



1/26/2021

VIA EMAIL

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

RE: Grantline 220 Large Lot & Small Lot TSM (DD9837) January 5, 2021 Routing

Dear Mr. Sosa:

We have submitted extensive comments on two previous routings for the Grantline 220 project. In our July 11, 2019 letter commenting on the second routing (June 17) we noted several inconsistencies the project had with the SunCreek Specific Plan and noted 1) the project proposals in the second routing lacked adequate connections between neighborhoods and to surrounding future development, 2) there may be insufficient room for proposed grade-separated crossings, 3) multifamily residential not located for convenient active travel to parks and the Regional Town Center, 4) neighborhood green park sites reduced from two to one, 5) school site location not central to surrounding residential, and 6) large blocks that reduce connectivity.

Our August 30, 2019 letter commenting on the third routing (August 14) noted the continued inconsistencies with the SunCreek Specific Plan and 6) diminished connectivity due to the inclusion of a gated active adult community, 7) lack of neighborhood connections, 8) reduced walkability due to long L-shaped blocks wrapping around small blocks, 9) multifamily residential far from the Regional Town Center, and 10) all residential streets lack sidewalks on one side.

The January 5, 2021 routing, which is the fourth resubmittal we have received, contains a few elements that will promote healthy, active transportation. Landscape Lot FF was added, and it connects Street 14 in the eastern Grantline neighborhood to Americanos Boulevard. Also, the high density residential parcel at the far northwest corner of Grantline 220 has been eliminated and two high density residential parcels were added to the northwest corner of the Regional Town Center. Although the density of the high density residential is lower compared to the original routing, the relocation of more than half the units to the Regional Town Center will encourage more active transportation and reduce vehicle trips.

Even with these positive revisions to the Grantline 220 proposal, there is much room for improvement. The remaining major issues include sidewalks, connections to arterials, connectivity, and block sizes.

Sidewalks on residential streets

Every residential street in Grantline 220 is proposed to have 5' attached sidewalks on only one side. Without a sidewalk in front of a house, pedestrians must cross the gutter and driveway apron to get to the house. If lots without sidewalks have driveway aprons with slopes that are too steep or the transitions between driveway and street pavement are not smooth and flush, then potentially one-half of the houses in Grantline 220 could be inaccessible or difficult to access for

many people, including people with mobility, circulatory, respiratory, or neurological disabilities, people that require assistance walking or have diminished sense of balance, people using wheelchairs or powered mobility devices, and people pushing strollers.

Sidewalks not only provide accessible routes to residential lots and houses, but they also provide a safer place to walk than the street. Sidewalks on one side of the street implies the street is not safe for walking in the street and residents may, therefore, be discouraged from walking. Even though Grantline 220 residential streets are private and the neighborhoods are gated, there will still be cars on the streets that are driven by residents and visitors. Either pedestrians have sidewalks on both sides of the street so that pedestrians and drivers are separated or the street is shared by drivers and pedestrians. If the streets are to be shared, then design elements should be applied to all residential streets throughout Grantline 220 that 1) compel driving speeds of 5 mph to 10 mph and 2) provide pedestrian access in compliance with the American Disabilities Act. If streets are not to be shared, then sidewalks are needed on both sides of the streets.

Inter-neighborhood connectivity

As we observed in our previous letter, the SunCreek Specific Plan (SCSP) requires the street system to provide convenient walking and biking travel to neighborhood destinations and between neighborhoods. Grantline 220 has several neighborhood destinations to which access should be provided. The Private Clubhouse/Recreation Center and the Regional Town Center in eastern Grantline 220 will be destinations for residents throughout Grantline 220 and beyond.

The Clubhouse/Rec Center may be a daily destination for residents of western Grantline 220, yet pedestrians and bicyclists do not have a safe crossing of Americanos Boulevard at Street 9. The only other crossing will be at Chrysanthy Road or the future grade separated crossing of Americanos Boulevard in Sierra Sunrise to the south. Either detour can add a quarter-mile to the trip and require walking along the arterials that are noisier and more dangerous than residential streets.

Crossing Americanos Boulevard at Street 9 will not be safe with the current intersection design. Americanos Boulevard will have four through lanes, one left-turn-only lane in each direction, and bike lanes that result in a 74' crossing distance that could take up to 25 seconds or longer. The FHWA *Field Guide for Selecting Countermeasures at Uncontrolled Pedestrian Locations* recommends the following for intersections such as Americanos Boulevard at Street 9: High-visibility crosswalk markings, parking restriction on crosswalk approach, adequate nighttime lighting levels; Advance Yield Here To (Stop Here For) Pedestrians sign and yield (stop) sign; and Pedestrian Refuge Island.

Connections to arterials

SunCreek Development Regulation DS 5 requires the distance between connections from interior residential neighborhoods to arterials be less than 1,000' with an average of 800'. Providing frequent connections to arterials can shorten walking distances to destinations and between neighborhoods. Even though crossing opportunities on the Grantline 220 arterials are limited, more frequent points of access will shorten many trip distances and provide alternative routes that can encourage more walking.

The addition of several landscape lots over the past two project revisions have improved access to the arterials from the neighborhoods. Lot Q between Chrysanthy Road and Street 13 is over 600' from Street 10 and slightly over 1000' from Street 9. Lot V between Americanos Boulevard and Street 8 is less than 600' from Street 9 in Grantline 220 and about 700' from the sidewalk

connection to Street 1 in Sierra Sunrise and about 600' from the future grade-separated crossing in Sierra Sunrise. Lot FF between Americanos Boulevard and Street 14 is about 500' from Street 9 in Grantline 220 and about 500' from Street 7 in Sierra Sunrise.

Lot FF was added to the latest Grantline 220 map and it's labeled as Landscape/Ped Access. The other landscape lots providing pedestrian access, i.e. Lots G, L, Q, V, EE, and DD should be labeled in the same manner.

The remaining non-compliance with DS 5 occurs at two locations. First, Landscape Lot L between Street 25 and Street 12 added a connection that's about 950' from Street 9, but it's almost 1,100' from Street 10 and when you add in the distance into the neighborhood the total separation is almost 1,600'. Second, the distance between Street 1 on Chrysanthy Road and Street 9 on Americanos Boulevard is about 1,600', and when you add in the distance into the neighborhoods at the collectors, the total separation is about 2,300' and the distance to the bus stop may discourage transit use.

External connectivity

Street 9 takes the approximate route of the "Class II Bike Route w/ Separated Sidewalk" shown on *Fig 4-18, Primary and Secondary Trails Master Plan* in the SunCreek Specific Plan. The gated, private street has bike lanes, but it doesn't have separated sidewalks and more detrimentally, it isn't open to use by the public. Non-residents of Grantline 220 traveling from the south to the Regional Town Center will have to go up to 4,200' out of their way.

Lot G connects the southern edge of Grantline 220 to the Grant Line North area, Lot DD connects the western edge of Grantline 220 to The Ranch, and Lot EE connects the southern edge of Grantline 220 to Sierra Sunrise. We are not aware of any detail insets in any plan drawing or a proposed condition of approval that indicates there will be pedestrian gates at any of these locations.

Block sizes

There are two large peninsula blocks that diminish connectivity within the Grantline 220 neighborhoods. The block created by Streets 1, 9 and 7 in western Grantline 220 and the block created by Streets 23, 9 and 21 in eastern Grantline 220 create excessive travel distances. The walking distance between Lots 9 and 47 that are back to back in western Grantline 220 is almost 1,900' because of the peninsula block, and the walking distance between Lots 8 and 43 in eastern Grantline 220 is over 1,100'.

The August 9, 2019 map avoided any large peninsula blocks. Although some of the blocks were larger than on the current November 16, 2020 map, maximum distance between back-to-back lots on four-sided blocks was still several hundred feet less than those for the large peninsula blocks.

Summary of Recommendations

- Include sidewalks on both sides of all residential streets.
- Redesign the intersection of Americanos Boulevard at Street 9 to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Also consider similar treatments on Chrysanthy Road at Street 1 and Street 10.

- Replace Lot L with two landscape lots, one near the midpoint between Street 10 and Street 25 on Chrysanthy Road, and one near the midpoint between Chrysanthy Road and Street 9 on Street 25.
- Add a landscape lot to connect Street 8 to Americanos Blvd near the midpoint between Chrysanthy Road and Street 9 (about where Lot 15 is located).
- Open Street 9 between Americanos Boulevard and Street 25 at the Regional Town Center to public use.
- Add pedestrian gates at Lots G, L, Q, V, DD, FF, and EE.
- Replace the two large three-sided peninsula blocks with smaller four-sided blocks or add landscape lots for pedestrian access between Street 3 and Street 7 and between Street 21 and Street 23.

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 public health and physical fitness, better air quality, a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in neighborhoods, and more sustainable communities and local economies.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager