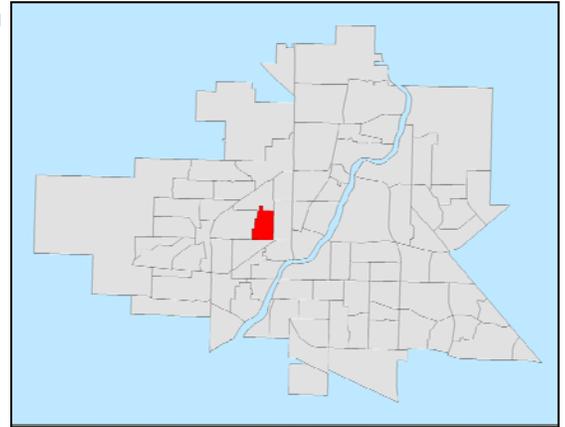


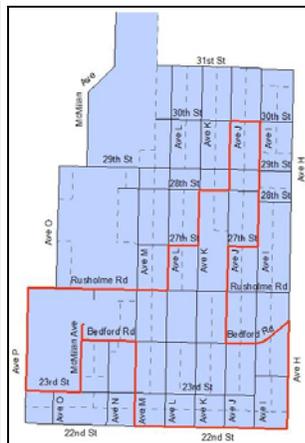
Westmount



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).



Westmount in Saskatoon

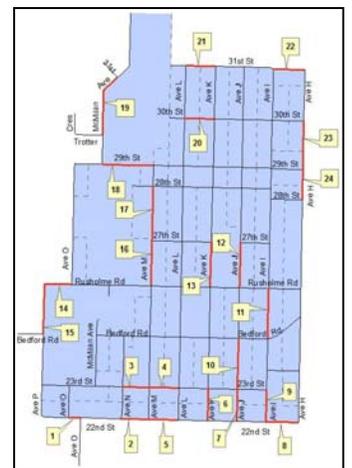


NALP Route Map

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 Westmount compare to Saskatoon neighbourhoods in general.

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 connected by 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

Smart Cities Healthy Kids

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Westmount Overview

Westmount is bordered by 31st Street, Avenue H, 22nd Street, Avenue P, Avenue O, and McMillan Avenue.

Westmount 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 include early forms of curvilinear streets, where grid patterns give way to crescents linked by a collector street. However, the streets in Westmount are all of a grid pattern.



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



Pedestrian crossing near Westmount School

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Westmount rated **5.55** for Safety from Traffic, below Saskatoon's average rating of **6.06**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Westmount rated **7.02** for Safety from Crime, below Saskatoon's average rating of **8.46**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Westmount rated **3.13** for Safety, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.81**. (NALP)

Westmount's safety ratings suggest that pedestrian and vehicular travel areas are fairly well defined and safe to navigate, but there are some elements that reduce feelings of personal security. For example, there are very few pedestrian crosswalks throughout the neighbourhood, though they are mostly present where they are needed on heavily travelled roads. The traffic level away from main roads was low, so observers felt that many streets were safe to cross. Several sidewalks throughout the neighbourhood are separated from the roadway by a buffer strip of grass. 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, a high amount of graffiti was observed in some areas of the neighbourhood, as well as several areas there were 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, Westmount rated **8.00** for Diversity of Destinations, above Saskatoon's average rating of **6.26**. (IMI)



Westmount School

- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Westmount rated **3.50** for Density of Destinations, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.92**. (NALP)

Westmount's destination ratings suggest that there are many destinations of an adequate variety. For example, observed destinations in Westmount include three large neighbourhood parks and playing fields, three schools, a day care centre, and a commercial strip along 22nd Street with restaurants, services, retail, and entertainment.



Commercial strip along 22nd Street

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.



Wide streets provide room for cyclists

- Out of a possible highest rating of 10, Westmount rated **4.84** for Pedestrian Access, below Saskatoon's average rating of **5.08**. (IMI)
- Out of a possible highest rating of 6, Westmount rated **3.25** for Activity Friendliness, below Saskatoon's average rating of **3.67**. (NALP)



Straight, grid patterned roads support

These activity friendliness ratings suggest that Westmount has both supports and obstructions for pedestrians. For example, sidewalks are fairly well maintained, although there are several observed streets throughout the neighbourhood missing sidewalks on either one or both sides of the street. Wide streets provide adequate room for cyclists, and bike parking facilities located at some of the destinations considerably increase the bike friendliness. The grid street pattern provides route choice and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists, although some streets are discontinuous.

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, Westmount rated **5.02** for Attractiveness, above Saskatoon's average rating of **4.80**. (IMI)



Leif Erickson Park

Westmount'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 in a number of areas. Large street trees observed on most streets provide shade for pedestrians on some of the sidewalks. Further, some architectural variety, large parks, 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, Westmount rated **1.50** for Universal Accessibility, below Saskatoon's average rating of **2.19**. (NALP)



No paved pathway through the park

This universal accessibility rating indicates that Westmount has few elements that enable safe movement for those with reduced mobility. For example, few sidewalks in Westmount are mountable, and there are curb cuts in very few places. A lack of paved pathways through the parks reduces accessibility and parks can serve as a barrier to pedestrians with reduced mobility. Further, only one observed pedestrian crossing is 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.