



January 7, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Sierra Peterson, Associate Planner  
Department of Community Development  
300 Richards Boulevard 3rd Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Railyards Lot 3 (DR21-251)**

Dear Sierra Peterson,

Civic Thread has reviewed the Railyards Lot 3 project (DR21-251) and offers the following comments.

Railyards Lot 3 proposes to construct a corner retail building and two residential buildings (432 units total) to create a vibrant, mixed-use development on a 3.4-acre parcel of land within the larger Sacramento Railyards project. The site is bordered by Railyards Boulevard to the north, 5<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, 6<sup>th</sup> street to the east, and Telegrapher (formerly Camille) to the south.

Transforming and connecting Sacramento's historic Railyards to the Downtown area, the project offers exciting opportunities for sustainable development, historic preservation, and urban reclamation. Special attention is given to creating an active streetscape through a variety of strategies, including programming, outdoor social spaces, and orienting buildings towards central plazas and retail. Tree-lined walkways and materials selection of lighter pavements not only provide environmental benefits (i.e. reduction of the urban heat island effect), but also increase the comfort of pedestrians, particularly during the region's hotter months. Short and long-term bicycle parking add additional opportunities for active travel for residents and patrons of the development.

Given the site's advantageous location less than a quarter mile from a major transit hub (the Sacramento Valley Station) and proximity to Downtown Sacramento and the Sacramento River Bike Trail, opportunities to establish safe and convenient active

transportation networks to these key destinations should be maximized. Improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to, from, and within this development is critical to meeting the City's climate goals and generally promoting healthy, active lifestyles among Sacramento residents. Suggested strategies to enhance the walkability and bikeability of the site are outlined below.

### **Connectivity**

- Incorporate pedestrian-scale wayfinding (including walking and cycling travel times) throughout the site to orient people towards local transit facilities, recreation areas, and other key destinations.
- Consider upgrading existing bicycle lanes along 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> street to Class II-B buffered bike lanes to improve the safety and comfort of cyclists and improve access to the Sacramento Valley Station and Downtown Commons.

### **Bicycle Facilities**

- Establish direct and secure entry points to the bicycle storage rooms in both residential buildings to improve access, and thus, encourage use. Additionally, ensure storage rooms have a variety of rack types to accommodate a diversity of bicycles (i.e. cargo bicycles, recumbent bicycles, etc.).
- Increase the amount of short-term bicycle parking, particularly in the northern area of the site near the West Building's central plaza, as parking is currently concentrated in the southern areas.
- Increase the overall bicycle parking ratio from the current ratio of 0.69 (299 spaces/ 432 units) to at least 1.0 (432 spaces) to support transit-oriented development goals. Given the current proposed vehicle parking (432 spaces) exceeds the City's zoning code's exemption of minimums for off-street parking within transit-oriented developments, excess vehicle parking spaces can be allotted to increase long-term bike parking if needed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See City of Sacramento zoning code: [17.608.020 G1](#)

Positive health outcomes can be further supported by prioritizing healthy retail uses for the proposed commercial spaces, particularly fresh food. There are several smaller, corner-store type markets within a two-mile radius of the site, however, there is a lack of stores with a wider variety of fresh food options. Providing healthy retail options on site would also likely contribute to a decrease in Vehicle Miles Traveled by improving direct access to essential destinations such as grocery stores.

Lastly, accessibility on site could be improved by replacing stairs with ramps at select walk-up units along the West and East Buildings.

Please notify Civic Thread of future routings or notices for this project. Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Jordan Grimaldi

Project Manager, Civic Thread