Reviewer's report

**Title:** Cross-sectional associations between residential socio-environmental exposures and cardiovascular diseases

**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 6 October 2014

**Reviewer:** Susan Elliott

**Reviewer's report:**

There is no question that this manuscript addresses a very important public health issue: the role of urban planning decisions/directions/policies in shaping chronic disease in our modern day world. My concern is that a lot of the literature on which the work is based might be considered dated and hence some more recent literature that has indeed addressed these issues in Canada, Ontario and in Toronto specifically has been missed. In my opinion, it would be very useful if the authors went back and revisited/updated the literature in order to shore up the foundation for the conclusions they draw and the (potential) contributions they can make. I consider this a

**MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISION**

For example, in the BACKGROUND, the authors state: "With increasing recognition that urban planning initiatives may have an impact on health disparities through modifications to urban infrastructure and built environment [references provided are 2003 and 2004 - over a decade old], the present study aims to inform research on healthy urban planning by clarifying the associations between a broad range of neighbourhood-level planning related factors and cardiovascular risk."

There are a number of more recent references that would have helped form a stronger foundation for this work from within the realm of medical geography. See, for example, Dan Harrington's MLM analysis of determinants of CVD in Ontario and Dora Pouliou's work on socio-environmental factors affecting BMI in Canadian cities as well as Jennifer Dean's work on urban health. I would also suggest that the authors review the volume of empirical papers published with and by John Eyles on determinants of population health at the local level.

**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
No competing interests.