

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alberta Centre for Active Living Funds Urban Design Research Project

EDMONTON, AB, March 1, 2005—The Alberta Centre for Active Living recently provided one-time seed funding for an important Alberta research project.

The NUDGE Project (Neighbourhood Urban Design to Gain Exercise)

Does neighbourhood design affect how much people walk?

Dr. Tish Doyle-Baker (a clinical exercise physiologist at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Kinesiology) is working with urban designer Dr. Bev Sandalack (Environmental Design, University of Calgary) on a study of how urban design factors influence walking.

The two researchers will compare the “walkability” of two Calgary neighbourhoods—Garrison Woods and Somerset.

Garrison Woods is a newer neighbourhood built according to the principles of “New Urbanism,” an urban design concept that favours walkability. Walkability includes factors such as the number of public spaces, sports facilities, and walking paths included in a neighbourhood's design. Mixing homes, shops, and offices in the design can also increase walkability. For example, there's a strong relationship between active commuting and placing retail and office buildings within a walkable distance from homes.

Somerset was built at the same time as Garrison Woods, but with a conventional suburban “loops and lollipops” design. Somerset also includes fewer retail and office buildings in its design.

Doyle-Baker and Sandalack will compare these two neighbourhoods to find out whether people who live in a more walkable community actually walk more.

About the Alberta Centre for Active Living

The Alberta Centre for Active Living is a provincial non-profit research and education centre affiliated with the Faculty of Physical Education at the University of Alberta. The centre is supported by the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Alberta Community Development, and the University of Alberta. For more information about the centre, visit our web site at www.centre4activeliving.ca.

Contact information

For more information about this research project, contact

Dr. Tish Doyle-Baker
Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Calgary
Calgary AB
403 220-7034
pdoyleba@ucalgary.ca
www.kin.ucalgary.ca/2002/profiles/doyle.asp