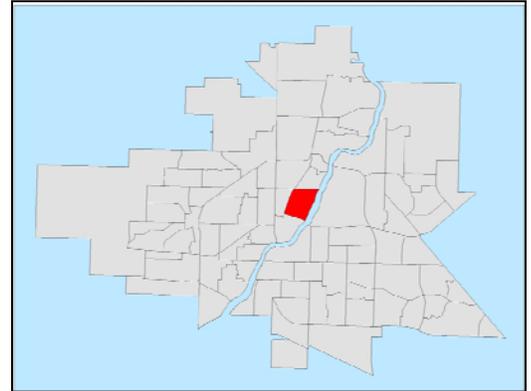


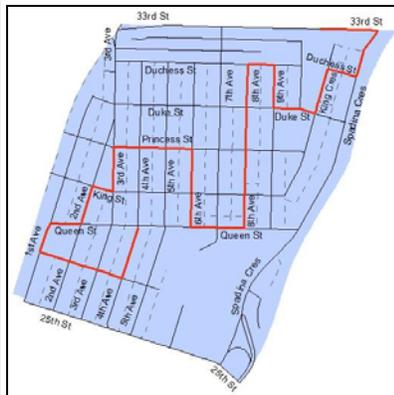
# City Park



The **Smart Cities, Healthy Kids** research project looks for solutions to childhood obesity by investigating how neighbourhood design affects children's ability to be physically active. Research suggests that safety from traffic and crime, the presence of destinations and built features supporting an active lifestyle (eg. parks, playgrounds, and bike lanes), a neighbourhood's attractiveness, and its accessibility are all very important in determining whether people will be active there. To determine which Saskatoon neighbourhood designs are the most supportive of active living, researchers walked each neighbourhood in Saskatoon in the summer months of 2009/2010, collecting data on these areas using two research surveys: the Neighbourhood Active Living Potential (NALP) and the Irvine-Minnesota Inventory (IMI).



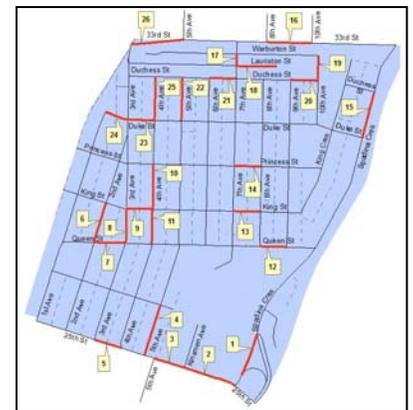
City Park in Saskatoon



NALP Route Map

NALP consists of 22 items within four areas: Activity Friendliness, Safety, Density of Destinations, and Universal Accessibility. Using this method, observers rated each item on a 6-point scale after walking a pre-defined route in each neighbourhood that connected 10 randomly-selected street segments. The route, typically 4 to 5 kilometres in length, is shown in red on the map.

IMI consists of a 229-item inventory of neighbourhood features within five areas: Attractiveness, Diversity of Destinations, Pedestrian Access, Safety from Traffic, and Safety from Crime. Twenty percent of street segments in each neighbourhood were randomly selected and observed. Each segment is the two facing sides of a street block and is indicated by a numbered flag on the map.



IMI Segments Map

The NALP tool is more subjective in nature and takes into account the impression of the entire neighbourhood based on the systematic observations of the researchers. In contrast, the IMI is more objective in nature and is based on observations of each individual segment. The following report will discuss how the characteristics of City Park compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

Smart Cities Healthy Kids

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# City Park Overview

City Park is bordered by 33rd Street, 1st Avenue, 25th Street, and Spadina Crescent. City Park was developed under the Yorath Plan, which was in effect from 1913-1930. This plan was the first growth plan for Saskatoon with a city-wide focus. It identified general areas for residential, industrial, and greenspace, although neighbourhoods with distinct boundaries were not yet identified. As such, there was little consideration for localized neighbourhood facilities, such as schools, community centres, leisure facilities, or park space. Rather, development was focused on grand, city-wide initiatives that would improve the image and quality of urban life at the time. Over time, City Park has evolved into a more defined neighbourhood including schools, park space, other amenities and places of interest.



*Streetscape in City Park*

Over time, City Park has evolved into a more defined neighbourhood including schools, park space, other amenities and places of interest.



*Clearly painted pedestrian crosswalk*

## Safety

We rated each neighbourhood according to the presence or absence of certain neighbourhood elements that increase or detract from a feeling of personal security. Observing both the physical and social characteristics of the neighbourhood, security was measured both in terms of traffic and crime. These ratings suggest whether safety concerns affect an individual's related active living decisions in their neighbourhood.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, City Park rated **6.53** for Safety from Traffic, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, City Park rated **6.87** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, City Park rated **3.63** for Safety, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

City Park's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are well defined and easy to safely navigate, but there are some elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, many streets had moderate to high traffic levels. Some high traffic intersections included crosswalks or other safety measures for pedestrians, but there were places where better consideration for the safety of pedestrians was necessary. Many streets have grass buffer strips separating the sidewalk from the roadway. In terms of safety from crime, mostly well maintained homes and plenty of opportunities for casual surveillance of the street by home owners contribute to the perception of personal security. However, we observed a high amount of graffiti in some areas of the neighbourhood, and there were several areas concealed by bushes or in alleyways that could be used for lurking.



*This area needs better consideration for the safety of pedestrians*

# Destinations

We rated each neighbourhood according to the number, diversity, and density of its destinations. These ratings suggest whether destinations in a neighbourhood can motivate deliberate, localized active living choices by providing a place to go and a means to interact with others.



*Commercial Destinations on 25th Street*



*Community garden*

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, City Park rated **10.00** for Diversity of Destinations, well above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, City Park rated **5.19** for Density of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

City Park's destination ratings suggest that there are several destinations of a wide variety. For example, observed destinations in City Park include the YWCA, City Hospital, Kinsmen Park, churches, schools, a school of dance, medical clinics, retail stores, a bank, a hotel, various offices, several services, a convenience store, a gas station, a community garden, a bakery, restaurants, a coffee shop, outdoor dining areas, and the Meewasin Trail along the South Saskatchewan River.

# Activity Friendliness

We rated the activity friendliness of each neighbourhood based on specific features that encourage or present barriers to an active lifestyle. These ratings suggest whether a neighbourhood can assist or limit the opportunities for physical activities such as walking, cycling, or skateboarding.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, City Park rated **5.03** for Pedestrian Access, below Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, City Park rated **3.42** for Activity Friendliness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



*Makeshift pathway using parking dividers*



*Some areas are difficult for cyclists*

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that City Park has both supports and obstructions for pedestrians. For example, most streets have at least one sidewalk, but several sidewalks were in poor condition. Grid street patterns provide route choice and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists. Further, bike parking located at some of the destinations considerably increased bike friendliness. However, narrow streets can prove difficult for cyclists.

# Attractiveness

We rated each neighbourhood based on specific features that could potentially increase or decrease the attractiveness of the neighbourhood. This rating suggests whether the level of attractiveness for each neighbourhood itself can encourage or discourage individuals to participate in an active lifestyle.



*Kinsmen Park*

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, City Park rated **4.78** for Attractiveness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)

City Park's attractiveness rating suggests that both attractive and unattractive features are present in the neighbourhood. For example, large street trees are present on most streets and they provide shade for the pedestrians on the sidewalks. Sidewalk amenities, such as benches and well-kept



*Curb cut*

garbage cans, were located in various places throughout the neighbourhood. Architectural variety, well maintained homes, and pleasant landscaping considerably increase the attractiveness of the neighbourhood. Further, Kinsmen Park, the Meewasin Valley Trail, and the views from Spadina Crescent are features that attract residents from across the city.

# Universal Access

We rated the universal accessibility of each neighbourhood according to the presence or absence of specific features that help or prevent safe movement for those with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments. These ratings suggest whether people with reduced mobility are able to travel in the neighbourhood safely without assistance.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, City Park rated **1.83** for Universal Accessibility, below Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)

This universal accessibility rating indicates that City Park has few elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, few sidewalks in City Park are mountable, though there are curb cuts at some intersections. The poor quality of many sidewalks would considerably decrease the ease of movement for individuals with reduced mobility. Further, few of the observed pedestrian crossings are adapted for individuals with visual or hearing impairments.

**The principal investigator for this project is Nazeem Muhajarine, PhD. For a complete list of contributing researchers, partner organizations, project staff, and more information, please visit our website: [www.smartcitieshealthykids.com](http://www.smartcitieshealthykids.com)**

**If you have any further questions about the project, please contact our research co-ordinator [tracy.ridalls@usask.ca](mailto:tracy.ridalls@usask.ca) or call 966-2237.**