Reviewer's report

Title: Parental perceived neighborhood attributes: associations with active transport and physical activity among 10-12 year old children and the mediating role of independent mobility

Version: 2 Date: 25 April 2014

Reviewer: Nazeem Muhajarine

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions

1. Clarification of the use of pedometers and accelerometers. This was a point that was raised in the initial review. The authors have nicely re-presented this information (from referring generically to "activity monitors" at the beginning and then giving useful specific information about the pedometers and accelerometers used. While I think the presentation regarding the pedometers and accelerometers in this version is an improvement, from the previous, I still have some questions regarding this point. On page 12 it is stated that pedometer determined daily number of step counts did not show any associations with parental perceived built environment attributes. What about accelerometer based step counts? Did these show any associations? (I am assuming not, because otherwise these would have been reported.) Why are there no mention of accelerometer based results in the Results section. There is explanation, however, why this study may not have found any significant results based on pedometer/accelerometer step counts (such as cycling). Given that there are null associations based on measures collected via pedometers or accelerometers, and we still have some questions outstanding based on accelerometer data (for instance, how was the data reduction and quality checks conducted--adjusting for variable weartime for example--of data downloaded from accelerometers), wouldn't the paper be far clearer if pedometer and accelerometer data are not reported in this paper. Dropping the references to pedometer and accelerometer data will have the effect of streamlining the paper and making it clearer (at least with regard to the type of questions I have raised here and in the previous review).

2. Figure 1 is ok but it is only a very limited improvement in terms of presenting mediational results. I appreciate that it is difficult to present results from a series of mediational analyses in a coherent way in one simple path diagram, but many of these types of analysis typically do present their results with the aid of diagrams.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.