



4/6/2020

VIA EMAIL

Jose Quintanilla, Assistant Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd., 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Natomas II Apartments (P19-075)

Dear Mr. Quintanilla:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the revised routing for Natomas II apartments and we offer the following comments. We are pleased to see that our three recommendations to improve access to the off-site bike trail were implemented. We're disappointed, though, to see the pedestrian access to East Commerce Way from Buildings 1 and 4 was not improved. Providing plentiful pedestrian access to residential units creates a stronger relationship between the street and the building that encourages greater social interaction and activity, both of which can enhance personal safety, improve emotional health and reduce property crime.

The City's Citywide Design Review Area Multi-Unit Dwelling Design Guidelines recognizes the importance of the relationship of the building to the street. The Natomas II Apartments buildings implement several of the design guidelines, such as providing large windows, porches and balconies that will provide "eyes on the street." The project doesn't meet the guidelines for *building orientation ... planned to address the street with entries and active uses to assure both a viable, safe and attractive site design.*

The Citywide Design Guidelines also state that *Residential buildings should have pedestrian access ... to the adjacent roadways.* The Natomas Crossing PUD Guidelines are even more specific and state that *Residential buildings should have pedestrian access and visual orientation to the adjacent roadways and/or open space features, i.e., "front-on" lotting,* and that *Garages and/or parking should be located away from public roadways, i.e., internal to the development, such that front door entries are accessed from public sidewalks.* *The building entrances will be allowed to within 12'6" of the front property line or in the case of split sidewalk, from back of walk, with a maximum front yard setback of 15'-0".* [emphasis added]

The Natomas II Apartments buildings that are located along East Commerce Way have plenty of windows, patios and balconies facing the street, but they do not have front door entries. The site has access to the street sidewalk, but the buildings do not. A minor change to improve building access could have been accomplished by extending sidewalks that are already proposed at the entry door/stairwells ends of the buildings. It appears the sidewalk extension for Building 4 would be less than 20'. **We recommend, again, that the sidewalk at the east end of Building 4 be extended to East Commerce Way.**

The sidewalk extension for Building 1 may be significantly longer than that for Building 4 because a bio-retention area is blocking a direct path between the parking lot sidewalk and the street sidewalk. If the floor plan for Building 1 was modified to incorporate a door at the outside northeast corner of the building, access to the street would be improved to a greater extent than if our original recommendation had been implemented. Building 6 could also be improved in a similar way with the addition of a new door and sidewalk to the street at the outside southeast corner of the building. In each building, what appears to be a dead-end hallway would become a utilized hallway. **We recommend adding a door and sidewalk to East Commerce Way at the northeast corner of Building 4 and the southeast corner of Building 6.**

Upon further examination of the architectural drawings for Buildings 1 and 4, we noticed the indirect access to the bike storage room in the BLDG 'B' and BLDG 'C' floor plans. In both floor plans, there appears to be an opportunity to add a second door into the bike rooms from the lobby as was implemented in the BLDG 'D' floor plan. **We recommend adding a door from the lobby into the bike storage room in the 'C' and 'D' floor plans.**

If you have any questions regarding our comments in this letter or the first letter, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager