



September 16, 2009

Subject: Curtis Park Village (P04-09)

Honorable Mayor Johnson and City Council members,

We believe that the Curtis Park Village project, in its current proposed iteration, misses a major opportunity to be an exemplar of transit oriented and environmentally sensitive infill development. We applaud the applicant's effort to clean up such a polluted brown field site and we acknowledge the difficult economic challenges associated with making such a venture profitable. At the same time we are very concerned that the project has transformed, from a plan that was an outgrowth of years of productive input and collaboration with the surrounding neighborhood groups, and associations and public officials, into a plan that resembles the typical automobile oriented suburban development of the past.

The possibilities inherent in the prime location of this project should be maximized to garner the full benefits of available resources. With two light rail stations located adjacent to the project and its proximity to the downtown, an excellent opportunity presents itself to get people out of their cars. The thousand parking spaces proposed at the commercial center would appear to be inconsistent with this effort. They are more typical of a big box mall arrangement than a more traditional town center with "daily needs" retailers, which would be utilized by the immediate neighborhood, and not act as a traffic magnet drawing shoppers from farther afield and unnecessarily increasing vehicle miles travelled.

A more traditional town center type of retail arrangement is also more likely to encourage pedestrian and bicycle visitation because it is not built around the concept of automobile visitation. Building a bicycle and pedestrian friendly neighborhood (Complete Streets), with bicycle and pedestrian friendly local businesses and services next to an excellent mass transit line, would encourage people to get out of their cars. When they get out of their cars, they stop polluting, they get healthier, they meet their neighbors, and they create and participate in what makes a neighborhood great in the first place, community.

We urge you to move this project back into the collaborative process that created the previous iteration of the Curtis Park Village, which received broad support from both the neighborhood as well as environmental groups.

Sincerely,

Tony Loftin  
Chairperson  
Sacramento Group, Sierra Club