

APPENDIX G

PEDESTRIAN STUDY

MEMORANDUM

To: Ms. Durre Shamsi
City of Los Angeles Department of
Transportation, Valley Development Review

Date: May 31, 2012

From: David S. Shender, P.E.
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Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers

LLG Ref: 1-11-3948-1

Subject: **Pedestrian Safety Study -
4141 Whitsett Avenue, City of Los Angeles**

This memorandum has been prepared by Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG) to summarize our review of pedestrian safety in conjunction with the Studio City Senior Living Center project located at 4141 Whitsett Avenue, in the City of Los Angeles. Pursuant to our coordination with you and Ms. Pauline Chan with the Department of Transportation Pedestrian and School Safety section, we understand that the preparation of a pedestrian safety study is required as outlined in the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) assessment letter¹, dated May 2, 2012. The pedestrian safety study documents existing pedestrian amenities near the project site as well as recommends measures for consideration to improve pedestrian connections and enhance walkability and mobility for seniors. This pedestrian safety study has been prepared based on field observations of existing pedestrian conditions in the study area, and supplemented by existing morning and afternoon peak hour pedestrian traffic counts conducted at site adjacent intersections along Whitsett Avenue.

Project Site Pedestrian Amenities

The proposed project consists of the development of a 200-unit senior residential condominium campus while retaining the existing nine-hole golf course, club house, driving range, and surface parking lot. The senior residential housing will be age-restricted for seniors aged 55 and older. The project site has been designed to encourage pedestrian activity and walking as a transportation mode.² The underlying principle is that pedestrians should not be delayed, diverted, or placed in danger. A review of the project site plan and pedestrian walkway network indicates that the five primary characteristics (i.e., connectivity, convivial, conspicuous, comfortable, and convenient) are accommodated as part of the proposed project. The project site is adjacent to and accessible from nearby commercial uses (e.g., retail, restaurant, etc.) and other amenities along the Ventura Boulevard corridor, as well as adjacent public

¹ City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation Inter-Departmental Correspondence, Traffic Assessment for the Proposed Studio City Senior Living Center Project Located at 4141 Whitsett Avenue, DOT Case No. SFV-011-088, dated May 2, 2012.

² For example, refer to <http://www.walkscore.com/>, which generates a walkability score of approximately 82 (Very Walkable – most errands can be accomplished on foot) out of 100 for the project site.



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bus transit stops. The pedestrian walkways within the site and the adjacent sidewalks will be appropriately landscaped and designed to provide a friendly walking environment. Additionally, the walkways will be well lit and include appropriate wayfinding signage.

The interior of the project is planned to provide a combination of landscape and hardscape that facilitates internal accessibility as well as connectivity to a broad range of uses beyond its boundaries. The project will include pedestrian gates on all sides, which will allow residents access to the golf course and driving range, the sidewalk along the Los Angeles River, and the sidewalk along Whitsett Avenue. Once outside the project, residents will be able walk to a myriad of nearby destinations, including grocery stores, restaurants, coffee houses, bars, retail shops, movie theaters, schools, parks, libraries, and fitness establishments. The existing pedestrian conditions surrounding the project site are discussed in detail below.

Review of Existing Pedestrian Conditions

Existing pedestrian amenities in the project study area are provided along Whitsett Avenue adjacent to the project site. Specifically, the following pedestrian amenities are provided near the project site:

- Standard marked pedestrian crosswalks exist at all four approaches to the Whitsett Avenue/Ventura Boulevard intersection (i.e., 15 feet in width and painted white)
- Pedestrian movement push buttons are provided for walk movements across Ventura Boulevard at the Whitsett Avenue/Ventura Boulevard intersection
- Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps are provided at four corners of the Whitsett Avenue/Ventura Boulevard intersection
- Sidewalks and combination sidewalks/parkways are provided along the project site property frontages as listed below:
 - Whitsett Avenue – combination 10.5-foot sidewalk/parkway (5 feet/5.5 feet) on the west side; combination 15-foot sidewalk/parkway (4.5 feet/10.5 feet) on the east side.
 - Valleyheart Drive – combination 10.5-foot sidewalk/parkway (5 feet/5.5 feet) on the north side west of Whitsett Avenue.
 - Ventura Boulevard – 15-foot sidewalk on both sides.

The widths of the sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as the location of bus stops and shelters, traffic signal pedestrian push buttons, etc., are shown in *Figure 1*. Photographs of the sidewalks/parkways along Whitsett Avenue adjacent to the proposed residential project are displayed in *Figure 2*.

