

LANSING AREA PARK DEVELOPMENT

A project of the Lansing Area Community Resources Workshop in cooperation with Michigan State University

By

Jean H. Nilsen and Susan Zerbst

Director: Mrs. Frances B. Schneider Assistant Director: Ralph Chapman

July, 1969

Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries

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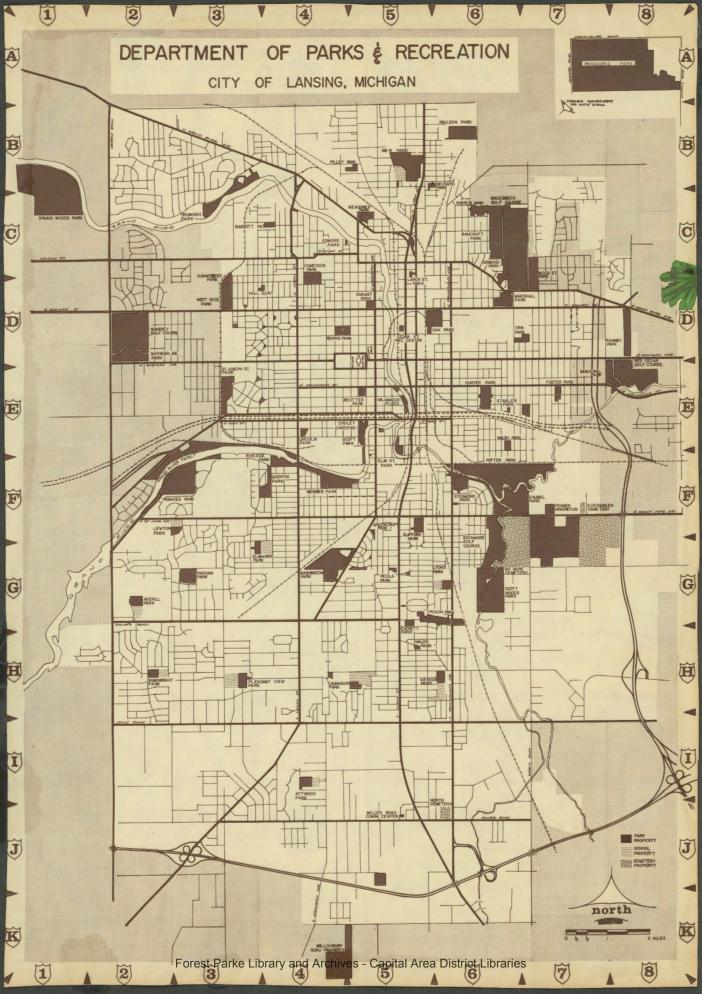
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LOCATIONS OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL Or ACAES 4Courses FACILITIES

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LOCATIONS OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL ACQUIRED FACILITIES

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GROUPS

Introduction

The purpose of this project was at the outset two-fold: 1. To determine where and on whom the responsibility for making final decisions in park planning and maintenance fell.

2. To determine the function of City Planning in the park area.

This first purpose grew out of a concern over the lack of modernization of certain features at Potter Park. The second purpose dealt directly with a unit study in the social studies curriculum and would be of value to both instructor and student.

As resource people were contacted and resource materials read and reviewed it soon became apparent to the writers that what was actually being dealt with in this report was the development of parks in the Lansing area, and it is upon park development that emphasis in this report has been placed.

With the four-day work week no longer a dream, but an approaching reality, the leisure of the family becomes the concern of the community. What determines the areas to be used for parks and recreation as the city rapidly expands, and consumes the land within its boundaries? Do the children of today have adequate facilities for recreation? What assurance can we have that in ten,fifteen, or twenty years our

youngsters will have land available so that they can discover and enjoy nature? The plight of ghetto children playing in streets and alleys of decaying cities must not be repeated in Lansing. It is with this concern that the writers set about to determine what provisions are being made for future park development.

Procedure

The writers first made the decision as to the specific area to be studied, then divided this area into relating categories. Included was an historical background, present park planning, specific park classifications including several available examples of each, and future park planning.

Both writers interviewed, as a team, the resource contacts. The expectation was that such interviews would heighten the writers' awareness of community resources. The interviews were conducted by appointment. The utmost courtesy and cooperation was extended to the writers. Resource materials such as charts, pamphlets, maps and booklets were graciously and generously offered. One young man, in City Hall's Parks and Recreation office, not only promised reproduction of maps found in a dusty back-corner bin in four to five days, but kept the promise as well.

The writers divided the parks that were to be surveyed for the project. An investigation as to available facilities for classification was made at each park and colored pictures were taken. Because of the great number of parks in the Lansing area, only those were chosen which would best represent their specific classification.

The writers felt that by exploring the past and present in the area of parks and their development a clearer and more concise ascertainment of future park planning could be made.

Park Classification

It is suggested that playlots should be operated by private persons and organizations, and ordinarily should not be included in the parks operated by the municipal government. Although this is generally true, there is scarcely a city in the country that has not found it necessary to become involved in that sort of operation. Even in a new situation, instances may arise in small and congested areas in which this type of park is the best solution available to provide some degree of recreation service.

4

The next smallest and most elemental classification is the neighborhood park of which one to two acres per thousand population ought to be set aside. The next higher category is that of playfields to which has been assigned a similar one to two acres per thousand population. Flayfields are expected to service two or more neighborhoods, usually three or four with a radius of influence of a mile and a half to two miles. Large park areas constitute the next category to which has been attributed five acres per thousand population, and the character of which is noted in general terms on the schedule. Special use parks follow, with two acres per thousand population attributed to then. This makes a total of ten acres per thousand population for the entire park and recreation system of the municipality. Neighborhood parks and playfields are predominantly characterized and influenced by active recreation for the age groups from about eight to the early twenties. The neighborhood parks are the parks which can be reached by walking to them; the playfield type requires the use of bicycles and cars although a fair number can walk to the location. The younger children and the adults use these facilities but not to the extent that other age groups use them. Areas for athletics, games, amusement, club gatherings and the like become the controlling feature of the design. Pleasing patterns, beauty of landscape and peaceful environment are part of the designs, but are not the controlling factors. The influence of the recreation directors and the recreation program not only influence but actually dictate the character of the parks in these two classifications.

It is to be noted that neighborhood parks and playfields are relatively new introductions into the pattern of municipal park systems. Prior to 1900 or even 1910, park systems were constructed in the best tradition of the "founding fathers". They consisted of several large parks (100 acres or more) in the several radial portions of the city. connected by a parkway system. Large parks are widely spaced and like all other parks are designed for rest, contemplation, appreciation of scenery, and sedate use rather than for

active play.

The functions and features which distinguish large city parks from special use parks are often vague. In most situations special use functions have been separated from the formerly large city parks and given a home of their own-conservatories and flower gardens, zoos, arboretums, outdoor theaters, museum sites, golf courses, large municipal stadiums and sport centers. That is because so often the space required for such functions under present standards is too great to be put "in a corner" of a large city park. But many large city parks are still extensive enough to encompass land required for one or more of these functions and for the most part such functions are not incompatible with the original idea of a large city park.

