



March 16, 2007

Supervisor Roberta MacGlashan  
County of Sacramento  
700 H Street, Suite 2450  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Sycamore Village Community Plan Amendment  
Control #: 261-0240-008

Dear Supervisor MacGlashan

WALKSacramento is pleased to support the proposed Sycamore Village Cohousing project proposed for Illinois Avenue near Greenback Lane in Orangevale. This is an exciting project that we believe offers important community walkability benefits.

**Walkability benefits** -- The Sycamore Village Cohousing project will encourage residents to walk by its location very near to two schools, to commercial uses and offices, and to regional transit. Additionally, it will offer pedestrian improvements to the neighborhood along Illinois Avenue. The project will fill in a gap in the sidewalk on the west side of Illinois to enable residents to walk safely to destinations along Greenback Lane. The project plans to implement separated sidewalks with new shade trees, which would not only offer greater protection to pedestrians but greater comfort, particularly in the hot summer months.

The project will also add "eyes on the street" as the units facing Illinois will have windows and that will bring added protection to the neighborhood. Additionally, more pedestrians on Illinois Avenue will make the street safer for all neighborhood residents. Research shows that there is safety in numbers.

**Less traffic than equivalent units** -- The residents of the new units will add motor vehicle traffic. However, studies indicate that cohousing projects tend to have less traffic generated than equivalent housing developments (as much as 25% less). This is because of the increased sharing of resources. Many trips are shared, and trips that individual households might take may be avoided by the sharing of gardening, meal preparation, and other maintenance responsibilities.

**Opportunities for seniors** -- The Cohousing project offers senior empty nesters in Orangevale, who may be interested in smaller yards, the opportunity to stay in their neighborhood. Cohousing projects are particularly valuable for seniors, as they offer

neighborhood cohesiveness and support. This project in particular offers seniors the opportunity to walk to nearby destinations. Research shows that continued walking not only maintains health as we get older, but the exercise, in fact, makes it possible to continue to drive.

**Smart Growth** -- The County envisions a Smart Growth corridor along Greenback Lane providing opportunities for infill projects that meet its criteria. Cohousing projects such as this one that are created by community members are ideal for infill development. They include people who already live in the community as well as others who live in nearby Sacramento communities – people that have a commitment to a sustainable lifestyle. They have come together to create an environmentally and family friendly community. Sycamore Village will be a real asset for the community and a model for future infill projects in other areas in the County.

We strongly urge your support and approval of Sycamore Village. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255 or via email at [ageraghty@walksacramento.org](mailto:ageraghty@walksacramento.org).

Sincerely,



Anne Geraghty  
Executive Director

cc: Supervisors Dickinson, Nottoli, Peters, Yee  
Ted Wolter, Chief of Staff, Supervisor Roberta MacGlashan  
Marty Maskall, Sycamore Village Cohousing  
Tricia Stevens, Sacramento County Planning Staff  
Dave Franke, Sacramento County Department of Transportation  
Teri Duarte, Sacramento County Department of Health & Human Services  
Larry Robinson, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District  
Jennifer Finton, Breathe California of Sacramento Emigrant Trails  
Rebecca Garrison, Highway 50 Corridor Transportation Management Association