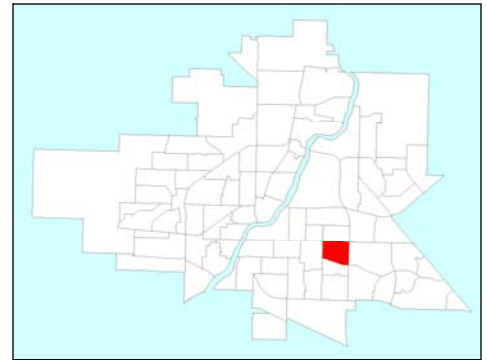


Brevoort Park



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).



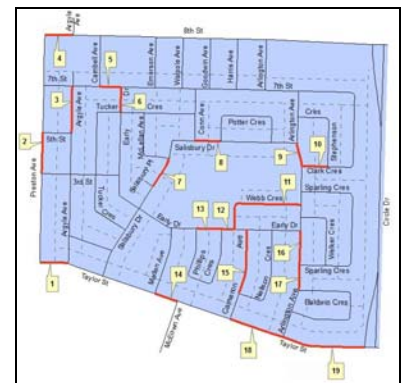
Brevoort Park in Saskatoon



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 4-5 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 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 Brevoort Park compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in

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Brevoort Park Overview

Brevoort Park is bordered by 8th Street, Preston Avenue, Taylor Street, and Circle Drive. Brevoort Park was designed under the First Community Planning Scheme, which was in effect from 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. As a suburban neighbourhood, Brevoort Park is primarily residential, with most of its commercial needs served by 8th Street on its northern boundary and nearby Nutana Suburban Centre.



Typical Brevoort Park street view



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 in terms of traffic and crime. These ratings suggest whether safety concerns affect an individual's related active living decisions in their neighbourhood.



School Zone sign

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Brevoort Park rated **6.11** for Safety from Traffic, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Brevoort Park rated **7.98** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Brevoort Park rated **4.25** for Safety, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

Brevoort Park's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are well defined and easy to safely navigate and that there are only a few elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, there were several crosswalks near the schools and park space on Early Drive. However, some of the other busy streets were lacking crosswalks or other pedestrian safety measures. A wide buffer strip of grass separated pedestrians and traffic on 8th Street.

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 considerable amount of graffiti in some areas of the neighbourhood and a high number of spaces concealed by bushes or in alleyways that could be used for lurking.



Graffiti

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.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Brevoort Park rated **6.00** for Diversity of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Brevoort Park rated **4.94** for Density of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

Brevoort Park's destination ratings suggest that there are a moderate number and variety of destinations. For example, in Brevoort Park, there are three schools, a park with playgrounds and a playing field, a picnic area, an outdoor pool, a curling rink, a dance studio, a church, a daycare, a movie store, in addition to the varied commercial strip along 8th Street.



Neighbourhood Commercial



Buffer strip along sidewalk

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, Brevoort Park rated **5.37** for Pedestrian Access, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible

highest rating of 6, Brevoort Park rated **3.83** for Activity Friendliness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that Brevoort Park has some supports and few obstructions for pedestrians. For example, all observed streets had well maintained sidewalks on both sides of the street. Further, wide streets and bike parking at the schools increase bike friendliness. However, the layout of the streets can be confusing and difficult to navigate. Alleyways are present across the neighbourhood,



Park access

which can join disconnected streets and increase route choice for pedestrians and 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.



Street bench

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Brevoort Park rated **5.20** for Attractiveness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)

Brevoort Park'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, although litter was also commonly observed. The street trees observed on several streets provide partial shade for some of the sidewalks. Parks and pleasant landscaping increase the attractiveness of the neighbourhood considerably.

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, Brevoort Park rated **2.33** for Universal Accessibility, above Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)

This universal accessibility rating indicates that Brevoort Park has some elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, there are graded curb cuts present in many areas, though they are not consistently present across the neighbourhood. Further, a few of the observed pedestrian crossings were 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

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