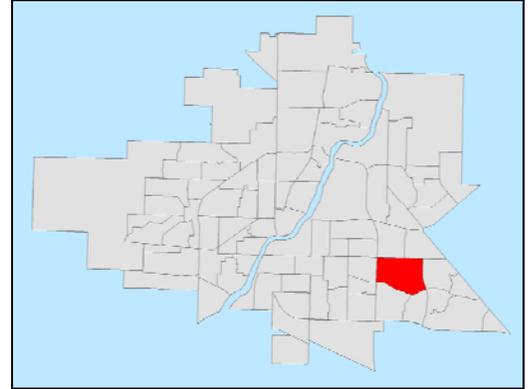


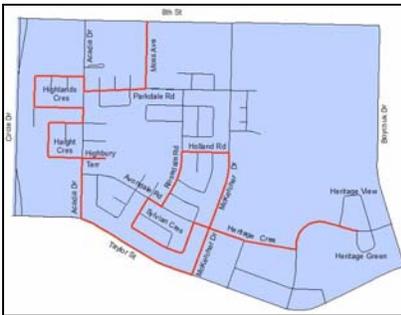
Wildwood



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).



Wildwood 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 Wildwood compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

Smart Cities Healthy Kids

Contact: Tracy Ridalls

306-966-2237

tracy.ridalls@usask.ca

www.smartcitieshealthykids.com

Wildwood Overview

Wildwood is bordered by 8th Street, Boychuk Drive, Taylor Street, and Circle Drive. Wildwood was designed under the First Community Planning Scheme, which was in effect between 1966-1982. This was Saskatoon's first comprehensive neighbourhood plan that sought to design neighbourhoods as independent communities. As such, each neighbourhood was required to develop around a school site and neighbourhood park, and park space became standardized at 10 acres per 1000 people. Commercial types became distributed into neighbourhood and suburban centre uses. Core neighbourhoods became the focus for high density and mixed-use while suburban neighbourhoods became primarily single-family residential. Although it is a suburban neighbourhood, Wildwood has a considerable amount of commercial uses along 8th Street, which also promotes a number of high density areas.



Wildwood street view

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.



Zebra crosswalk in the School Zone

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Wildwood rated **6.29** for Safety from Traffic, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Wildwood rated **8.95** for Safety from Crime, above Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Wildwood rated **4.13** for Safety, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

Wildwood's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are fairly well defined and easy to safely navigate and that there are only a few elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, although there were several busy streets with high traffic levels throughout the neighbourhood, there were also several crosswalks in strategic locations. However, better consideration for the safety of pedestrians is needed in some areas, particularly along 8th Street. In terms of safety from crime, mostly well maintained homes and complexes, a low amount of graffiti, few concealed areas, and plenty of opportunities for casual surveillance of the street by home owners all contribute to the perception of personal security.



Well marked pedestrian crossing with traffic calming measures

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.



Strip Mall on Taylor Street



Street vendor at Centre Mall

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Wildwood rated **9.00** for Diversity of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Wildwood rated **4.25** for Density of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

Wildwood's destination ratings suggest that there are many destinations of a wide variety. For example, observed destinations in Wildwood include: two schools, several neighbourhood parks with playgrounds and playing fields, Wildwood Golf Course, Lakewood Civic Centre with an indoor pool, a library, and leisure facilities, churches, a gas station and convenience store, a strip mall, and Centre Mall with a variety of retail, restaurants, entertainment, and professional and medical services.

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 assists or limits the opportunities for physical activities such as walking, cycling, or skateboarding.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Wildwood rated **5.24** for Pedestrian Access, above Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Wildwood rated **3.92** for Activity Friendliness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



Bike parking at Lakewood Civic Centre

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that Wildwood has both supports and obstructions for pedestrians. For example, most observed streets have well-maintained sidewalks on both sides of the street. Further, wide streets provide adequate room for cyclists and bike parking located at some of the destinations considerably increases bike friendliness. Further, paved pathways through parks provide additional route choices for pedestrians and cyclists. However, several heavy traffic roads are difficult to safely and quickly navigate and can act as barriers to pedestrians.



Park bench and paved pathway

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.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Wildwood rated **5.02** for Attractiveness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)



Heritage Park

Wildwood's attractiveness rating suggests that both attractive and unattractive features are present in the neighbourhood. For example, sidewalk amenities, such as benches and well-kept garbage cans were present on some observed streets. Litter was observed in several areas. The street trees observed on several streets provide partial shade for some of the sidewalks. Neighbourhood parks and pleasant landscaping considerably increase the attractiveness of the neighbourhood.



Curb cut and reflective strips on bollards

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

This universal accessibility rating indicates that Wildwood has few elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, though few sidewalks in Wildwood are mountable, curb cuts are present at some intersections. Further, some of the observed pedestrian crossings are adapted for individuals with visual or hearing impairments.

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.



Street level space makes the pedestrian refuge universally accessible

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

If you have any further questions about the project, please contact our research co-ordinator tracy.ridalls@usask.ca or call 966-2237.