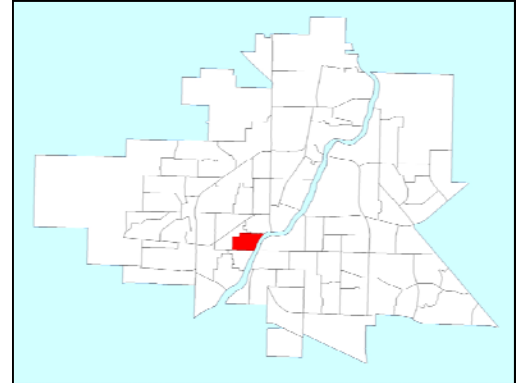


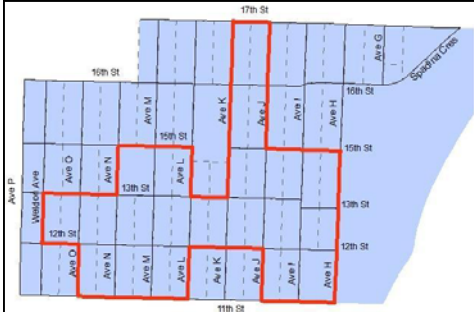
King George



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).

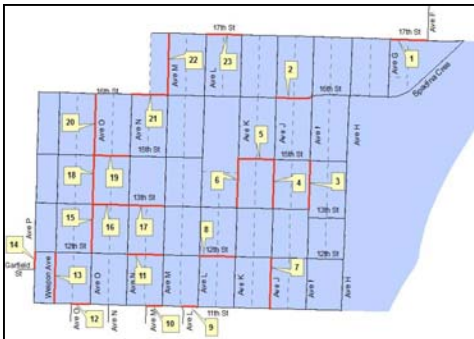


King George in Saskatoon



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 Segments 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 King George compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

Smart Cities Healthy Kids

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King George Overview

King George is bordered by 17th Street, Spadina Crescent, Avenue H, 11th Street, Avenue P, and 16th Street.

King George 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 discrete 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, King George has evolved into a more defined neighbourhood including a school, park space, and other amenities and places of interest.



King George 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.



Well marked pedestrian crossing

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, King George rated **4.44** for Safety from Traffic, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, King George rated **6.39** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, King George rated **4.13** for Safety, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

King George's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are somewhat defined and safe to navigate, but there are some elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, the streets along the edge of the neighbourhood had heavy traffic but also had crosswalks to assist the safety of pedestrians. Although crosswalks were mostly absent in the interior of the neighbourhood, traffic levels were fairly low, so observers felt it was often safe to cross. In terms of safety from crime, plenty of opportunities for casual surveillance of the street by residents contributed to the perception of personal security. However, in some areas of the neighbourhood, we observed a high amount of graffiti, poorly maintained homes, and areas 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, King George rated **6.00** for Diversity of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, King George rated **4.69** for Density of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

King George's destination ratings suggest that there are many destinations of a moderate variety. For example, observed destinations in King George include a school and playground, corner stores, a food store, a restaurant, an outdoor pool and places of light industrial employment. Victoria Park is also located within the boundaries of King George and includes a skate park, a basketball court, BBQs, picnic tables, and walking trails.



Outdoor pool



Separate pedestrian and cyclist path

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, King George rated **4.78** for Pedestrian Access, below Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, King George rated **4.16** for Activity Friendliness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



Bench and a garbage can

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that King George has both supports and obstructions for pedestrians. For example, grid street patterns provide route choice and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists. However, sidewalks were missing from some streets within the neighbourhood. And although narrow streets with street parking can prove difficult for cyclists, bike parking located along the pedestrian and cyclist path on 17th Street increases bike friendliness considerably.

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, King George rated **4.65** for Attractiveness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)



Public art

King George'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 garbage cans, were located in some places through the neighbourhood, particularly along the river and pedestrian pathway. Architectural variety and pleasant landscaping considerably increase the attractiveness of the neighbourhood. Further, Victoria Park and Riversdale Pool are features that attract residents from across the city.



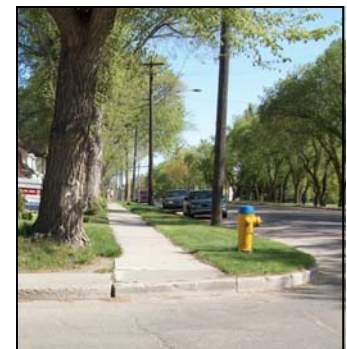
King George street view

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, King George rated **1.50** for Universal Accessibility, below Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)

This universal accessibility rating indicates that King George has few elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, few sidewalks in King George are mountable, and curb cuts are absent from most intersections. Further, none of the observed pedestrian crossings are adapted for individuals with visual or hearing impairments.



Absence of curb cut

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.