



 **OAKLAND**
COUNTY PARKS

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

GREAT PARKS FOR GREAT PEOPLE

ANNUAL REPORT CONTENTS

1. Pics of the Parks Finalists
2. Chairman's Message
3. Fun Business starts with Strategic planning
4. Residents value trails, nature centers and the farmers market
5. SE families love the outdoors
Series takes recreation on the road
6. Making guests feel at home is award-winning idea
7. Six staff honored for saving a life
Protecting the Massasauga Rattlesnake in Oakland County
8. Keeping Freshwater Resources Clean
Grants score bullseye for recreation
9. At-Risk youth experience first campfire
County fair 'must see' annual tradition
10. Golf courses debut food & beverage service
Controlling invasive Swallowwort in natural areas
11. Safety path increases community walkability
Never Underestimate the Power of Imagination
12. New Twin Chimney dock increases access for all
ORV Park gets the green light
13. Yurt debuts on Cottage Island
By the Numbers
14. Awards & Accolades
Making Lemonade from Lemons

Pics of the Parks Finalists

Detroit Radio Personality Spike, of Channel 95.5's Mojo in the Morning Show, chose "Sunset on the Lake" taken at Independence Oaks County Park by Wai Nguyen of Troy as Best of Show in the 2017 Pics of the Parks Photo Contest, featured on the front cover.

"This year's entries reflected so many great recreational uses of the parks, showing park visitors enjoying the vast array of activities and events offered by the parks system. The image I chose – Sunset on the Lake – highlights the real star attraction – nature.

This photo perfectly captures the serene lake, a beautiful sunset and the peaceful surroundings. The photographer used the leading lines of the stairs to pave an easy path to guide the eye upwards and inwards to the beckoning picnic bench on the dock – it makes me want to visit this park!" Spike said.

Spike is an avid photographer. His work can be viewed at BuzzClickPhotography.com



Eastern Kingbird
Rob Craig
Parks Category



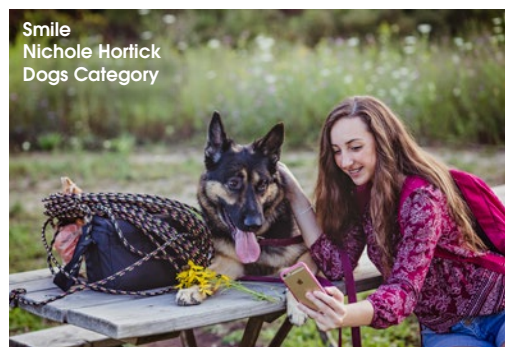
Focus
Martha Myers
Recreation Category



Cowboys
Kathy Rollins
Artistic Category



Little Barrel Racer
Kathy Rollins
Kids Category



Smile
Nichole Hortick
Dogs Category

Forty-six photographers submitted a record 146 images in this year's Pics of the Parks Photo Contest. The winners received mounted prints of their photos, which were on display at the Oakland County Executive Office Building. All photo entries can be viewed online at OaklandCountyParks.SmugMug.com.

THE STATE OF OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION 2017

Oakland County has done a fabulous job of serving its residents, businesses, and property owners! Consistently, when regional and state conditions are reported, Oakland County is doing an exceptional job at looking at present circumstances, and reaching out into the future, and then shaping County programs and initiatives that conform to needs and desires. County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Board of Commissioners Chair Mike Gingell have set a high bar.

It's important for Oakland County Parks and Recreation to follow this lead. Clearly, parks and recreation facilities represent an important element in the total picture of "the County," having the potential to make important contributions to the quality of County life and prosperity. A few examples are relevant in this regard. First, parks and recreation has the potential of impacting fitness and health. Surveys of County residents report that they love to get onto County park trails during all four seasons. Hiking and cross-country skiing is enjoyed by individuals, families, and other groups, and is great for physical fitness and health. I can report that being out in the natural environment provided in our parks is also great for

mental health – the perfect getaway into a fresh environment that invigorates and recharges the mind and spirit for all the things our residents do in their busy lives.

Numerous programs are provided by County Parks and Recreation that are embraced by young and old alike. Our larger regional parks have been the focal point of extremely popular activities such as competitions for those with special needs. In addition, our "Southeast Oakland Strategy" has energized the opportunities in numerous communities, including, as examples only: the annual Marshmallow Drop in Southfield that attracted some 10,000 participants this year, HomeTown Harvest held at Red Oaks Nature Center in Madison Heights had approximately 1,200 attendees and Trick or Trees also held at Red Oaks Nature Center drew approximately 800 attendees.

The Parks and Recreation Commission also feels a responsibility to play a strong part in County economic development. In our world of mobility, attracting and retaining employees and businesses in the County is certainly impacted by the availability of parks and recreation programs, as well as environmental beauty. Grasping this responsibility has led the Parks and Recreation Commission to survey not only residential users of our facilities

and programs, but to also reach out to our business community to learn what we can do to enhance our role in County economic development.

We look to all of our regular parks and recreation users, and to all those who have not yet taken advantage of our resources, to help us make your parks and recreation experiences the best in the nation, providing *Great Parks for Great People*.



Gerald A. Fisher

Oakland County Parks and Recreation
Commission Chairman

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Fisher".

✓ 2017 Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission
A. David Baumhart III, Jim Nash, Gary R. McGillivray, Vice Chairman
J. David VanderVeen, Chairman Gerald A. Fisher, Secretary Ron Fowkes,
Christine Long, Hugh D. Crawford, Robert E. Kostin and David W. Potts.

The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission was established by Public Act 261 of 1965. Founded in 1966, the commission is the policy-making board that oversees the system's 6,700 acres. Commissioners are tasked with allocating resources throughout 13 parks and making decisions about purchasing

park land, constructing facilities, preserving maintenance standards and developing innovative programs and services.

Oakland County Parks, programs, services and facilities are made possible by millage funds supported by Oakland County residents. For a home valued at \$200,000, the homeowner pays less than \$25/year to support Oakland County Parks and Recreation.



The 'Fun Business' starts with strategic planning

In 2007, the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission began a strategic planning process with the purpose of defining the role of Oakland County Parks and Recreation as a regional recreation provider.

That process continues with the Five-Year Park and Recreation Master Plan 2018-2022 ("Recreation Plan"), which has been drafted and will be approved in early 2018. The Recreation Plan is designed to guide the staff and Parks and Recreation Commission over the next five years as Oakland County Parks and Recreation continues to provide high-quality recreation experiences to the residents of Oakland County. With this update of the Recreation Plan, OCPR reaffirms its dedication to its mission and to align its goals and objectives with the needs of Oakland County residents, the status of recreation in the county, and trends in recreation both statewide and nationally.

A guiding element for the Recreation Plan is a recreational survey of Oakland County residents conducted in summer 2017. The responses indicated that residents remain very supportive of the parks and recreation services provided by Oakland County Parks and Recreation. Staff also learned about newer recreational opportunities on which to focus in 2018-2022. The survey responses showed support for maintaining and fixing up older facilities and structures throughout the parks system and placed a high priority on beaches, trails, nature centers, canoe and kayak launch sites, picnicking areas and playgrounds.

Key elements of the Five-Year Park and Recreation Master Plan include: be fiscally sustainable; communicate effectively; enhance communities; improve access; manage assets and infrastructure; and protect natural resources. Initiatives and successes of these guiding principles are highlighted in the 2017 Annual Report: *Great Parks for Great People*.



Trails are the number one reason people visit the Oakland County Parks. The system offers more than 70 miles of paved and natural trails for walking, jogging, skating, biking and equestrian riding. In 2017, a trail project at Waterford Oaks County Park replaced 312 linear feet of boardwalk.



Residents value trails, nature centers and the farmers market

In July and August, Oakland County Parks and Recreation worked with a national survey company, ETC Institute, to complete a county-wide Community Needs Assessment Survey. A similar survey was last completed in 2010. The survey results provide staff and the commission with data on recreational needs, preferences, and importance within Oakland County. This data helps the Parks and Recreation Commission prioritize projects and programs throughout the 13-park system.