Priggooris Park, situated northeast of the Lansing area, would fall under the classification of Reservation and Preserve. with the ultimate development of facilities, including Grass Lake, it will serve the urban area of Lansing and provide areas not requiring intensive development. Although at one time Pine Lake, later known as Lake Lansing, could have been classified under this same category, it was felt that it is now too extensively developed and too great a distance from the inmediate area to be so included in this report.

Recommended Standards for Park Area and Service

1

Type of Park Area	Size	Area per 1000 pers	Service Area	Location	Usual Facilities & Remarks
Playlot	Less than 1 acre	Special Facility	Usually limited to single block or project	High den- sity neig- borhood w/o usual private yards	Paved areas.sitting area and play equip- ment for small children. Usu- ally a private responsibility.
Playground (Neighbor- hood Park)	minimum	1 to 2 acres	to 1 sq. mile	school or center of area	Softball, etc., play equipment, paved a- reas & planting, passive/rustic area. Minimum auto par- ing.
Playfield +Athletic Field	15-25 acres	1 to 2 acres; 1 acre ac- tive play	1 sq. mile; 4-5 neigh- borhood units	major in- tersection	Baseball,football. tennis; fieldhouse community center; pool;night lights; auto parking.
Large Park	100 acre minimum	5 acres	near roads	where site can stay natura l	Athletic facilities, 3 of area rustic; Auto parking must be spacious off- street.
Ornamental Areas Special Parks			serves the entire ur- ban area	terways; by c1v1c cen- ters; zoos, gardens & nuseums at center	
Preserve	Several hundred acres or nore		ban area		Rustic & wild areas, nature/hiking trail, bridle paths, bird sanctuary, boating, fishing. Extensive development not required.

Resource Contact: Mr. Birt Darling Title. Author Address; 212 Loree Drive, East Lansing, Tichigan Phone: 332-1290 Information: Historical Tketch of Tarly City Darks

At the turn of the century Lansing had only two parks, with no park system or anyone to administer what little there was.

The two parks were the old Third ward Park between South Capitol Avenue and Townsend, later to be renamed Central Park, and finally Reutter Park. The second was Oak Park out East Shiawassee which automatically became a parkland with removal of bodies to the new Mount Hope Cemetery in 1870.

In 1909 J. Henry Moores presented Lansing with eighteen acres of land known as Moores Park and upon his death willed another strip of wooded land to the city, which was named Frances Park, after his wife, Sarah Frances Goodman.

In the late 1800s two wealthy timber kings owned private parks in Lansing. The first of these was the James M. Turner estate, later known as the Dodge Estate and later the Great Lakes Bible School.

The other private park and zoo was owned by Charles J. Davis, and extended from the 1300 block of East Michigan to East Kalamazoo. Davis kept a variety of animals including a

herd of deer and a pet otter.

Little was done to attract the public to use of the existing parks as there was no parks department, even though a Park and Cemetery Board had been set up in 1912. The parks were still under the jurisdiction of the Public Works Department and it was not until the Commissioner of the Parks and Cemeteries Board Stormed into the office of Mayor J.Gottlieb Reutter demanding a 'qualified forester' to manage the growing park system that the parks department came into its own.

The first thing the new, qualified forester, H. Lee Bancroft, had on his hands was a fast-growing zoo at Moores Park, containing the hard-to-raise elk herd from the Turner Estate. More importantly, the park system now had a director responsible to the Park Board for park planning.

In 1912 James W. Potter deeded to the city a sizable piece of land from a large tract of land acquired by him in 1903. At that time it consisted of only one farm house and the private zoo of Charles J. Davis.

A special committee was set up for development of the park, with Potter as chairman. He was concerned over the fact that the park was so far out in the country but was relieved when the streetcar people agreed to extend their line clear out to his park. Today this is one of the most thickly populated areas in Lansing.

Early in the 1920s the zoo was moved from Moores Park to Potter Park where more room was available for animal containment. The lion house was built shortly before the 1928 crash, the bird aviary was built by the Works Project Administration in the early 1930s to be followed by the outdoor container for monkeys.

Today the Park Board of Lansing has under its jurisdiction over 80 parks, including 55 supervised playgrounds, 4 golf courses, and 3 cemeteries. The 'qualified forester' has been replaced by many 'park naturalists', which would indeed be gratifying to the first Park Board of 1912. Resources Contact: Mr. Ted Haskell

Title: Assistant Director - Parks and Recreation Address: Lansing City Hall Phone: 372-5000

Information: The Lansing Department of Parks and Recreation consists of 2,000 acres,82 parks,4 golf courses,3 cemeteries and includes vector control. A wide variety of recreation is provided including tennis, swimming, playground programs, a senior citizen ppogram, performing arts, and education centers.

The park and recreation program is based on two sets of values. The land values are termed 'parks' and the human values are termed 'recreation'. For a park program to justify its development there must be an equal mixture of both sets of values.

when the need for a new park becomes apparent, a study is made by the Park Board. Under the Budget Process, a survey is made of streets, land and sewer development, fire standards, and equipment, depending upon the classification of the proposed park. A model park is then constructed. When the needs and recommendations for the proposed park have been developed, the plan is then forwarded to the City Council for approval.

Population density is the one most important determining factor in considering a new park development. In a low-cost

housing project with high density the need for recreational facilities for the young would be of prime importance. In areas where there is a concentration of senior citizens such facilities important to their needs would be developed.

When a permit for a housing project or a subdivision development is submitted and approved by the City Council, they in turn notify the Park Board of the planned project in order that adequate park and recreation facilities will be made available for this area.

The Park and Recreation Board attempts to provide services for all of the people in the Lansing area. A 'minute vacation' is available for everyone, whether to bat a ball, cook a hamburger, or listen to a bird call, see a tree or touch a rose. Resource Contact: Mr. Richard Zimmerman Title: Redevelopment Director for Urban Renewal Address: Lansing City Hall Phone: 372-5000

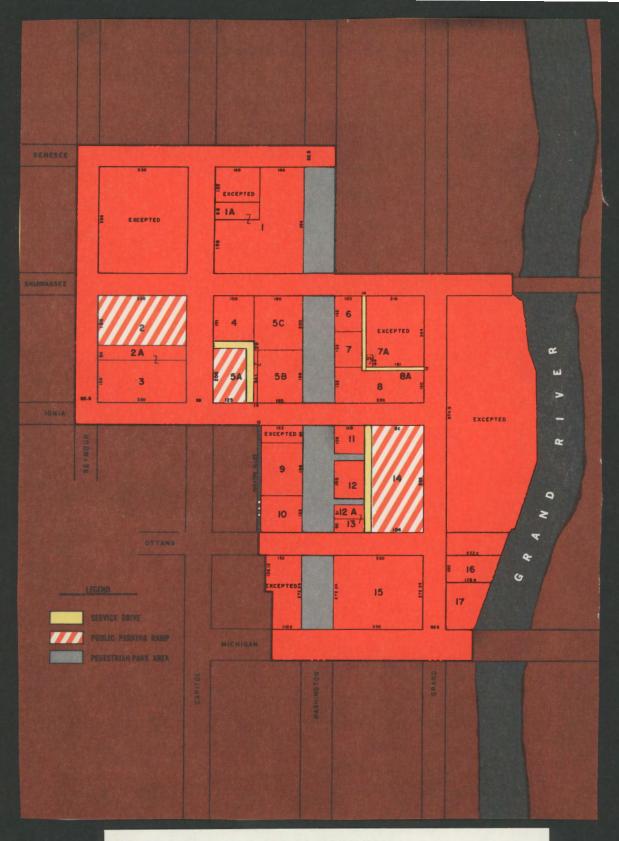
Information: Urban Henewal began in Lansing in 1965 and since that time the central business district has undergone drastic change. From 1955 to 1964 the retail sales in downtown Lansing declined over 20% while retail sales in the metropolitan areas increased over 100%. Stores built in the late 1800s were standing empty and dilapidated as many businesses moved outward to new and more convenient surroundings.

