

Architects offer prescription for better health

OTTAWA Feb. 27, 2006 – The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada applauded recent findings in a report from the Canadian Population Health Initiative (CPHI) at the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).

“Helping Canadians fight the ‘battle of the bulge’ involves more than simply prescribing diet and exercise—social and environmental factors can also play a role in promoting healthy weigh,” states the CPHI report. “The reality is that there are many social and environmental factors that can make it easier—or harder—for Canadians to make healthy choices. The community where we live may make a difference to our health; being able to walk or bike on safe streets is just one example of this.”

“We’ve got the prescription that will give Canadians better health,” said **RAIC President Yves Gosselin, FIRAC**. “Creating healthier communities is the crux of our proposed Model Architecture Policy. It will help ensure Canadians create *walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use communities of resource-efficient, healthy buildings with careful consideration of the social fabric that makes vibrant living places*”, he added quoting the Institute’s document.

Architects serve as advisors during the building process. As designers of buildings and communities, architects envision the possibilities and balance between human participants—users, developers, regulators, decision-makers—and the environment. Architects have led the world in developing and adopting Green Building Rating systems, as well as urban planning principles and practices that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods, which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological reconstruction.

Copies of the Model Architecture Policy can be found at http://www.raic.org/raic/advocacy/model_architecture/index_e.htm. The CIHI report can be found at http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=media_15feb2006_e.

The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada is a voluntary national association established in 1907 as the voice for architecture and its practice in Canada. Representing more than 3,300 architects, the RAIC provides the national framework for the development and recognition of architectural excellence.

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