As in previous surveys, trails continue to be one of the highest-ranking priorities for county residents. Residents also place strong value on beaches, nature centers, canoeing and kayaking, picnicking areas and playgrounds.

In terms of programs, Farmers Market programs ranked highest in importance to county residents.

“Since assuming operation of the farmers market in 2012 we’ve been thrilled with the response from our patrons to the various programs and activities we’ve hosted,” Jeremy Brown, Market Manager, said. “Not only can you get your fresh, local produce, but you can also learn something new or participate in a fun activity with your kids.”

County residents are also very interested in adult fitness and wellness programs, community festivals, and food truck rallies. The developing 2018-2022 Recreation Master Plan will reflect these results and include goals and actions to participate in and/or facilitate more of this type of programming in the county.

Oakland County Parks naturalist staff are dedicated to “growing the green minds of tomorrow” in our nature centers, parks, and community. Red Oaks and Wint Nature Centers offer immersive nature education programs all year round.



Oakland County Farmers Market Manager Jeremy Brown visited the Cranbrook Early Childhood Center with Vanhoutte Farms and Greystone Garden to help with a lettuce-planting activity and teach children how food grows.



SE Michigan families love the outdoors

Partnering with Skidmore Studio of Detroit, Oakland County Parks and Recreation set out to discover how people hear about the parks system, what activities they enjoy and how to improve its messaging.

The Brand Strategy and Identity Project revealed most people get their information from social media and word of mouth via family and friends. People like to visit clean, quiet parks that are close to their home and do basic activities like walk, bike, picnic and play with their kids.

Resident and business leaders surveyed want to know more about the Oakland County Farmers Market, the Wint and Red Oaks Nature Centers and the system's 70+ miles of trails for hiking, walking and bike riding.

"It's clear from survey results that our nearly 2 million annual visitors enjoy spending time outdoors with family and friends," Executive Officer Dan Stencil said.

"Our mission now is to refine how our social media and park and event information is distributed so people have the information they need to make decisions about how to spend their leisure time."

A recommendation was given to change the OCPR logo, but the Parks Commission and staff recommended keeping the current logo for cost savings.



"At the end of the day, we would rather take the \$400,000-\$500,000 cost to change the logo on all our signs, mobile units, uniforms and other collateral and put it towards something the public can enjoy like new trails, facility upgrades and more programming," Stencil said.

"We want to live the brand message, 'Great Parks for Great People' and create those experiences for our guests."

Series takes recreation on the road

The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Mobile Recreation Department delivered recreation to thousands of children via its Come Out and Play Series.

Come Out and Play included six special events which entertained children with inflatables, a zip line, games, a climbing tower, face painting and interactive nature touch tables. Events took place at Independence Oaks County Park in Clarkston, Clawson City Park, City of Southfield Civic Center, Shepard Park in Oak Park and two events at Catalpa Oaks County Park in Southfield, one held during the day and one in the evening.

"Our Come Out and Play series is a great way to provide a fun day filled with bouncing, splashing, and zipping for free," Brandy Boyd, Chief of Recreation Program and Services, said. "Through this outreach initiative, we can take the parks to the people and showcase what Oakland County Parks and Recreation offers. At each event, we usually see 700-900 participants."

The zip line and climbing tower are definitely a hit, according to John Haney, Recreation Program Supervisor. "Without this program many kids wouldn't have access to these experiences," he said.





Photo:
Oakland University

Making guests feel at home is an award-winning idea

*"Parks staff is always
extremely kind and helpful with
our unique population."*

*"Oakland County Parks and
Recreation has gone above and
beyond by having OUCARES
offer autism training for their
staff to help them understand the
disability and equip them with
helpful strategies and techniques
to effectively work with
our campers."*

OUCARES Director
Kristin L. Rohrbeck

Learning to recognize characteristics of autism spectrum disorder and how to communicate effectively with visitors with autism was a unique training program parks supervisory staff embraced to make all visitors feel welcome.

The training provided by Oakland University's Center for Autism, known as OUCARES, won the 2017 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties. The novel idea also won Best in Category and was named to NACo's 100 Brilliant Ideas at Work.

Each summer OUCARES hosts a camp at Independence Oaks County Park for youth to experience the outdoors and socialize at parks.

OCPR has also partnered with mParks to provide inclusive customer service workshops statewide to parks and recreation professionals.



Dock Entrance
Vickie Johnson
Pics of the Parks



Lake
Jacob Schenten
Pics of the Parks



Mr Belveder's Big Smile
Jon Olszowy
Pics of the Parks



Six staff honored for saving a life

Saving a child's life was all the reward six lifeguards needed when they pulled an unconscious 11-year-old boy from the water at Red Oaks Waterpark in June.

"The lifeguards performed a save and followed the emergency action plan. This is why we train so diligently," Parks Supervisor Matt Parry said. "Every single guard said they were just doing their job."

Lifeguards Rebecca Dorey, Joe Heaton, Sam Kuzina, Dillon Lemond, Zach Owczarzak, and Joshua Turner were honored with the Lifeguard in Action Award from Ellis & Associates. They were also recognized by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission and Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson.

"The Lifeguard in Action Award is given to lifeguards who positively contribute to the efforts of saving a life. We look to highlight individuals who either performed

OCPR employs 100 lifeguards to monitor the aquatic safety of 215,000 annual visitors at two waterparks and one beach.



exceptionally well or went above and beyond to get the positive outcome," Luke Martinez of Ellis & Associates, said. "We do not give these awards out very often, which I think adds to the meaningfulness."

To credit the entire lifeguard staff, OCPR dedicated July is National Park and Recreation Month in their honor. OCPR has received the Ellis & Associates International Aquatic Safety Award for exceptional safety annually since 2010.

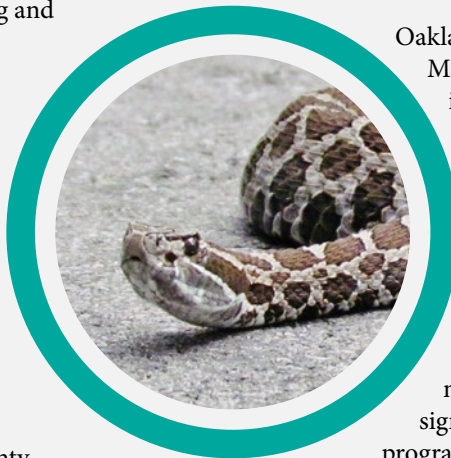
Protecting the Massasauga Rattlesnake in Oakland County

A little-known inhabitant of Oakland County Parks is Michigan's only venomous snake, the federally threatened Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. This unique species has experienced a 53% decline in populations. Threats to the Massasauga include habitat loss, fragmentation, road mortality, killing and collection, snake fungal disease, and incompatible land management practices. Despite these threats, Oakland County remains a relative stronghold for the rattlesnakes which have been documented at seven of the 13 Oakland County Parks, with breeding populations occurring at two parks.

In 2016, the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission partnered with the Oakland County Aviation Division and Oakland County Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division

to enter into a voluntary conservation agreement to protect the Eastern Massasauga on all county lands managed by these departments. This agreement, known as a Certificate of Inclusion to the Eastern Massasauga Conservation Candidate Agreement with Assurances, requires the Oakland County departments to commit to a conservation program for the Massasauga.

In exchange, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service provide formal assurances that the participating county departments will not face new restrictions or prohibitions should unintended or unforeseen harm come to the snakes on enrolled Oakland County lands, provided all agreed-upon conservation measures are in place.



Oakland County Parks' Eastern Massasauga conservation program includes best land management practices such as proper seasonal timing of prescribed burns, mowing, and herbicide application that limit potential impact to rattlesnakes. In addition, OCPR's Natural Resources and Recreation Program Services staff implement public education and outreach measures including interpretive signage and dog-owner education programs to protect the snakes.

Keeping Freshwater Resources Clean

Seasonal rainfall keeps park forests lush, prairies blooming, and lakes full. But when rain falls on built infrastructure and impervious, paved surfaces in and around parks, it can produce runoff water that mobilizes pollutants such as motor oil, fertilizer, salt, and sediment. In most cases, this stormwater flows directly to water bodies through storm sewer systems, contributing a major source of pollution to lakes, streams and rivers.

