

## **Infill Compatibility Standards for Pedestrians** by Tom Schneider

As we discuss ideas for establishing appropriate standards for infilling existing neighborhoods within the UGB, these are suggestions of changes to encourage pedestrian travel for short trips and sharing the costs more equitably.

When residential or commercial projects are approved within existing UGB, sidewalks or in the case of private parking lots, pedestrian access between commercial entities is given little or no comprehensive planning except voluntarily within the development itself. Statutes need to be developed to have the costs of these impacts be born by the projects themselves, not by the neighbors who are left with the increased vehicular traffic.

#1 Example: Over 20 years, a west Eugene neighborhood, City approved 13 separate apartment complexes or dense single family dwellings and Acorn Park Road became their primary or secondary access. None of those developments were compelled to assist paying for sidewalks between their developments and Acorn Park itself or the nearby businesses which could have incrementally reduced the impacts of additional 300 vehicles a day. Each of these "Infill" projects on its own wasn't a big problem but their total is. Now the 11 single family homes and Richardson Bridge Apartments along the route are expected to pay an average of \$2500 each for those sidewalks as the current statute requires 50% of sidewalks be done at the time the developments are approved.

#2 Example: Warren Street off Bailey Hill Road gives access to development of higher end homes up on top of the hill a mile away. They have well planned curved streets and cul-de-sacs etc up there in the new development but the kids who used to walk down a quiet street to Kennedy Middle School or Churchill High School, now have to walk on the street and have to dodge construction vehicles on their way to school as there are no sidewalks. The developers have sidewalks or low traffic counts within the development, but should the taxpayers along the route be forced to pay for sidewalks when the increase in vehicular traffic wasn't their choice? No, it should be budgeted into the true cost for the developer who got approval to make the "infill". How far does an infill's impact go?

#3 Example: Home Depot built a store right next to Fred Meyer on W 11<sup>th</sup>. If a person wanted to pick up some lightweight plumbing fittings at Home Depot or walk to Izzy's Pizza or Blockbuster Video after parking and shopping at Fred Meyers, there is no planned access between these stores. Each has some sidewalks or painted

pedestrian access in their parking lots, but nothing that makes it safe or encouraging. Each has great vehicular access on its own but contributes to traffic on W 11<sup>th</sup> and Seneca as there is no overall view that customers may not arrive in an automobile though the Seneca Station of LTD is right there.

Developing statutes to compel developers to make non-vehicular access a higher priority will incrementally cut down on vehicular traffic and encourage pedestrian usage. This will save money in the long run as it's inexpensive compared to developing or widening highways. With good statutes, our traffic planning department can be successful.