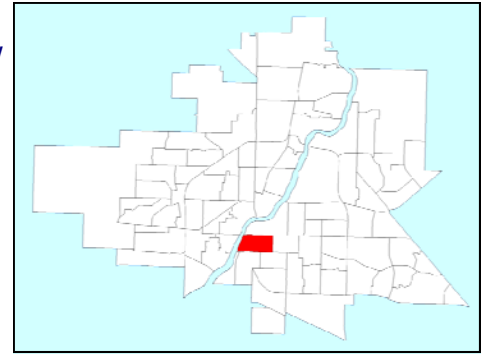


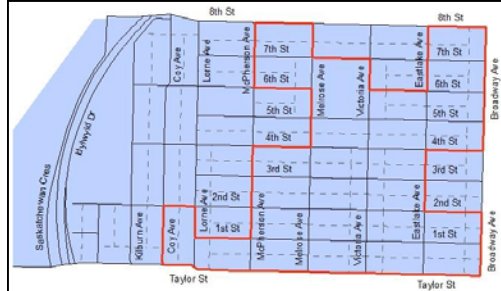
Buena Vista



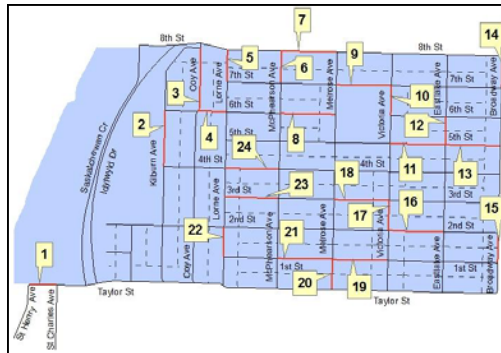
The **Smart Cities, Healthy Kids** research project looks for solutions to childhood obesity by investigating how neighbourhood design affects children's ability to be physically active. Research suggests that safety from traffic and crime, the presence of destinations and built features supporting an 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).



Buena Vista in Saskatoon



NALP Route Map



IMI Segments 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.

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 Buena Vista compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

Smart Cities Healthy Kids

Contact: Tracy Ridalls

306-966-2237

tracy.ridalls@usask.ca

www.smartcitieshealthykids.com

Buena Vista Overview

Buena Vista is bordered by 8th Street, Broadway Avenue, Taylor Street, and the South Saskatchewan River. Buena Vista was designed under the First Zoning Bylaw, which was in effect from 1930—1966. This Bylaw marked the beginning of a formal land use classification system that separated land use types into more defined categories for the purposes of controlling land uses and protecting property values. This Bylaw also marked the beginning of a street classification system that separated volumes of traffic into classes (local, collector, and arterial).

Neighbourhoods developed under the First Zoning Bylaw often included early forms of curvilinear streets, where grid patterns give way to crescents linked by a collector street. However, Buena Vista is composed entirely of grid patterned streets.

Buena Vista is characterized by wide avenues and streets with tree canopies providing shade. Buena Vista has several destinations located throughout the neighbourhood that provide places to go and an opportunity to interact with neighbors. However, the built environment does not consistently support pedestrians and other forms of active living. Altogether, Buena Vista is an attractive neighbourhood with room for improvement.

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.



Pedestrian signs

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Buena Vista rated **6.04** for Safety from Traffic, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Buena Vista rated **8.28** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Buena Vista rated **4.63** for Safety, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

Buena Vista's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are fairly well defined and safe to navigate and that there are only few elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, although several observed intersections were uncontrolled and few were marked for pedestrian crossing, traffic levels were quite low, so observers felt most streets were safe to cross. Indeed, the intersections with high traffic did include measures of safety for pedestrians. Further, on many streets, large grass and tree buffer strips separate the pedestrians on the sidewalk from the traffic on the street. In terms of safety from crime, well maintained homes, plenty of opportunities for casual surveillance of the street by home owners, and minimal graffiti all contributed to the perception of personal security. However, we observed a high number of spaces concealed by bushes or in alleyways that could be used for lurking.



Buena Vista welcome sign



School zone sign

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, Buena Vista rated **5.00** for Diversity of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Buena Vista rated **4.56** for Density of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)



Broadway Avenue



Playground

Buena Vista's destination ratings suggest that there are several destinations but of moderate variety. For example, the destinations we observed in Buena Vista are a gas station and convenience store, a service station, a neighbourhood park with a playground and lawn bowling club, a school with a park, a church, a restaurant, a coffee shop, a grocery store, professional services, and a medical clinic.

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, Buena Vista rated **5.00** for Pedestrian Access, below Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Buena Vista rated **4.17** for Activity Friendliness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



Buena Vista Park



Buffer strip separates sidewalk from road-way

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that Buena Vista has some supports and few obstructions for pedestrians. For example, sidewalks were often in good condition and present on both sides of most streets. However, several wide avenues lacked sidewalks or a clearly defined pedestrian area. Wide streets provide adequate room for cyclists, but bike parking was absent from most destinations. The grid street pattern is easy to navigate and provides a wide range of route choices 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.

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Buena Vista rated **5.57** for Attractiveness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)



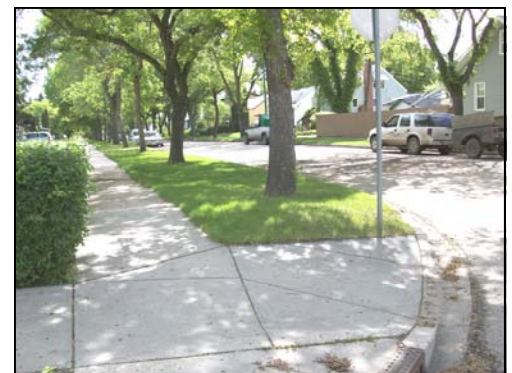
Architectural variety

Buena Vista's attractiveness rating suggests that both attractive and unattractive features are present in the neighbourhood. For example, large street trees are present on several streets and provide shade for pedestrians on the sidewalk. Sidewalk amenities, such as benches and well-kept garbage cans, are present in a couple areas throughout the neighbourhood. Further, mostly well maintained homes, architectural variety, and pleasant landscaping considerably increase the attractiveness of the neighbourhood.

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, Buena Vista rated **2.00** for Universal Accessibility, below Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)



Curb cut

This universal accessibility rating indicates that Buena Vista has few elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, very few sidewalks in Buena Vista are mountable, although there are graded curb cuts present at some intersections. Further, very 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

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