



December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Nick Sosa, Associate Planner  
Planning Department, City of Rancho Cordova  
2729 Prospect Park Drive  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Goddard School DR (PLND-1121-0018)

Dear Nick Sosa:

Thank you for routing the Goddard School project to Civic Thread (formerly WALKSacramento). We are pleased to see the application provides both short-term and long-term bike spaces, as these accommodations can encourage school staff to choose active transportation to commute to work. We also think the shaded play structures and ample tree canopy around the parking lots and playground will provide a comfortable work and play environment for staff and students, respectively.

As Civic Thread is recognized as a leader in Safe Routes to School programming for the Greater Sacramento Region, our immediate concerns will regard bicyclist, pedestrian, and vehicle safety and access around the project site. We offer the following recommendations to improve the health-supportive features of the project.

The original site of Goddard School currently shares an entrance off Bear Hollow Drive with Navigator Elementary School. Although Goddard School's site is moving further northeast from the elementary school and may help to reduce traffic congestion in the aforementioned area of Bear Hollow Drive, the new proposed site is planned to continue building its parking, pick up, and drop off area at the end of the same street. As our team reviewed through Google Maps, the strip of Bear Hollow Drive that is adjacent to the parking area is at maximum 600 feet (0.1 mile), giving cars minimal space to wait when entering the lot during pick up and/or drop off. The driveway giving access to the lot is roughly 40 feet according to the measurement tool included in the plan. If congestion occurs, this traffic will trickle into the farthest right lane on southbound Zinfandel Drive,

and the left turn lane on northbound Zinfandel Drive. Not only could this create a stressful experience for travelers to the school or the general area, but there would also be environmental impacts through an increase of idling emissions. Air pollution is a mix of hazardous substances including car emissions and affects the health of our most at risk community members such as pregnant individuals, children under 14, and older adults, who are more than likely to work or visit the future project site.

We understand pick up and drop off may be dispersed in a two-hour time frame (7:00-9:00AM and 4:00-6:00PM), however this brings up another area of concern when considering the 168 students planned to attend the school, the 5-10-minute process that families must park and complete for pick up and drop off, and how many of the 48 parking spaces will remain after staff use for the pick up / drop off process. Creating a walkable and bikeable surrounding environment to the site is one method to help reduce chances for traffic congestion off Bear Hollow Drive, Zinfandel Drive, and in the site's parking lot. If Goddard School can create the environment, mode shift to walking or biking can be better encouraged.

Long-term bike parking was included in the proposal, but the number of spaces that would be offered was not clear in the application. We propose these long-term bike to offer at least 10-15 spaces, in which the proposed racks could be extended around the perimeter of the building to provide faculty with ample parking to encourage biking to work.

Additionally, there is a proposed sidewalk entrance connecting the campus directly to Zinfandel Drive, however there is no proposed sidewalk or safety feature to protect bicyclists or pedestrians from turning left out of the driveway and heading southwest on Bear Hollow Drive. Integrating a sidewalk measuring 3-6 feet wide in the proposed landscaped area (facing Bear Hollow Drive) will offer better pedestrian and bicyclist connections to homes and parks west of the site, while not interfering with the proposed parking spaces. Supplementally, a brightly colored crosswalk with neon yellow school crossing signs installed on both sides can be added between the two lots, to better connect the front of the school and its sidewalk to our proposed sidewalk.

Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community's future. Human beings need moderate exercise, such as walking, for about 30 minutes a day to promote physical health and well-being. Only 30% of the population in the Sacramento region is active at this minimal level, often due to limitations placed

by a built environment not suited to walking and other types of physically active travel. A 30-minute walk is about one and a half miles. If more people could obtain regular exercise by walking and bicycling to their regular destinations, in lieu of driving, it could yield significant health improvements to the resident population of this area. Reduced driving would also decrease vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions. More trips by walking and bicycling could help reduce the current expensive burden on the health care system of providing medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

Civic Thread 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.

Please notify Civic Thread of future routings or notices for this project.

Sincerely,

*Pristina Zhang*

Pristina Zhang, MPH  
Project Manager  
Civic Thread (formerly WALKSacramento)