September 5, 2014

Matt Diaz  
City of Rancho Cordova  
2729 Prospect Park Drive  
Rancho Cordova, California 95670  

RE: Anatolia IV 2014 Amendments (RC-03-023/SAC200300027)

Dear Mr. Diaz,

Thank you for providing the Anatolia IV 2014 Amendments project to the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (District) for comment. The recent recirculation provides the opportunity to expound upon our May 30, 2014 comments on the project.

The east-west pedestrian paseo addition along Tours Way supports the SunRidge Specific Plan’s vision for pedestrian oriented village centers, with some potential to reduce motor vehicle trips and associated air pollutants. The paseo connects Anatolia IV, the Montelena subdivision and park planned to the west, and the village center / neighborhood commercial uses planned to the east. This linkage supports the SunRidge Specific Plan’s concept of walkable neighborhoods organized around activity centers including parks and neighborhood commercial centers. The SunRidge Specific Plan describes the circulation approach as emphasizing alternatives to automobile use including pedestrian and bicycle systems and public transit. The air quality mitigation plan (AQMP) for the SunRidge planning area is based on assumptions in the specific plan.

We observe that a north-south paseo was removed from the original plans. Please note that this eliminates three pedestrian connectivity points, which could affect compliance with the AQMP pedestrian connectivity mitigation measure. The removal of these connectivity points alone does not bring the project out of compliance with the measure. Combined with the recent addition of cul-de-sacs to the SunRidge planning area, however, the elimination of pedestrian connectivity points reduces the project connectivity index.

The new east-west paseo along Tours Way has potential to ameliorate connectivity lost in eliminating the north-south paseo. It has potential to be a pleasant, safe, and convenient pedestrian connection between complementary neighborhood uses, consistent with the specific plan vision. It has potential to encourage non-polluting, active transportation for daily trips to neighborhood retail and recreation uses.
Measures to maximize the paseo’s function as a pedestrian connection hold potential as replacement mitigation measures, pursuant to ongoing District and City staff conversations about replacing obsolete measures currently in the Sunridge Specific Plan. Following are our recommendations for creating a pedestrian corridor along the paseo with maximum potential to encourage non-polluting, active transportation for daily trips. They are consistent with SunRidge Specific Plan street standards.

- A safe pedestrian intersection at Rancho Cordova Parkway and Tours Way is critical to the paseo’s viability as a pedestrian connection between the village center and complementary uses. The paseo as designed funnels foot traffic to the intersection of Tours Way and Rancho Cordova Parkway, a high volume intersection. To facilitate intersection safety, it should include an enhanced pedestrian crossing with high visibility crosswalk markings and other treatments to demonstrate maximum pedestrian safety (for example enhanced signalization, HAWK beacon, curb cuts on both Rancho Cordova Parkway and Tours Way, curb extensions, pedestrian island, etc.)
- The paseo cross-section depicts a 10-foot separated sidewalk on the north side, and a 5-foot un-separated sidewalk on the south side. Separating the south sidewalk from the street with a landscape buffer would more clearly identify the paseo as a pedestrian connection between complementary neighborhood uses.
- Extending the pedestrian paseo on Chrysanthy (along the north edge of the project) westward to the recreation center is preferred, to support pedestrian connections between neighborhood uses.

In addition to connectivity concerns, the amendments reduce the project residential density, and density is a factor in walkability. Reduced density is associated with higher vehicle miles traveled, and reduced pedestrian access and mobility. Longer distances between destinations, created by larger lot sizes, reduces the viability of walking to village centers, parks, and other neighborhood uses. Since the May circulation, we have reviewed other map amendments that reduce residential densities proposed in the SunRidge Specific Plan map. Cumulative reductions in density could seriously compromise the area’s walkability and specific plan vision for pedestrian oriented neighborhoods, and result in vehicle miles traveled above those projected in the environmental document traffic study. If this density reduction becomes a trend, it could potentially undermine the basis for the SunRidge AQMP’s finding of technical adequacy.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please contact me at mwright@airquality.org or 916-874-4207.

Sincerely,

Molly Wright
Air Quality Planner / Analyst

cc: Larry Greene, Air Pollution Control Officer
Larry Robinson, Program Coordinator