

18 March 2014



The Chair
Standing Committee on
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Re: Additional information requested by the committee and a clarification of evidence

Dear Mr Gentleman,

As indicated at my appearance before the committee on Tuesday 4 March 2014, I would be pleased to provide you and the committee some supplementary information to my evidence. I would also like to clarify a statement I made to the committee and provide additional information on examples of where "Healthy Space and Places" has been implemented.

Dr Bourke asked about the Making Walking Count audit and how many people were surveyed.

In answer to the question, the survey consisted of 605 telephone interviews with a structured questionnaire. It was undertaken in December 2010. Through quota controls, the survey ensured representation from respondents in the following age groups: 12-16 years, 17-59 years and 60+ years. To accommodate the poly-centric nature of the city, respondents were sampled from two representative central zones, 1) Civic and 2) Town Centres, as well as Inner Suburbs and Outer Suburbs of Canberra.

More information on this survey can be found at the following website:

[http://www.transport.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/398438/Making Walking Count.pdf](http://www.transport.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/398438/Making_Walking_Count.pdf)

Dr Bourke also asked "is there anything out there that can give us some evidence to say that if we give people what they want, they will actually use it?"

There are several studies available that suggest that the built environment makes a difference to physical activity levels. While not specifically related to Canberra the studies identified below support the notion of the built environment plays a specific role in the community being active:

TRB Special Report 282 – Does the Built Environment Influence Physical Activity? (2005) This report states that “the available empirical evidence shows a linkage between the built environment and physical activity” and that “Built environments that facilitate more active lifestyles and reduce barriers to physical activity are desirable because of the positive relationship between physical activity and health.” However, this report goes on to state that “evidence supporting a causal relationship (between health and the built environment) is currently sparse.”

Other papers that provide additional information include work by James F. Sallis and Karen Glanz, “The Role of Built Environments in Physical Activity, Eating, and Obesity in Childhood” from The Future of Children, Volume 16, Number 1, Spring 2006, pp. 89-108. Who identify that there are “many links between the built environment and children's physical activity, but (that) they have yet to find conclusive evidence that aspects of the built environment promote obesity. For example, certain development patterns, such as a lack of sidewalks, long distances to schools, and the need to cross busy streets, discourage walking and biking to school. Eliminating such barriers can increase rates of active commuting”.

Kirsten Krahnstoever Davison and Catherine T Lawson's review article “Do attributes in the physical environment influence children's physical activity? A review of the literature”, in *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 2006, 3:19 states that their “Results highlight links between the physical environment and children's physical activity.

L.D. Frank et al, “Stepping towards causation: Do built environments or neighborhood and travel preferences explain physical activity, driving, and obesity?” in *Social Science & Medicine*, Volume 65, Issue 9, Pages 1898-1914, state that “Findings suggest that creating walkable environments may result in higher levels of physical activity and less driving and in slightly lower obesity prevalence for those preferring walkability”.

Brian E. Saelens and Susan L. Handy's review “Built Environment Correlates of Walking: A Review”, in Med Sci Sports Exerc. Jul 2008; 40(7 Suppl): S550–S566 states that “Previous reviews and newer studies document consistent positive relations between walking for transportation and density, distance to non-residential destinations, and land use mix; findings for route/network connectivity, parks and open space, and personal safety are more equivocal”

Kent, Thompson & Jalaludin's 2011 literature review, Healthy Built Environments: A review of the literature, done for the Healthy Built Environments Program, City Futures Research Centre at the University of NSW (<http://www.be.unsw.edu.au/programs/healthy-built-environments-program/literature-review>) is also a useful tool for identifying what makes a healthy built environment.

I also wished to clarify a statement that I made to a question from Mr Gentleman. He asked if there were examples of Healthy Space and Places being implemented. In my answer I mentioned Wagga Wagga. While there are aspects of Healthy Spaces and Places that have been implemented there,

I am now not certain the Wagga Wagga City Council has implemented the Healthy Spaces and Places tool kit *per se*.

What I should have done was draw the committees' attention to the following website:

<http://www.healthyplaces.org.au/site/casestudies.php?task=list>

It lists a series of practical examples of policies, programs and projects across Australia that encourage physical activity and demonstrate the key principles and processes of Healthy Spaces and Places.

Should you have any further question please don't hesitate to contact me at anthony.burton@heartfoundation.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Anthony Burton', written over a horizontal line.

Anthony Burton
Active Living Coordinator
Heart Foundation ACT