **Trees between driveways should be street trees.**
- **Add several floor plans incorporating active living space at the front to the Viridian collection.**

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.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm