



2/2/2021

VIA EMAIL

Sean de Courcy
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd., 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Opus at Folsom and Elvas (DR20-229)

Dear Mr. de Courcy:

Thank you for routing the Opus at Folsom and Elvas project to WALKSacramento. The project will provide student housing that's within walking distance of the 65th Street light rail station and much of the Sac State campus, in addition to the retail and commercial along Folsom Boulevard, Elvas Avenue and 65th Street. The project site is also less than a five-minute bike ride from the Jedediah Smith Memorial Bike Trail along the American River.

The project incorporates several design elements that will positively affect daily physical activity by Opus residents and visitors. The two stairwells that provide access to all levels of the building each have windows on levels 2-6. There is decorative paving marking the walkway through the drive aisle and parking lot between Elvas Avenue and the lobby entrance. There is also a pedestrian corridor between Elvas Avenue and Folsom Boulevard on the western edge of the project site. However, there are several improvements to the project site plan and design that we'd like to recommend.

Long-term bike parking room. Table 3 on the Project Data sheet indicates that 40± long-term bike parking spaces will be provided. Since the only long-term bike parking we have found on the routing drawings is the BIKES room on level 1, we assume a special parking system will be used to park the 40 bikes. If bikes are to be hung vertically, some of the BIKES room space should be devoted to horizontal floor-level spaces to accommodate bicyclists that may have trouble lifting their bike onto a vertical rack.

Number of long-term bike parking spaces. The project site is categorized as Urban Parking District so 72 long-term spaces would be required. For a typical apartment building, it makes sense to assign the number of bike parking spaces according to the number of dwelling units as each unit is typically occupied by family members. Student housing units often have multiple bedrooms in which the occupants are not related and amenities are not shared in the same way as in non-student housing units.

The number of long-term bike parking spaces provided may serve the resident population better if it was based upon the number of beds. 125 spaces should be provided if the rate was 1 per 3 beds. The City of Davis requires residential group living land uses to provide 0.75 long-term spaces per bed – that would be 282 spaces for the Opus project. Biking is not as prevalent in Sacramento as in Davis, but the project's proximity to Sac State and the bike trail along the American River will generate much more demand by residents to have a bike at hand than is typical in Sacramento.

Number and location of short-term bike parking spaces. The project proposes to meet the ordinance's requirement for a minimum of 15 short-term bike parking spaces. As with long-term bike parking, we believe demand will be determined more by the number of beds than the number of units. 38 spaces would be required if the number was calculated based upon the number of beds.

The site plan and landscape plans don't indicate where the short-term bike parking spaces will be located. There are two primary entrances into the building, one at the parking lot on the north side of the building and one on the south side of the building at the Folsom Boulevard sidewalk. Bike racks should be located at each of the two primary entrances.

The best location for bike racks on the north side of the building would be at or near the entrance. However, there appears to be little room for bike racks. The Lobby and Leasing area facing Folsom Boulevard is shown with a fully glazed façade, so there should be good visual surveillance of bikes parked at racks located near the curb side of the sidewalk.

Bike access from Folsom Boulevard. The site plan provides bike access to the BIKES room only from Elvas Avenue. It would be an added convenience for residents if they could access the long-term parking directly from Folsom Boulevard.

Trees on Folsom Boulevard. The landscape plans indicate the four existing trees that were planted in wells in the recently constructed sidewalk on Folsom Boulevard will remain but not be supplemented with new trees. As the project will remove two existing driveways, at least two more trees should be planted for a more complete canopy shading the sidewalk.

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