



# Pontiac Parks and Recreation Study

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## Introduction

The MSU Practicum Team set out to assess the eight major parks within Pontiac, MI. Using the newly adopted 2021-2025 Parks & Recreation Master Plan, conducting site visits, and using online resources, the team was able to complete the overall project goals: recommend new themes for the 8 major parks, showing possible connections, and provide recommendations on how these parks can be used safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Current Park Conditions

| Amenities                                      | Aaron Perry Park | Oakland Park | Beaudette Park | Crystal Lake Park | Hawthorne Park | Jaycee Park | Galloway Lake Park | Murphy Park |
|--|------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Adult Fitness Area                             |                  | X            | X              |                   |                |             |                    | X           |
| Ball Fields                                    | X                |              | X              |                   |                | X           | X                  | X           |
| Courts (Tennis, basketball, volleyball)        |                  | X            | X              |                   |                | X           | X                  |             |
| Docks/piers                                    |                  |              | X              | X                 | X              |             | X                  |             |
| Lake   |                  |              | X              | X                 | X              |             |                    |             |
| Miscellaneous (Horseshoe pits, sledding, etc.) |                  |              |                | X                 | X              |             |                    | X           |
| Playground(s)                                  | X                | X            | X              |                   | X              | X           | X                  | X           |
| Restroom(s)                                    | X                | X            | X              |                   | X              | X           | X                  | X           |
| Warming Center                                 |                  |              |                |                   |                |             |                    | X           |
| Overall Condition                              |                  |              |                |                   |                |             |                    |             |
| 1 - Terrible                                   | 3                | 3.5          | 3              | 1                 | 3              | 3           | 3                  | 2           |
| 5 - Excellent                                  |                  |              |                |                   |                |             |                    |             |

From the assessment of current conditions, the team concluded that all parks need significant quality improvements. The team also identified the greatest strengths of the individual parks and combined these strengths with socio-economic data, as well as the history and culture of Pontiac, to provide themes and recommendations for each of the 8 parks.

## Socio-Economic Conditions

| Parks              | Population | Persons Per Household | Median Age (years old) | Median Household Income | Number of Households | Census Tract |
|--------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Aaron Perry Park   | 4,485      | 2.9                   | 31.3                   | \$26,483                | 1,531                | 1416         |
| Oakland Park       | 4,485      | 2.9                   | 31.3                   | \$26,483                | 1,531                | 1416         |
| Beaudette Park     | 3,539      | 2.3                   | 38                     | \$26,483                | 1,547                | 1426         |
| Crystal Lake Park  | 3,539      | 2                     | 38.7                   | \$26,483                | 1,771                | 1426         |
| Galloway Lake Park | 6,378      | 2.8                   | 29.8                   | \$18,091                | 2,261                | 1415         |
| Hawthorne Park     | 2,984      | 2.5                   | 34.3                   | \$21,544                | 1,206                | 1411         |
| Jaycee Park        | 5,225      | 2.2                   | 29.8                   | \$26,742                | 2,392                | 1410         |
| Murphy Park        | 2,307      | 2.2                   | 29.9                   | \$16,980                | 1,052                | 1423         |

Through the collection of socio-economic data, the team shaped recommendations based on the demographics of the census tracts in which each park is located. Data, including population, persons per household, median age, per capita income, and number of households, was used to understand the social dynamics of each park's census tract, allowing park update recommendations to appropriately reflect the population being served.

## Park Recommendations

### Recommended theme: Small-Scale Water Recreation

Crystal Lake Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Install a roped-off swim area, a standing water slide, and an inflatable slide by the lake for summer
- Adding a kayak and canoe launch, concessions stand, and beach volleyball courts
- Add new amenities, such as outdoor workout equipment, restroom facilities, picnic tables, and bike parking
- Creating non-motorized connections through a bike path

### Recommended theme: Transportation Recreation

Aaron Perry Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Decorate with car part replicas (GMC and Chevrolet)
- Sports car themed playground
- Add concession stand or designate an area for food vendors



Design renderings of a bicycle track.



Bicycle track Case Study: Lake Lansing Park South.



Vintage gas station signs idea for mile markers.



Playground equipment idea for automobile themes.

### Recommended theme: Classic Cars Historical Park

Oakland Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Decorate with car part replicas (Pontiac and Cadillac)
- Vintage vehicle themed playground
- Public art of vintage vehicles
- Antique gas station signs as mile/kilometer markers

### Recommended theme: Special Events/Family Activities

Beaudette Park.  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- As host, self-promote during Woodward Dream Cruise
- Host more family-centered events
- Enhance resident access to park amenities



Classic cars at the Jack Frost Auto Museum.



Petting zoo as an example of hosting more family-center events.



Concept of a new community center for the David Ewalt Center.



### Recommended theme: Water Recreation

Hawthorne Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Replace fishing dock with a kayak launch
- Add services to supplement recreational activities, such as concessions
- Roadway maintenance for vehicles to access the boat launch

Kayak launch Case Study: Brighton Recreation Area.



Concessions by lake Case Study: Tawas Point Grille.



Urban beach Case Study: The Fountain Detroit.



### Recommended theme: Urban Recreation through an "Urban Beach"

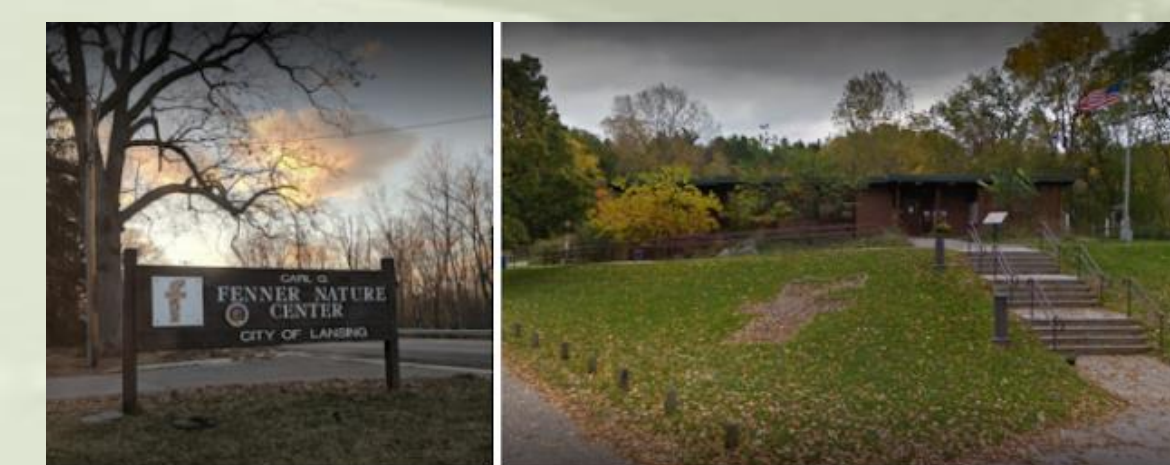
Jaycee Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Updating the baseball facility
- Creating areas for gathering
- Paths for strollers and wheelchairs

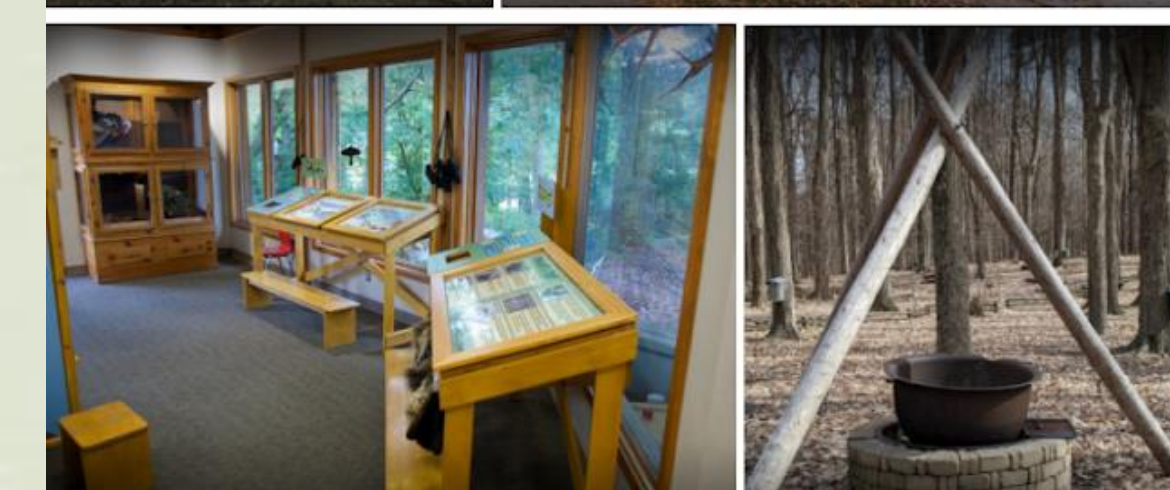
### Recommended theme: Nature and History

Murphy Park  
 Recommendations for this park include:

- Create a trail system by expanding the short trail, cleaning out the creek bed, and clearing the brush that blocks the view of the creek
- Convert the existing warming center into a nature center
- Educational signs to explain the history and culture of the Ottawa tribe
- Replica structures of Ottawa culture for public use



Nature center Case Study: Fenner Nature Center.



Warming hut Case Study: Hubbard Park Lodge



Warming hut Case Study: Hubbard Park Lodge



Water slide Case Study: The inflatable Trippo Water Slide.



Signage to add for non-motorized bike paths.