Urban Renewal Project #1 includes that area in the immediate central business district. In 1964 assessed valuation of the buildings in this area was \$2.4 million. Upon completion of Urban Renewal Project #1, the same land area will have an estimated assessed valuation of \$12 million, and produce an estimated \$750.00 annually in property taxes. This is an increase of \$600.000 over 1th 1964 revenue.

In the Urban Renewal Project #1 stood 117 buildings, of which 70% were sub-standard. 25% empty, and 5% condemned. With few exceptions Urban Renewal has purchased these and successfully relocated both businesses and families. Eighteen families were relocated to outlying areas, as were 250 single men who had been living above the stores in single rooms. Relocation reimbursement was provided for both the actual cost

Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries

	AREA SQ. FT.	PRINCIPAL USES	ALTERNATE USES
1	98,010 } 108,900	College Expansion	
2	61,380	Public Parking Ramp	College Expansion, Residential, Cultural
2A 3	17,820 51,480 69,300	Public High Rise Apartment	Parking
4	25,650	Office	Parking Retail
5A	25,000	Public Parking Ramp	Retail, Service, Office
5A2	8,750	Public Alley	
5A1 5B 5C	2,940 32,340 36,000	Office, Retail) Office, Retail } Office, Retail }	Culture, Parking, Service
6	13,200	Office	Service, Retail
7	13,200	Office	Service, Retail
7A	1,100	Public Right-Of-Way	
8	40,800	Office	
8 A	2,592	Public Alley	
9	30,294	Office	
10	20,196	Office	Retail, Service
11	11,550	Office	Retail, Service
12	15,400	Retail, Service	Office
12B	2,200	Pedestrian Way	COLORE DE TRATERIO DE
12C	- 2,200	Pedestrian Way	
12A 13	5,610 6,600 } 12,210	Office, Retail	•
14	73,656	Public Parking Ramp	
14A	13,464	Public Alley	
15	89,839	Retail Center Office, Motel	
16 17	20,300 24,335 } 44,635 Forest Parke 756,796 TOTAL	Public Plaza Public Plaza Library and Archives - Capital Area D	strict Libraries



PARCELS AVAILABLE AND PLANNED USES

The primary objective in development of the land in URP # 1 is to make possible the construction of buildings, with complimentary uses, under a well-coordinated plan. Individual parcel development must relate in design and function to adjacent parks and the area as a whole. The focal point of Lansing's project is the Washington Mall, and buildings must be oriented in design to the use of the Mall. Pedestrian passage ways and plazas are included in the over-all plan to encourage easy pedestrian access to and from parking facilities and between commercial users. All development proposals will be reviewed by the City's architectural design consultants so as to meet these objectives. Study of the map and explanation below will show what is planned. Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries of moving and up to \$1,000 for rent readjustment. Some businesses preferred to remain in the downtown area, while others found it to be advantageous for their business to move out of the center area.

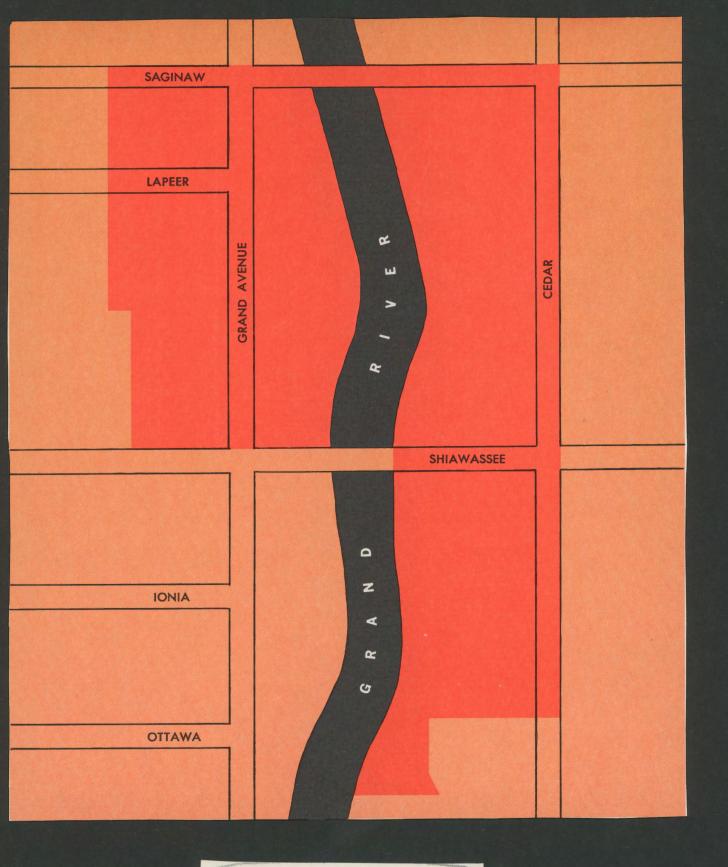
Actual redevelopment under Project #1 was the last completed building for Lansing Community College. The Michigan Bell Building will be completed in 1970 at a cost of \$6 million. The Leonard Distributing Building is half-complete with the cost of \$1.6 million. The Michigan Dental Association Building begins construction next week at a cost of \$1.3 million. Next to go into construction will be the \$15 million complex built on the block surrounded by Washington, Michigan, Grand, and Ottawa. This will consist of a twelvestory,350-room motor hotel, a fifteen-story office building and a two-story, high quality retail center.

Both sides of the Grand River in this central area will become public parks featuring a pedestrian mall and boat landing, and that area both north and south of Michigan on Washington Avenue will become a mall featuring landscaped areas, fountains, and shopping plazas.

SOUTH ON WASHINGTON MALL

In the future, you may stand at what is now the northeast corner of Washington and Ionia looking south and see this scene unfold. While plans are not finalized, this artist's conception of the Mall makes it a thing of bearforest wearke a joy and concertain the main and construct Libraries downtown shoppers.

Ma

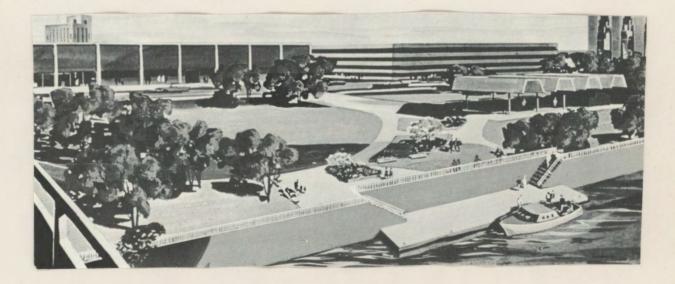


URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT NO. 2

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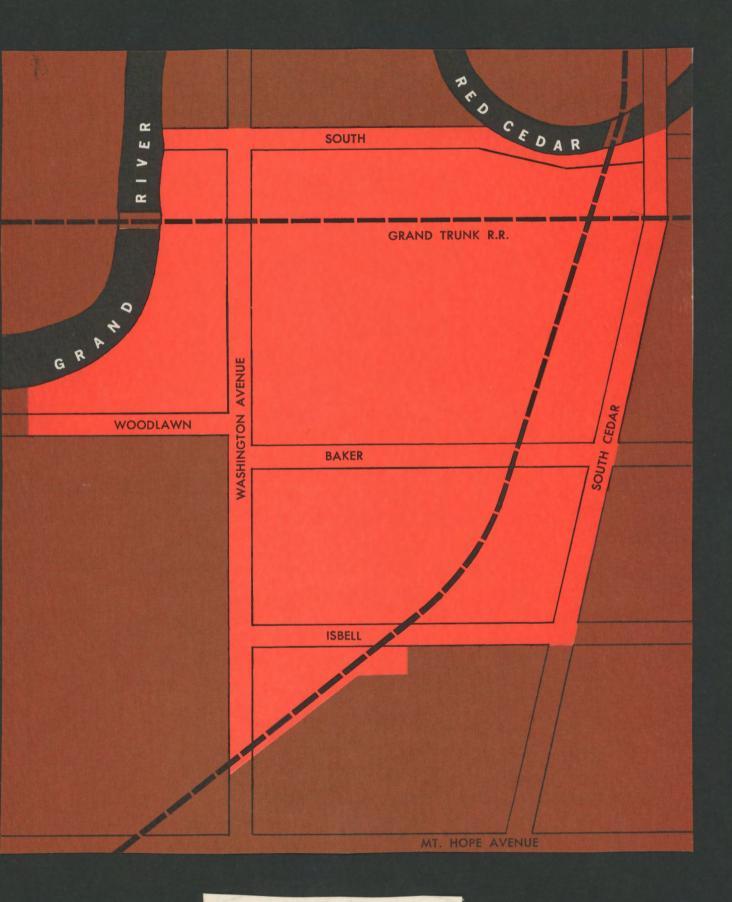
Urban Renewal Project #2

Urban Renewal Project #2 is an extension of the area around Project #1. Forty-one acres encompassing the Grand River on both sides from Michigan to Saginaw Avenues are included. Parts of the area east and west of 1th river will be used by Lansing Community College for campus development. Some of the area east of Grand River will be used to relocate commercial businesses. The entire riverfront will be beautified as a public park to take advantage of the river's natural beauty.



DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT

The Grand River where it crosses Michigan Avenue eventually will frame a panoramic entrance to the central business district and Capitol Complex. The planned public park will feature a scenic overlook and boat landing, and be a valuable attraction for retail stores and offices to be constructed nearby.



URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT NO. 3

Urban Renewal Project #3

Phase Three in Lansing's progression Urban Renewal Program will begin with an application to be submitted early in 1969 to the Federal Government, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, for approval of the overall project. Upon approval, surveying and planning may begin. The area in Project #3 encompasses nearly 108 acres of land. Of the 330 structures in the area more than 60% are substandard. They are almost equally divided between owner and renter-occupied. When completed, the section involved can provide a model setting for low, moderate and middle income homes, including apartments, shopping areas, business and commerate and is a stablishments.

Plans are being formed for the eventual removal of the White Motor Company from this area with the hope of its relocating within the Lansing community.

Project #3 is the most ambitious and far-reaching plan of Urban Development but it will fulfill the words expressed in the 1949 Federal Housing Act: "A decent home and suitable living environment for every American family."

Place: Woldumar: A Regional Outdoor Educational Center Classification: Preserve Resource Contact: David Cross Title: Project Instructor Address: 501 Chanticleer Lansing, Michigan

Phone: 372-2039

Description: Woldumar was donated to the Lansing area by Mrs R.E. Olds with the stipulation that this land was always to remain in its natural or wilderness state.

The Nature Ways Association, which developed this area, is didicated to the expansion and promotion of outdoor education.

Tours are provided for interested groups throughout the year. Camp Discovery, providing an outdoor education program, is run throughout the year. During the summer, courses are offered on a weekly basis to children of the Eaton-Ingham-Clinton counties.

World Conservation Day is observed each year, which twoday program for young people is dedicated to the conservation and preservation of natural resources of the country. Last year, 1,500 young people participated in this event.

Woldumar consists of 180 acres of prime cover. It is located off Waverly Road on old Highway 27 going west.

woldumar would be classed as a preserve, in that it is to remain in its natural state, eventually reverting to a

primeval or "climax" area,

Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries

Resourcd Contact: Mr. Raymond Guernsey Title: City Planner Address: City Hall

Phone: 372-5000

Information: At the present time Lansing is known to have one of the best park systems in the country. About 15% of its developed land area is for parksor for every one hundred people about 1.3 acres. It the population and growth of business were to stay the same as they are now, everything would be in order and proportion. However, more people are moving to Lansing yearly and the present amount of parks will be unable to handle all of the people. Therefore, perhaps it was with this in mind that convinced the lawmakers to adopt Act 285 of the Public Acts of Michigan which states that park recommendations must be reviewed to assure adaquacy especially in new subdivision plans. In the Lansing area 1. acres of park land for every 100 persons is proposed. Since the greatest area of growth of population seems to be in the south and west of the city, it is here that more parks are needed.

Following is a Table 39 of <u>Comprehensive Master Plan</u> for 1960-1980 by the City Planning Board, Lansing, Michigan, page 140.

Summary of Proposed Public Recreational Areas

FACILITIES	NO	C	TTY	OF	LANSING	**ACRES	
Play-Lots	3					2.0	
Neighborhood Parks						132.0	
and/or Playgrounds	3			,			
Elementary School							
with Playgrounds	34					251.6	
Playfields	3					29.9	
Junior Hish Schools	-					-101	
with Playfields	6					121.9	
Athletic Fields	4					60.2	
Senior High Schools	3					130.0	
with Playfields	1					27000	
Community Parks	4					265.7	
City-wide Parks	4					157.4	
	1					300.0	
Regional Park	1					187.0	
Riverside Park	Z						
Golf Courses	2					226,6	
TOTAL TOTAL	07			-	- 0 1.7.	1,864.3	
	50 50 M	200	2202	200	A 44 14 14 14	7007 0 C	8

Goals, values, and the needs of the people are the major considerations of city planners. With these in mind they work for a better community. Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries

Resource Contact: Mr. Ford Ceasar

Title: Historian of the Landing Area and Principal of High Street School Address: High Street School, 1717 North High Street Phone: 484-1389

Information: Länsing is a city rich in history and parks. One of the oldest parks, Reutter Park is located in the heart of downtown Lansing, across the street from the Lansing Public Library and just two blocks south of the State Capitol Building. During the life of the park its name has been changed several times. It has been known as Third Ward Park, Central Park, and now Reutter Park. Remaining in the downtown area this park offers a relaxing atmosphere in the midst of busy city life.

Other parks with interesting histories include Frances Park, Moores Park, Potter Park, Oak Park, and Sycamore Park. In more detail the land for both Frances Park and Moores Park was donated by the farseeing philanthropist J.H. Moores. It was at Mobres Park where Lansing's first zoo was located. Mr. James W, Potter gave the land for the present Potter Park about the time of World War One. Oak Park was first a cemetery. then a school site, and how a playground. Sycamore Park has always been a ball park and at one time hosted a grandatand. Parks, as people, are changing and their histories, as records of families, should be kept and preserved.

Recreation Highlights

Playground activitie

RHYTHMIC GAMES, HANDICEAFT, STOEIES TELLING, SPECIAL COMMUNITY EVENTS, OMMUNITY EVENING DANCES AND DAY CAMPS

55 Supervised Playgrounds

IN COOPERATION WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCITION, OPEN JUNE THEN AUGUST 12:30 - 830 MONDAY - FRIDAY

• PARK LOCATIONS • SCHOOL LOCATIONS

- · BANCEOFT
- BASSETT
- · CAVANAUGH
- · CLIFFORD
- · COMSTOCK
- DUNNEBACKE
- FERRIS
- · FILLEN · HULL COURT
- · HUNTER
- · INGHAM
- ·LARCH · MOORES
- ·OAK
- · 119 TH
- · PLEDSONT VIEN
- · POTTER_
- · POETER
- QUENTIN
- · REASONER
- . S. FOSTER
- · SCOTT
- · SEVENTH AVE
- · STABLER
- · ST. JOSEPH
- · WASHINGTON
- · WALSH

1965 SEASON

- · AVERILL
- · CHRISTIANICY
- · CUMBERLAND
- · OM HURST
- · EVERETT
- · FAIRVIEW
- · FOREST VIEW
- ·DIER
- · GEAND RIVER
- · HARLEY FRANK
- · HOLMES
- · HOESEBEOCK
- · KENDON
- · LONTON
- · LINCOUN
- ·LYONS
- · MAIN
- · MAPLE GEOVE
- · MICHIGAN AVE.
- . MT. HOPE . N. FOSTER
- · NORTH
- · NORTH WESTERN
- . 230
- · VERLINGEN
- · WAINMRIGHT
- · WILLOW

Resource Contact: Mr. Rusty Bowers

Title: Playground Director

Address: 2925 Cooley

Phone: 372-3421

Information: The Parks Department of the City of Lansing has sixty parks which have supervised recreation during the summer months. Both a male and female playground director are placed in each of these parks. Mr. Bowers is one of the directors of Lewton Park. Working from 12:30pm to 8:30 pm, Mr Bowers setsup a daily schedule of activities for the 40 to50 children who come to the park daily. A typical day may include softwall, early in the afternoon, crafts, free time, and ball practice for the various city leagues. Each park has a team that plays against other mearby park temms. At the end of the eight week season playoffs and championship games are held. The children in attendance at this park range in age form 5 to 14. They are formally registered at the beginning of the summer for precautionary reasons in case of an accident. Should one occure in the course of the day the child's parent and the park police are notified. Children who play in league games must have their parent's permission when they register.

The playground directors are in charge of the children who come to the park. They not only organize the games, but also participate in the games with the children. The children need and enjoy their leadership. Playground equipment is supplied by the Parks Department through five supervisors for the parks.

In summary, Mr Bowers feels that being a Playground Director is indeed a rewarding and enriching experience in learning Forest Parke Library and Archives - Capital Area District Libraries

Park: Sunnyridge Tot Lot

Classification: Playlot

Location: In various areas of Risdale Street Description: At the Sunnyridge Townhouses, a new low cost housing development, there are five areas, each about 60 square feet, with special cement playground equipment on them. Some of these cement objects are large turtles, a porpoise, and modern cement figures. These tot lots provide recreation areas for the children who live in the housing complex. Although such playgrounds are usually built for only small children, at Sunnyridge children up to junior high age seem to enjoy the playlots. Not only do these lots provide areas for fun and recreation, but they also act as a melting pot where the neighborhood children gather and get to know one another as well as learning how to get along with their neighbors.

No definite plans for additions to these tot lots have been voiced for the future.





Park: Clifford Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park Location: 600 East Mount Hope Avenue Description: Clifford Park, acquired in 1920, covers an area of 5.4 acres and is typical of the neighborhood parks of Lansing. The park is in a thickly populated area of MMM city and affords tennis, softball, and basketball playing. Several pieces of playground equipment are located on the east side of the park, as well as the picnic tables.

The day that this park was visited by the writer many small children were enjoying the playground facilities. Several mothers had brought lunches and all were enjoying the picnic tables. Boys were playing a softball game at the opposite end of the park, and a group of teen-agers had arrived by car to play tennis. It is a park that is evidently doing a good job in this area of meeting the demands of the people.

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Park: Durant Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Location: Bounded by North Washington, Capitol Avenue, West Saginaw, and Maple Streets.

Description: Durant Park, acquired in 1920, is one of the city's most attractive small parks situated in the downtown section of Lansing.

It was named as a monument to one of the 'Idea Men' who helped pioneer the automotive industry in the early 1900s. William Durant was known as the little man with a big brain and a world of daring who built better than even he realized. In 1921 his Durants and Stars were rolling off assembly lines, with more than 2,000 men on the payroll. In 1930 'Billy' Durant wwnt into receivership and the Lansing plant closed its doors to be taken over around 1936 by Fisher Body.

A formal garden grows in the center of this park, and a playlot for small children is located on the north side of the block. Benches are placed among the large shade trees, making this a lovely and restful area on a hot summer day.





Park: Ingham Park

<u>Classification:</u> Playground (Neighborhood Park) <u>Location:</u> Catherine Street and Fauna Avenue <u>Description:</u> A plot of land set aside in a large residential neighborhood. Ingham Park is a pleasant place to rest one's eyes from the sig-zag pattern of the city streets near it and to rest one's ears from the hum of traffic not far away on Mount Hope Avenue. During a quiet stroll through the park the writer heard many wild bird calls and was indeed surprised to see so much wildlife on an 11.8 acre plot of land in the city. The most amazing sight was that of a pair of pheasants not far from the park sign. Other interesting things in the park include a peaceful area for picnics, a delightful area of some standard and some unusual playground equipment, not to mention playfields for basketball, softball, and for winter fun a skating rink and warming shelter.

By 1971 a shelter is planned for Ingham Park. It will cost about \$20,000.00 and will be a covered area for picnics and other programs of the playground. Financing will come from general revenue from the city's general fund.







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Park: Oak Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Location: Enter west off the 600 block of North Pennsylvania Avenue Description: Oak Park, consisting of 18.3 acres, is the oldest park in the city of Lansing, having been acquired by the Lansing Township in 1852. It served as the cemetery until the 1870s, when it automatically became parkland with the removal of bodies to the new Mount Hope Cemetery at that time.

On the particular day that this park was observed by the writer, two park counselors were with several children, but there seemed to be little activity. Something about the general atmosphere of this park seems to betray its age--it needs a general sprucing up. Next year the city has allocated \$17,500 for a 'field office expansion' at this park with an additional \$15,000 to be used this year for general improvements over existing conditions. There is a sliding hill for winter activities along with a small warming shelter.







Park: Pleasant View Park

<u>Classification:</u> Playground (Neighborhood Park) <u>Location:</u> South Pleasant Grove Road <u>Description:</u> Edging the eastern end of the 7.5 acre Pleasant View Park is a wooded area used for picnics. This makes a quiet, restful place for a picnic set away from the noisy street. In front of this area are special places for softball, baseball, basketball, playground equipment, tennis, tetherball, and a warming shelter for skaters in the winter. Although Pleasant View Park is adjacent to the Pleasant View School this park has been owned by the city since 1959 and is open the year around for all people of the surrounding neighborhoods to use and enjoy.

In the future citizans can look forward to the plans of a Pleasant View Center which will be used by all people in South West Lansing for various kinds of recreation. The \$100,334.00 cost of the center will be financed through General Obligation Bonds which the city will buy back from the bonds sold and through Federal Open Space Funds whose money is used for aduiring and developing potential recreation sites and opering recreation sites.







Park: Covanaugh Park

<u>Classification:</u> Playground (Neighborhood fark) <u>Description:</u> Cavanaugh Park is located in the 5.0 acres next to the Cavanaugh School. Not all of this park is developed now; moreover, some of the land seems unused. However, the portion that is used provides areas for bassstball, picnics, play equiptment, softball, and tetherbill. An interesting variation of the playground is the partially sheltered area for picnics and games. This area is part of the school building itself.

There are no changes in the city budget for this park in the near future.



Park: Comstock Park

Classification: Playfield (Includes Athletic Field) Location: Princeton Avenue north off the 1000 block of West Saginaw

Description: Comstock Park is strictly a year-round play and recreation center for young people. It is connected on the north with the State School for the Blind. It features both summer and winter facilities, an attractive pavilion, which serves in the winter as a warming shelter, excellent ball fields, and as a special feature provides a golf school center.

As it serves a high-density area, the facilities offered are designed to keep young people occupied in a wide variety of sports and recreation.





Park: Everett Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park (Playfield)

Location: East Holmes Road

Description: Although its size of 3.0 acres scarcely fits it into the Neighborhood Park category, the services Everett Park offers answers the description. Located almost at the eastern end of Holmes Road, Everett Park has areas for baseball(both day and night), football, and skating in the winter. A warming shelter is also fouri in the park. The park seems to be very popular and well used as there were four ball games going on at the time the witter visited the park.

30.

By 1970 the city plans to spend some \$50,000.00 for improving the present Everett Park facilities and its lighting.





Park: Hunter Park

Classification: Playfield (Includes Athletic Field) Location: 1400 East Kalamazoo Street

Description: Hunter Park is located in a densely populated area of Lansing and owes much of its popularity to the fact that it possesses one of the two public swimming pools in Lansing. On the day the writer visited this park it was at once apparent that of all the facilities available for the youngsters, as well as for some 'mons', the pool was the main attraction. There was a waiting line for boys and one for girls of approximately 200 children who would have to wait for nearly an hour before their turns to use the pool. There was by far a greater concentration of children at this swimming pool than at any other park facility observed by the writer. Therefore, it was with some satisfaction that the writer found, by looking through the Capital Improvement Program, that construction will begin in 1972 on two new pools: one at Wainwright Park, and the other at Kendon Park. It was with somewhat less satisfaction that the writer noted that of all four pools serving Lansing, not one would be north of Michigan Avenue. It is presumed that a satisfactory answer can be given for this apparent oversight of these low-income high-density minority-group areas.

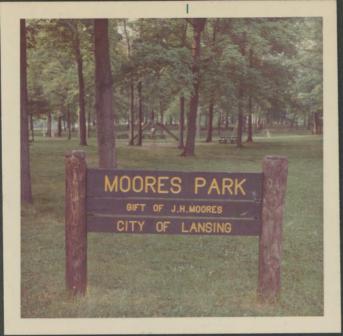


Park: Marshall Park

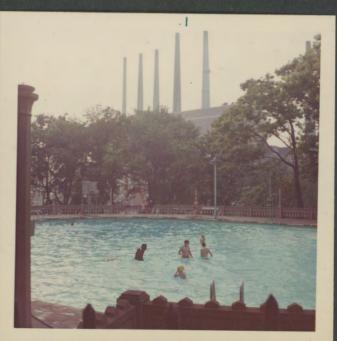
Classification: Playfield (Includes Athletic Field) Location: 1600 block between East Grand River Avenue and East Saginaw.

Description: Marshall Park, acquired in 1940, is the typical playfield as its facilities include only athletic areas such as softball, baseball, football, basketball and tetherball. Although it does not feature a lighted ballfield the park is used heavily during the day by both little league and adult teams. In 1971, the City Improvement Program will expand the bleachers at this park, for which \$7,200 has been allocated.

The ground-level of this area at one time was much lower that it is today. The writer recalls that in the 1930s, when there was a distinct separation of populated areas between Lansing and East Lansing, what is now Marshall Park was used as a dump by the city of Lansing. It is much pleasanter to look upon today, and serves the avid ballplayers well.







Park: Moores Park

Classification: Playfield

Location: East Moores River Drive

Description: The 22.4 arres of Moores Park were given to the city of Lansing in 1910 by J.E.Moores. One of Lansing's most versatile parks, Moores Park offers special spots for basketball, lighted shuffleboard, softball, tennis, tetherball, and picnic grounds. A pavilion is provided for picnics, also. Walking down the chip-covered steep hill at Moores Park makes one think of the fun this hill provides in the winter for sledding. Not only is this park located on the banks of the Grand River, but it also has another attraction of special feature--a swimming pool. One might choose to swim or watch the fun in the pool from the bleechers at one end of the pool.

In the future for Moores Park, the park picnic pavilion is planned to be renovated at the cost of \$35,000.00. This project is planned to be finished by the year 1970. The money for this project is financed from general revenew which comes from the general fund of the city budget. Another change in the park will come by 1971 when \$9.000.00 is spent, also from general revenew, for improving various facilities of recreation in the present park.





Park: Ranney Park

Classification: Playfield (Includes Athletic Field) Location: 3300 East Michigan Avenue

Description: Ranney Park is a long, narrow park situated at the extreme east side of the city and consists of 18.4 acres. It has several well-kept tennis courts, which always seem to be in use, perhaps because of their proximity to Michigan State University dormitories. This is the only park that provides facilities for archery, and one of the three which feature a lighted softball field. It also supports a concession stand which demonstrates the popularity of the night softball games during the summer months.

34







Park: Risdale Park

Classification: Playfield

LocationL: Pleasant Grove and Risdale Street Description: Risdale Park is a park of the future. It comprises a total of 18 acres and is now in its beginning construction stage. Work began on this park just a few weeks ago. Lund had to be leveled and a swamp covered in the earliest stages of work. After the ground dries out again grating will continue to smooth out the ground and then it will be planted. The date of completion has not been set.

Following is a very rough sketch of the future plan for Risdale Park: (The cost will be about \$11,000,00) Risdale Street

15 carparking

Softball

5091211

nic

Play Area

Picnic AND Play

Footbell

35.

Commun

parling for 100 card Harl surface

used for

Velley ball lasket boll

Korseshees

PLAXArea

lihen Not

used for

parking

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AreA AND Tot Lot Center

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Grove

Parking

100 CAYS

for

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100

Softkall





Park: Washington Park

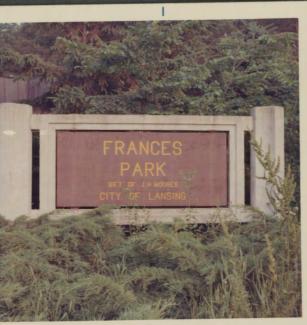
<u>Classification:</u> Playfield (Including Athletic Field) <u>Description:</u> Even though it seems long and narrow, Washington Park covers 44.0 acres. It was aquired by the city of Lansing in 1942. Perhaps its shape lends well to what is offered in the park: areas for baseball, basketball, football, a nature trail, picnic areas and pavilion, playground equiptment, softball, tetherball, and skating on a rink in the winter. The park is spacious and the areas are will placed, not crowding each other.

36.

In the future Washington Park will have a \$35,000,00 softball diamond to replace the lighted one at Miller Road. Plans say that this project is expected to be completed by 1971. Tennis courts and parking gacilities will be added for \$10,000.00 between the years of 1972 to 1974.











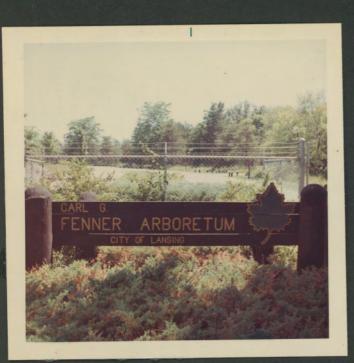
Park: Frances Park

<u>Classification:</u> Ornamental Area of Special Park <u>Location:</u> West Moores River Drive

Description: Frances Park is one of Lansing's oldest, largest, and most unusual parks. In 1918 J.H. Moores endowed the 57.8 acres now known as Frances Park to Lansing. This area given in honor of his wife, Frances, now hosts several rose gardens as its special feature. Dozens of varieties of roses grow in the neatly organized, well labeled, shrub enclosed area known as the Rose Garden. Two circles of roses are found in the parking lot of the rose garden, giving a hint of the beauty to be found just a few steps away. Adjacent to the Rose Garden is aromantic fairland park with precisely trimmed bushes, shrubs, and trees. The eye-soothing color of green is the main color in this formal garden contrasting and blending its various shades. On each end of this long fairyland garden is an arbor. To the east the arbor is shaded by trees and is circular with benches for resting and absorbing the beauty around the viewer. At the western end of this formal garden is a vine covered arbor with a special spot for viewing the Grani River. Flowers and flowering shrubs occasionally dot the edges of this breathtaking garden. Picnic areas, a large playfield for games, and a pavilion for indoor eating are also part of Frances Park.

37

No additions or changes are in site for this park in the near future.











Park: Fenner Arboretum

Classification: Parkways, Special Park Location: East Mount Hope Avenue

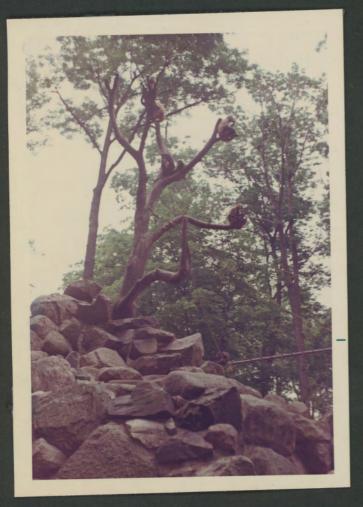
Description: An arboretum-Webster says an arboretum is "1. a place where many kinds of trees and shrubs are grown for exibition or study; hence 2. a wooded public park." No better word can describe Fenner Park or Fenner Arboretum for one of the reasons this 120 acres of land was set aside was perhaps because of the great number of kinds of trees, about 168 species of birds, 14 kinds of animals, from chipmunks to foxes, and 10 kinds of turtles are all found in this three mile area! The answer to why so many kinds of plants, animals, and birds are found in this area is that the land now known as Fenner Arboretum is a unique habitat containing a swamp forest, woodlots, a bog, and uplands, each one offering its own ecological make-up to the total confines of the Park. Not only was the land of such ecological value, but the price of it was indeed low for such a plot of land. The cost was a mere \$40,000. The man respondsible for obtaining of this land is Carl Fenner who is now a retired Director of Parks of Lansing.

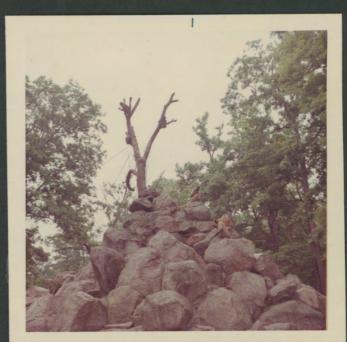
The unique habitats and ecological zones of the park can be studied by taking hikes through the Arboretum. Four nature trails are found and maps may be obtained to enrich the hiker's trip. A Nature Science Building found in the park also serves as a museum of specimens of wild life, both dead and living. The Prairie Exhibit shows several examples of animals that live on a prairie from prairie dogs to Texas longhorns and Bison. The writer feels she could go on for pages describing all there is to see and learn from the Fenner Arboretum, but these are just words that give word pictures in one's mind. A person may see for himself by taking a picnic to one of the picnic areas inside the park, touring the park by car, and taking at least one of the nature hikes. School classes may also tour the Arboretum throughout the school year at presently no charge. (Last year alone some 11,500 children went to the Fenner Arboretum for science studies.) A wealth of fun and learning awaits the visitor of the Park.

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Fark: Potter Fark

Location: 1301 South Pennsylvania

Classification: Special Fark

Description: Fotter Fark is not only the largest park in Lansing proper, but is also one of the oldest, dating back to 1915.

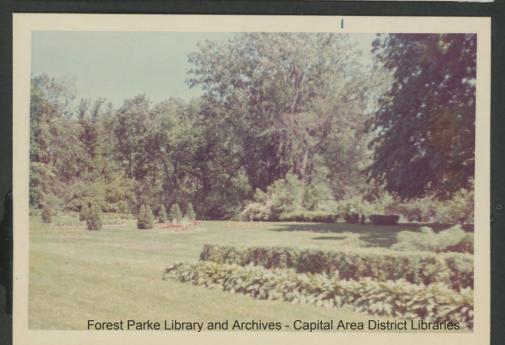
39.

The one hundred and two acres contain a zoo, pony rides, play facilities, indoor and outdoor picnic areas, a concession stand, and flower gardens. It is a scenic park as the south boundary follows the Grand River; in contrast, the north is bounded by the Grand Trunk Railroad.

There have been two major building periods during the fifty year history of the zoo. At the time of early development of the park a large animal building was erected, and in the 1930s the works Project Administration built the aviary. outdoor monkey containment, and outdoor facilities for small animals. A large area has been fenced off for elk, buffalo, lamas, and goats.