Existing Peak Period Pedestrian Traffic Volumes

Pedestrian traffic counts were conducted in conjunction with the weekday AM and PM peak period vehicle traffic counts conducted at the study intersections as analyzed in the Traffic Study.³ Specifically, the pedestrian traffic counts were conducted during the weekday AM peak period (7:00 AM to 10:00 AM) and PM peak period (3:00 PM to 6:00 PM) in November 2011. The existing weekday AM and PM peak hour pedestrian traffic volumes crossing each leg of the study locations near the site are presented in *Figure 3*.

As presented in *Figure 3*, a moderate level of pedestrian activity currently occurs at the Whitsett Avenue/Valley Spring Lane and Whitsett Avenue/Valleyheart Drive intersections along the easterly property frontages. The total AM and PM peak hour pedestrian volumes observed at the three site adjacent intersections along Whitsett Avenue are as follows:

- Whitsett Avenue/Valley Spring Lane: AM peak hour - 18 pedestrians; PM peak hour - 26 pedestrians.
- Whitsett Avenue/Valleyheart Drive: AM peak hour - 47 pedestrians; PM peak hour - 45 pedestrians.
- Whitsett Avenue/Ventura Boulevard: AM peak hour - 67 pedestrians; PM peak hour - 90 pedestrians.

The moderate level of pedestrian activity along the west side of Whitsett Avenue adjacent to the proposed residential complex (i.e., on average one pedestrian every two to three minutes during the peak commute periods) indicates that future pedestrians related to the project will “blend in” and enhance overall pedestrian safety based on the “safety in numbers” phenomenon documented in prior pedestrian safety studies.⁴

³ Traffic Impact Study for Studio City Senior Living Center Project, City of Los Angeles, prepared by LLG Engineers, February 2, 2012.

⁴ Peter L. Jacobsen, “Safety in Numbers: More Walkers and Bicyclists, Safer Walking and Bicycling,” Injury Prevention, September 1, 2003.

Potential Measures to Enhance Walkability

Based on review of the existing pedestrian conditions adjacent to the project site, the following measures are recommended for consideration to improve pedestrian connections and enhance walkability near the project site (with the focus being on the separation of pedestrians from vehicles and measures that increase the visibility of pedestrians). It should be noted that such recommendations made should be used for planning purposes only and would require further engineering design and City staff input prior to implementation.

- Improve the existing sidewalk along the Whitsett Avenue property frontage as portions of the sidewalks are cracked and uneven and in poor conditions for pedestrians. The sidewalks will need to be well-lit, even, and wide enough to accommodate seniors in walkers or wheelchairs.
- Review (by LADOT) existing traffic signal timing at the Whitsett Avenue/Ventura Boulevard intersection to ensure that pedestrians, in particular senior walkers, have adequate time to safely cross Whitsett Avenue and Ventura Boulevard during allocated pedestrian walk phases.
- Install a high visibility crosswalk with appropriate signage at the west leg of the Whitsett Avenue/Valleyheart Drive intersection (i.e., across Valleyheart Drive) to provide access to nearby transit stops.
- Install a high visibility crosswalk with appropriate signage across the west leg of the Whitsett Avenue/Valley Spring Lane intersection (i.e., across Valley Spring Lane) to provide access to nearby transit stops.

Please contact us should you have any questions regarding this pedestrian safety review conducted for the proposed Studio City Senior Living Center project.

cc: File



West side of Whitsett Ave. Adjacent to Site - Looking North

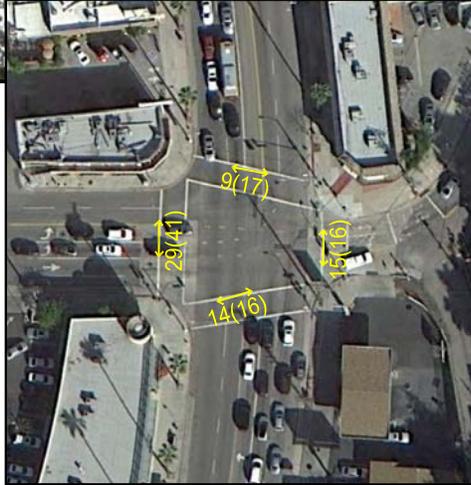


West side of Whitsett Ave. Adjacent to Site - Looking South

FIGURE 2
PHOTOGRAPHS OF ADJACENT SIDEWALKS
OF WHITSETT AVENUE



MAP SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH



PROJECT SITE
 XX(XX) = AM/PM PEAK HOUR

NOT TO SCALE

FIGURE 3 EXISTING PEAK HOUR PEDESTRIAN VOLUMES

STUDIO CITY SENIOR LIVING CENTER PROJECT