



PATREC

2nd PATREC Research Forum
19 September 2006

Abstract Template

Paper title: Model suburbs? Investigating transport, health and quality outcomes in Perth/Peel's 'liveable neighbourhoods'

Author(s) name(s): Ryan Falconer, Prof Jeffrey Kenworthy and Prof Billie Giles-Corti

Organisation(s): Institute for Sustainability & Technology Policy (ISTP),
Division of Arts, Murdoch University

Contact details: Ryan Falconer
Mailing address: c/- ISTP (Social Sciences Bldg), Murdoch University,
South Street
MURDOCH WA 6150

Telephone: 9360 6188
Facsimile: 9360 6421
Email: r.falconer@murdoch.edu.au

Abstract (300 words maximum):

Professionals and policy-makers are becoming increasingly aware that public health is inextricably linked with urban design and transport. An increasing number of links between the low density, heavily zoned, automobile dependent urban forms typical of many Australasian and North American cities, and poor public health are being identified. In Perth, Western Australia the State Government has responded to the dual issues of urban sprawl and car dependence by implementing the "Liveable Neighbourhoods" design code, which is intended to facilitate a more sustainable form of urban development. Liveable neighbourhoods are designed to be walkable environments, where housing is centred round services and facilities, and transit routes. In contrast, the conventional planning paradigm facilitates the growth of low density neighbourhoods, which feature segregated zoning and priority for private vehicles. This paper describes the Transport Sustainability and Health study which is being conducted in Perth. It forms part of the RESIDENTIAL Environments Project (RESIDE) based at the University of Western Australia, a longitudinal project which aims to the impact on walking, cycling and sense of community of neighbourhoods designed using liveable and conventional sub-division design codes.

Methods: Residents of living 'liveable' and 'conventional' estates will be compared in terms of their travel behaviour characteristics and the environmental quality of their estate, and these characteristics will be related to selected personal health indicators in order to explore possible linkages. Fieldwork, which is being conducted in 2006, includes travel surveys, a visual audit and focus groups. The qualitative data will be used to triangulate the results of the travel survey to answer questions about whether the "Liveable Neighbourhoods" design code is making a measurable difference to transport behaviour and health outcomes and the overall transport sustainability of Perth's newer suburbs.

Results: Early results of fieldwork will be presented and discussed in this paper.

Ryan Falconer will be the presenter at the research forum. Ryan's background is in urban social, transport and cultural geography, and resource management. He has one year's experience working as a Planner for the Christchurch City Council in New Zealand.