On the yellow tile and sterile concrete of zoo cages the male lion paces endlessly back and forth the full twelve feet the length of his cage permits. The tiger, known for power and beauty, walks around his cage with flaccid muscles. The pig-tailed macaque stares back at the spectator with bored and unseeing eyes as the fingers of his left hand





pick listlessly at the fingers of his right hand. These animals, all so alert and vitally alive in their native state, have been reduced to virtual neurosis in their bare, naked cages, outmoded so many years ago by modern zoologists. This mental and physical cruelty to the creatures of the 'big house' is the one, but shameful, blot on the Lansing Parks system.

40.

The City Improvements Program has recommended three projects for Potter Park during the years 1969-1974: a hay and grain barn at \$10,000; a contact area for children to touch animals at \$18,000; and a park train at \$40,000. This amounts to \$68,000 for park improvements during the next five years and not once cent or one recommendation has even been suggested for improving the facilities of the large cats and monkeys in their antiquated cages. It would seem to the writers that if park planning is concerned about developing facilities to attract the public to Potter Park, as the above indicates, it would do well to first appropriate money to make improvements realistic and humane.





Park: Reutter Park

Classification: Ornamental Area

Location: Capitol Avenue and Kalamazoo Street Description: The downtown 3.0 acre Reutter Park was aquired by the city of Lansing in 1878. This park is the second eldest park in Lansing. Located just two blocks south of our State Capitol Building, Reutter Park offers a restful area of greⁿ trees and grass with a large lighted fountain as the crowof the park. A bisy shopper or student may rest for a time on one of the benches or on the grass in this lovely old park and watch the spray from the fountain shoot toward the sky.

No changes in the near future are foreseen for Reutter Park.





Park: Shubel Park

Classification: Nature Trails and Greenhouse Location: 1500 East Mount Hope Avenue Description: Shubel Park is unique among the rest of the parks in the Lansing area: It maintains a greenhouse, and furnishes flowers and plants to the cemeteries, golf courses and other parks in the system. It covers an area of fiftyfive avres, with Sycamore Creek winding through it.

42.

with the exception of that land used for maintaining the garden and greenhouses, the remainder is used for nature trails. With the expansion of the city this park contains valuable land for developing other facilities, in the future. An appropriation of \$8,000 has been recommended for 1971 to expand and improve the greenhouse facilities.





Park: Bancroft Park

Classification: Large Park

Location: Otto Street off 1400 North Brand Street Description: Bancroft Park was acquired in 1920 and consists of 442 acres of land. It runs parallel, north and south, to the Groesbeck Golf Course and is connected at the southern boundary to Ormond Park, which contains 8.8 acres, and at the northwest boundary to Porter Park, which contains 7 acres. The entire complex thus becomes a sizable area of 175.2 acres.

45.

Bancroft Park provides both a skating rink and sliding hill, as well as a warming shelter, to be enjoyed during the winter months. There is a softball lot, basketball court and tether ball area. Playground equipment for younger children as well as a picnic area, a fire circle and rest rooms also provided.

A nice feature, depending upon one's point of view, is the fact that by being rather long and narrow the picnic tables are peacefully situated some distance away from the recreation area! Large shade trees and a rolling terrace give this park a most pleasant atmosphere.









Park: Grand Goods Park

Classification: Large Park

Location: west from the 1300 block of North Waverly to the end of Barton Drive.

44

Description: Grand woods Park covers an area of 139 acres and is scenically situated on the east side of the Grand River as it flows out of the Lansing area northwest of the city. It was acquired in 1939 at a time when few houses were situated in this area. Presently it is surrounded by beautiful residential areas.

On the day this park was visited, three parks instructors were conducting recreation for young groups. One young man was involved in a softball game, a young lady was conducting a story-telling session and another was getting a group of youngsters ready to start on one of the nature trails. The youngsters participating in these activities are bussed in from the Lansing area, and are able to participate in the many continuous summer programs including camping skills, first aid, sports, and outdoor wood lore, to mention a few. This park serves a special function by getting children from the inner city out to enjoy and learn about the wonderful world of nature.





Park: Scott Woods Park

Classification: Large Park

Location: South of the 1300 block of East Mount Hope Avenue to the end of Clifton Avenue

Description: Scott Woods Park provides an opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors through its nature trails which cover an area of seventy acres. It lies southwest of the Nount Hope Cemetery, and is an area of unmolested beauty. Sycamore Creek winds its way through the park and adjoining cemetery before joining with the Red Cedar at Sycamore and Potter Parks, and eventually with the Grand River at East Main Street.

The Park System has provided a peaceful cleared picnic area with outdoor barbecue equipment, and also a fire circle. This park is one of the most unique as far as outdoor beauty and would be especially enjoyable in the spring and fall of the year, as a family park for picnicking and outdoor walks.

Conclusion

With a fleeting glance the observer may see that the city of Lansing has a great number of parks. From their study the writers feel that they have discovered where some of the major parks are found and discussed them. The writers have studied such parks as Fenner Arboretum, Frances Park, Grand Woods Park, and a nature study area as Woldumar and found that Lansing had some farseeing philanthropists and citizans interested in preserving the beauty of nature as created by God and unspoiled by man. These people were respondsible for much of the comeliness in the Lansing area today. Careful evaluation, study, and planning as well as cooperation from the Parks Department, City Planners, and Redevelopers are only parts of the city's park system. These people plan and recommend what should be done to improve the recreational areas in the city, but the final decisions rest on City Council for what will be done in, with, or for parks in Lansing.

46.

The writers found that there are some flaws in Lansing's parks as the outdated large animal building at Potter Park. No improvements or changes are planned for at least the next five years because of the lack of funds. A zoological society could do much in the area of gathering funds and working to build modern spacious facilities for these deprived animals.

Even though time did not permit further study of more parks the writers feel that their discoveries are of great value to them in making them better informed citizans of the Lansing

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Points of Special Interest

- . ZOO AT POTTER PARK
- · RIVER OVERLOOK AT FRANCES PARK
- GARDENS, POTTER & FRANCES
- · LIGHTED FOUNTAIN AT REUTTER PARK
- . "LITTLE ARLINGTON" MEMORIAL AT EVERGREEN CEMETERY
- · OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOLS AT MOORES & HUNTER PARKS
- FORMAL ROSE GARDENS AT FRANCES & COOLEY GARDENS
- BOAT LAN, DING AT GRAND RIVER PARK
- NATURE CENTER AT FENNER
 AREORETUM
- NATURE TRAILS AT SCOTT WOODS, PRIGGOORIS & FENNER ARBORETUM

• TOTEM POLE REPLICE 50' HIGH AT FENNER AREORETUM

"Parks Serve The Whole Community"

area and will be to the children they teach as they make them aware of the beauty found near them in parks as well as the reasons for parks and the proceedures behing the Lansing Park System.

The City Of Lansing has ...

. TO PARKS TOTALING OVER 1450 ACRES • 350 MILES OF BEAUTIFULLY KEPT SHADE TREES GOLF 4 COURSES - 317.5 ACRES 55 SUPERVISED PLAYGROUNDS . 25.1 MILES OF RIVER FRONTAGE UNDER PARK BOARD JURISDICTION 5 MILES OF NATURE TRAILS . FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

CONTACT THE PARK BOARD CITY HALL LANSING, MICHIGAN 48933 372-5000

47.

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