



October 24, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Kyra Killingsworth
City of Elk Grove Planning Department
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

RE: Pardes Apartments (PLNG22-057)

Dear Ms. Killingsworth:

Thank you for providing Civic Thread the opportunity to comment on the Pardes Apartments development. The Pardes Apartments is a Major Design Review for a new multi-family development consisting of 236 affordable housing units. The Project also includes a Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide the site into two parcels and a Density Bonus to allow for increased density on the site as well as a reduction in the site development standards.

Civic Thread would first like to commend the project team for planning a development made up of entirely affordable housing units, particularly a multi-family development in close proximity to a future transit corridor. Transit access is critical for providing mobility options to individuals and families who do not own a personal vehicle, as well as a critical piece of the puzzle for getting cars off the road to meet the goals laid out in the City of Elk Grove's Climate Action Plan. We also are pleased to see that it will be possible to install Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure in 40% of the proposed parking stalls, and that 48 stalls are Accessible for residents with disabilities.

We see a few opportunities where the proposed plans could be adjusted to improve transportation flow and access:

First, noting that one of the high-priority bicycle infrastructure improvements listed in the *2021 Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Master Plan (2021 BPTMP)* is a proposed Class I bicycle lane on Big Horn Blvd between Whitelock Pkwy and Poppy Ridge Rd, which is the road segment directly north of the site, we recommend upgrading the proposed Class II bike lane along Big Horn Blvd to a buffered Class II bike lane, to provide a longer section of Big

Horn Blvd that protects bicyclists from vehicle traffic. The expansion of Big Horn Blvd to two lanes will likely induce higher traffic speeds. While a five-foot bike lane with three-foot curb & gutter (unbuffered) will be relatively safe and is up to standards, it will feel less comfortable for inexperienced cyclists than a bike lane with an additional foot of space and a buffer, which would improve comfortability and safety for cyclists. As an alternative, we recommend the planning team consider the feasibility of a partnership where the right of way allocated for the future RT corridor is utilized as an interim Class I bicycle facility, to extend the length of protected bicycle infrastructure along Big Horn Blvd until the necessary funding is acquired for construction of the transit line.

Second, we highly recommend going above requirements and increasing the ratio of bicycle parking on site to provide one bicycle parking space for every two housing units, rather than one for every three. With future bicycle infrastructure identified in the *2021 BPTMP*, additional secure bicycle storage space will encourage residents to own and use a bicycle. By providing supportive active travel amenities such as secure vehicle storage and increasing the ratio of bike parking to dwelling units, not only do residents and surrounding community members benefit by way of increasing physical activity and reducing air pollutants, but developers stand to accrue significant financial savings as a result. The average cost to developers to construct a single surface-level parking space is estimated between \$1,500 and \$2,000 not including maintenance. On average, 10 bicycles can be parked in the equivalent space necessary to park a single vehicle.

Other general considerations include:

- Ensuring that well-marked crosswalks are installed where sidewalks cross in front of entry/exit gates, to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians.
- When residents leave the property, there should be a gate that is easily opened so that they can seamlessly access the sidewalks outside the development, particularly when on a bicycle.
- We have some concerns about the width of Tarak Dr without a designated bike lane. While a 17-foot vehicle travel lane is wide enough to accommodate a vehicle and a bicyclist side by side, without bicycle lane markings drivers may not be expecting to share the road. We highly recommend reducing the vehicle travel lane to 12 feet and including striping for a Class II bike lane of five feet. The narrower vehicle lane would have the added benefit of reducing traffic speeds where drivers exit the property, improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community's future. Civic Thread is working to support increased physical activity such as walking, rolling, and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support active modes. 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at kcanepa@civicthread.org.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Canepa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kathryn" and last name "Canepa" clearly legible.

Kathryn Canepa
Project Manager, Civic Thread