



April 25, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Zach Dahla  
City of Sacramento Community Development  
300 Richards Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Lot X Mixed Use Development (DSD-0067)

Dear Mr. Dahla,

Civic Thread (formerly WALKSacramento) has reviewed the Lot X Mixed Use Development Project (DSD-0067) and would like to offer the following comments.

The project proposes to transform a 2.58-acre vacant lot into a mixed-use development featuring 248 multi-family housing units, commercial and office spaces, and a parking garage. The site is located in Downtown Sacramento adjacent to Crocker Park and bounded by the Capitol Mall Parkway to the north, Interstate-5 to the west, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the east, and N Street to the south. Lot X seeks to contribute to the revitalization of Sacramento's downtown core by offering opportunities for urban living without compromising a comfortable pedestrian experience and access to greenspace.

We commend the project team on their commitment to centering walkability throughout the development by creating tree-lined walkways and conducting streetscape improvements on N St. and 3<sup>rd</sup> St. to improve pedestrian access and safety. Enhanced pedestrian facilities, vibrant walkways, and strong integration of landscaping will promote daily physical activity, providing a multitude of mental and physical health benefits to tenants and site patrons. Given the high-rise nature of the development, the project also considers the pedestrian environment by scaling down building height towards the perimeters of the parcel. For example, townhomes line the N St. perimeter across from Crocker Park, giving the edge of the development more of a neighborhood feel.

Class I and II bicycle parking facilities on site (191 spaces total) further encourage active, urban lifestyles. The majority of the bike parking spaces are Class I and located securely

within buildings. Amenities such as locker rooms and showers will help to promote use of the bicycle facilities, particularly for commuters who are making daily trips.

Given the project is such a compact, high density development, we would like to submit the following recommendations to maximize the opportunities to encourage walking and biking, reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled, and improve air quality for the broader community.

### **Pedestrian Environment and Public Spaces**

- The project's prevalence of glass and balconies will provide natural surveillance through "eyes on the street." Further actions to promote personal safety include implementing a consistent lighting scheme illuminating all building entrances, pathways, and gathering areas. Any dedicated ride-share pick-up areas should be located in high visibility, high traffic areas and should be well lit. Consideration should be given to additional Crime Prevention through Environmental Design strategies to promote natural and community-based safety measures.
- Playscapes catering to a wide range of abilities and ages should be considered for public spaces given the quantity of multi-family housing units provided on site. Incorporating playscapes will not only work to activate public spaces but will also make the development more welcoming to young families in light of the project's location in a dense urban core.

### **Bicycle Facilities**

#### *Long-Term Parking*

- Ensure all building entrances, particularly pedestrian entrances to the parking garage, feature wide doors with automatic opening mechanisms so cyclists can easily enter and exit with their bicycles.
- Include racks catering to a variety of bicycle types such as cargo bikes and recumbent bikes.
- Replace proposed staircase access to the bike storage room located within the parking garage with a bicycle access ramp. Carrying a bike up and down stairs can be a major barrier to those wishing to cycle.

#### *Short-Term Parking*

- While Class II bicycle parking quantities are provided within the application materials, locations are not identified on the schematic design documents. As these locations are considered for future applications, we recommend Class II bike parking spaces be located in high visibility, high traffic locations. Additionally, we recommend “wheel well” or “Inverted U” type racks, which allow people to securely lock both their wheels and frames.

#### *Further Encouraging Modeshift*

- Per [City Code 17.608.030](#), there are no minimum vehicle parking requirements for the project’s location. Thus, we recommend reducing the proposed vehicle parking to 124 and 150 stalls for residential and commercial vehicle parking respectively. Offsetting vehicle parking will increase the project’s capacity to provide long-term bicycle storage, which will not only decrease development costs but also work to further encourage tenants to opt for cycling and support City, regional, and federal emissions reductions goals. Car-free living has the potential to be extremely attainable for residents given the site’s proximity to Sacramento’s amenity-rich downtown and midtown and a variety of high-quality transit options, including bus, light rail, and Amtrak.
- In anticipation of the Capitol Mall entry serving as a primary point of access for cyclists, we recommend the project team coordinate with the City to install a Class II bike lane on 3<sup>rd</sup> St. A Class II bike lane will improve connectivity between the Capitol Mall and N St. *and* significantly improve cyclist safety as there are currently no bike facilities on 3<sup>rd</sup> St.

#### **Construction Equity**

Given the project is located in a high traffic Central Business District, we recommend special consideration be given to minimizing the impacts and inconveniences to cyclists and pedestrians during construction, such as building pedestrian coverings over impacted sidewalks and minimizing re-routing whenever possible. In cases when re-routing existing pedestrian and cyclist paths is necessary, high visibility signage alerting drivers to share the road and clearly marked wayfinding signage should be

incorporated. Special attention should also be given to regular street maintenance to ensure walkways and bike lanes are free of debris and other hazards.

### **Social Cohesion and Place-Based Design**

We commend the project team for including a wide variety of housing types from townhomes to apartment style-living ranging from studio to 3-Bedroom units. Offering a variety of housing types creates more opportunities for tenants at different income levels and stages of life, which promotes greater diversity among residents. Social gathering spaces incorporated throughout the development also work to foster a stronger sense of community. We would like to offer the following recommendations to deepen Lot X's commitment to social cohesion.

- Investigate [City Code 17.704.070](#) to identify density bonus housing agreement opportunities for offering affordable options to low-income households. Additional strategies to increase affordability include unbundling vehicular parking costs from housing costs for households who do not have a car.
- Partner with Japanese and Japanese-American community groups to celebrate, elevate, and integrate the site's history rooted in Sacramento's Japanese community in a culturally sensitive way. We commend the project team for acknowledging this history in the narrative and would like to see Sacramento's rich diversity reflected in the City's built environment.

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

Sincerely,

Jordan Grimaldi

Project Manager