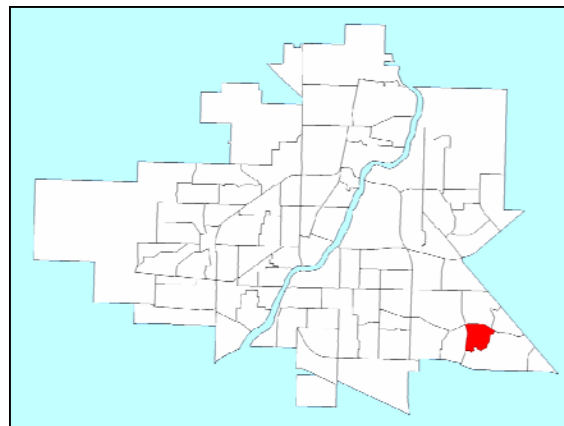


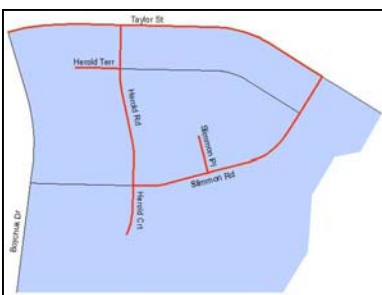
Lakewood Suburban Centre



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).



Lakewood Suburban Centre 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 the Lakewood Suburban Centre compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

Lakewood Suburban Centre Overview

The Lakewood Suburban Centre is bordered by Taylor Street, Slimmon Road, and Boychuk Drive. The Lakewood Suburban Centre was developed under Plan Saskatoon, a development plan adopted in 1998 as a result of community wide consultation on development and growth policies. Plan Saskatoon introduced sustainable development principles, Local Area Plans for existing neighbourhoods, and a Formal Concept Planning process for all new neighbourhoods. New forms of neighbourhood development were encouraged, including a minimum average density of 5 units per acre, housing variety, neighbourhood commercial sites, infill development, affordable housing, and mixed uses in core neighbourhoods and former industrial areas. Lakewood Suburban Centre tried to incorporate sustainable development principles through high density and a water retention pond.



Lakewood Suburban Centre Street View



Selective pedestrian activated crossings

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, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **7.63** for Safety from Traffic, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **8.09** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **3.63** for Safety, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

The Lakewood Suburban Centre safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are fairly well defined and easy to safely navigate and that there are few elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, all streets have the potential for high traffic levels, though few intersections were marked for pedestrian crossing. In terms of safety from crime, well maintained surroundings and plenty of opportunities for casual surveillance of the street by residents and customers contribute to the perception of personal security. However, some graffiti and concealed areas that could be used for lurking were present, particularly along the nature paths and in construction zones.



Children Playing traffic 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.



Commercial corridor

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **5.00** for Diversity of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **3.06** for Density of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

Lakewood Suburban Centre's destination ratings suggest that there are some destinations of a moderate variety. For example, observed destinations in the Lakewood Suburban Centre include a post office, a medical clinic, a pharmacy, a gas station, banks, retail stores, various professional services, restaurants, and a grocery store.

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.



High density living near destinations

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **5.57** for Pedestrian Access, above Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **2.50** for Activity Friendliness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



Pedestrian sidewalk separated from traffic

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that the Lakewood Suburban Centre has both supports and obstructions for pedestrians. For example, most streets have at least one sidewalk, and when present, sidewalks are in good condition and are often separated from traffic by a grass buffer strip. Further, wide streets provide adequate room for cyclists, though heavy traffic levels limits the route choice. High density residential areas close to destinations and clearly defined pedestrian areas at the destinations enable people to live nearby and have easy access to the places they need.

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, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **4.34** for Attractiveness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)



Nature walkway

The Lakewood Suburban Centre's attractiveness rating suggests that both attractive and unattractive features are present in the neighbourhood. For example, the architectural styles of high density units can appear repetitive. Litter was observed in some areas; however, pleasant landscaping, the nature pond, and nature walkways increase the attractiveness of the area 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, Lakewood Suburban Centre rated **2.67** for Universal Accessibility, above Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)

This universal accessibility rating indicates that the Lakewood Suburban Centre has some elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, almost all sidewalks are



Graded Curb cut

mountable, and there are graded curb cuts present at most intersections. However, only one 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.