



December 29, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Scott Johnson
City of Sacramento, Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Innovation Park & CNU Medical Center DEIR (P18-077; SCH# 2019039011)

Dear Scott Johnson:

Thank you for routing the Innovation Park & CNU Medical Center DEIR project to Civic Thread (formerly WALKSacramento). After reviewing the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), we are pleased to see bikeability, walkability, and accessibility prioritized within the project site. Adding a planned Level II Trauma hospital will support increasing access to healthcare services for Natomas and North Sacramento residents and help reduce patient overflow in current Level II Trauma hospitals, mainly located in Downtown Sacramento.

The proposed park space within Innovation Park will benefit the physical and mental health of patients and staff of CNU Medical Center, as well as residents of the proposed Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE). This open space can help promote physical activity for staff during their breaks, provide an uplifting green space for patients to go as an alternative from their hospital rooms, and serve as a safe, accessible area for older adults to do physical activity outdoors, or have facility-hosted activities.

Our immediate concerns regard bicyclist, pedestrian, and vehicle safety and access around the project site, as well as air quality impacts. We offer the following recommendations to improve the health-supportive features of the project.

While access from the RCFE to green space is a great feature in this project, older adults' access to other important destinations bordering the project site, such as grocery stores and pharmacies, will not be as easy to get to. Referencing [California Department of Transportation's Collision Overview](#) statewide data from 2008-2017, adults 65 years or older represent the largest pedestrian age group who are victims of fatal collisions or

experience serious injuries by a vehicle. The proposed facility would bring in approximately 100 residents, and it is currently unclear how many of them would be independent living and traveling alone. The nearest grocery stores, Safeway and Raley's, are located north of the project site across Del Paso Road. With the proposed site plan, there would be entrance/exit driveways off Del Paso Road requiring the crossing of six to seven lanes which can pose a hazard for pedestrians needing more time to cross or may not be visible to cars traveling at a high speed.

Generally, access in and out of the site around the north (Del Paso Road), south (Arena Boulevard), east (Truxel Road), and west points (E Commerce Way) do not consistently support walking, biking, or rolling. There are many features within the proposed site that will be supporting active transportation, however, active transportation faces limitations when traveling into the site. Current infrastructure limits walking, biking, and rolling due to safety concerns such as crossing multi-lane roads, or traveling on narrow, low-visible bike lanes next to high-speed traffic. Not all roads around the project site have continuing bike lanes to important destinations in the area. While the proposed project aims to be health informed, the infrastructure surrounding the site must also improve for the site's goals to be truly impactful to the public health of those who will live, work, and play there. Civic Thread supports any planned future developments through the City of Sacramento to improve the continuity of Class II bike lanes, reduce car lanes, and/or improve high visibility of controlled pedestrian crosswalks and bike lanes.

Lastly, the proposed project's effects on air quality are another reason for concern. This site would bring in an increase in traffic through high numbers of employees, patients, residents, and visitors, thus increasing vehicle miles traveled and potentially impacting existing traffic by increasing queuing on the local freeways during rush hours. These would all contribute to a predicted rise in pollutants and negative effects on air quality. As mentioned in the project's EIR, California Air Resources Board data from 2017-2019 showed that this area's ozone pollutant parts per million were on the brink of surpassing the national and state standards, while fine particulate matter greatly surpassed the national and state standards for concentration. Considering existing data, it can be anticipated that the development of this project site can have further negative air quality impacts. Future development prioritizing walking, biking, rolling, or taking the bus to important daily destinations will not only support the physical health of the public but will also contribute to the improvement of the local community's air quality. There is also an opportunity through the largeness of the project site to plant trees to help negate some of these projected pollutants.

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