Reviewer’s report

Title: Examining the relationships between walkability and physical activity among seniors: What about stairs?

Version: 0 Date: 20 May 2018

Reviewer: Sungmin Lee

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper. This is a nicely written paper but needs to be improved. As a whole, I found that the manuscript has potential and has meaningful implications for planning and policy decisions influencing the built environment. The manuscript could be strengthened with attention to the following points:

Firstly, the rationale of the study of why outdoor stairs in neighborhood environment are important environmental feature for seniors is a little bit week. Indoor stair or stair directly linked to the entrance of home in relation to fear of falling and physical activity are understandable, but still outdoor stairs may not directly related to walking option or frequency of walking. Authors may want to elaborate the importance of stairs, compared to other urban infrastructure like street lighting, bench, or curb cuts.

Secondly, the authors may want to explain why only "walkability" and "physical activity" have been used as search terms as "built environment," "neighborhood environment" might be better to check if the studies include stairs as a variable. Of course, instead of "physical activity," "falling" and "fear of falling" are more directly influenced by the conditions of the stairs.

Finally, the authors should show specific location (city or neighborhood) of each study. Some areas may have many stairs because of different terrain so that older adults may have a difficulty to access to the destination. However, some areas may be flat so that studies may not include the stairs as the environmental determinant. The authors may want to link this heterogeneity of the stairs in relation to the characteristics of the study location.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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