The Neighborhood Model: Building Block for the Development Areas

1. Pedestrian Orientation

The Neighborhood Model proposes a walkable community, with sidewalks and paths provided in new development and a variety of destinations within a five-minute walk for residents. Pedestrian orientation requires a high degree of coordination among the other principles. All elements — density, building placement, street and path connections, mixture of uses — must be designed with pedestrians in mind. The result should be a walkable community that reinforces all of the other goals for the neighborhood.

Pedestrian orientation, by definition, is designing neighborhoods at a human scale. Walking is convenient only when all of the elements of development fit the proper dimensions. A true test of walkability is when children can safely walk or bike to school or activities rather than being driven. Another test is the ability of someone to walk to work.

Providing sidewalks is only one part of the picture. Streets must also be connected to offer various routes. Density is needed to provide destinations. Siting parking lots behind buildings gives pedestrians a shorter and safer approach. Trees along streets and in parking lots provide shade and make walking comfortable. Mixed uses place destinations in walking distance of residents. Paths and open space make walking safe and pleasant. As the list below shows, the entire form of the neighborhood determines whether people will find walking useful and pleasant.

What Pedestrians Need:

- **Convenience and Safety** – continuous sidewalks and paths that are short and at clearly defined crossings
- **Destinations** – mixture of uses with buildings close to the sidewalk and to each other that are reachable from a variety of routes
- **Comfort** – trees, shelters, and other streetscape elements

Figure 2:6 (left) Sidewalks, lined with residences and wide enough to walk two abreast such as this example in Kentlands, Maryland, invite pedestrian activity and help to animate a neighborhood. While this example features brick paving, the Neighborhood Model does not favor one paving material over another.