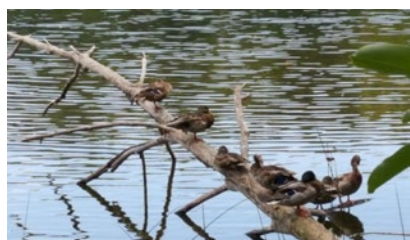
Stormwater discharges in Michigan are regulated through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.


Oakland County Parks and Recreation is a member of the Oakland County Water Resource Commissioner's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Initiative, which identifies the actions Oakland County takes to protect and restore its lakes, rivers and streams. These actions include public education, illicit discharge elimination, watershed-based planning, and facility good housekeeping practices.

This year, OCPR began tracking stormwater pollution prevention good housekeeping practices with an annual Stormwater Pollution


Prevention Inspection that verifies preventive measures and an annual Stormwater Infrastructure Inspection. Beginning in fiscal year 2018, Parks Facilities Maintenance will earmark up to \$20,000 to support prioritized maintenance of parks stormwater infrastructure.

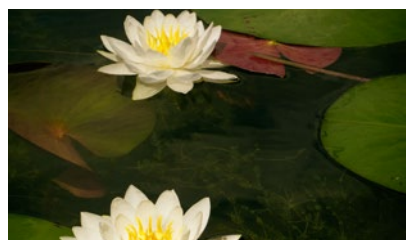
OCPR will also ensure stormwater pollution prevention through a number of additional initiatives, including no-mow zones and 13 designated native vegetation swales which help filter stormwater from park parking lots and other built infrastructure areas.



 *Birds On The Lake*
Nancy Arco
Pics of the Parks



 *Mr. Froggy*
Toni Rose Arceno
Pics of the Parks



 *Deux*
Gloria Boddy
Pics of the Parks

Grants score bullseye for recreation

Thanks to state and local grants, Oakland County Parks and Recreation will add an archery range to Independence Oaks County Park with programming to start in spring 2018.

The range will be available for introductory lessons, programming for summer camps, badge programs, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, groups using Camp Wilderness and family programs at the park. Supervised open range time will be considered in the near future.

OCPR received a \$4,000 grant through mParks, the Michigan Recreation and Park Association, in partnership with USA Archery, receiving 15 bows, 10 dozen arrows, five targets and maintenance supplies.

The Clarkston Area Optimist Club also supported the project with a \$6,800 grant. The funds were used for lumber, rope and guidewire, as well as additional equipment.





At-risk youth experience their first campfire

Wild Adventures Day Camp for 28 at-risk youth was envisioned by Antonio Martin, a man born and raised in the City of Detroit. Martin, a talented football player recruited to play professionally, was shot five years ago while working as a bouncer. As a result he is permanently paralyzed and uses a wheelchair.

Martin's dream to create a camping experience for kids came true when he teamed up with Brian Sheridan of

Arcangeles USA and Oakland County Parks and Recreation. "Martin's objective was to show the possibilities and opportunities outside of the city, in an environment he and others would normally never see," Sheridan said.

"The looks on these kids' faces spoke volumes to the camp's success."

At Independence Oaks County Park, the youth were treated to fishing, nature

interpretation, a hike, dinner over a campfire, crafts, a pontoon boat ride on Crooked Lake and more.

"I overheard a child ask, 'what's that smell' and she was referring to the campfire burning," Chief of Recreation Program and Services Brandy Boyd said. "Her comment was heartbreaking because every child should experience the outdoors. It made our efforts invaluable to these kids."



Photo:
Josh Bowren
Media Network of Waterford



County fair 'must see' annual tradition

The annual Oakland County Fair provides a glimpse into the county's agricultural history. Maybe it's that nostalgia, or the excitement of the carnival, rodeo, monster trucks, Miracle of Birth Barn newborn animals and elephant ears, that churn out record attendance. More than 106,000 people attended the 10-day fair that started with fireworks and ended with a corn hole tournament on the grounds of Springfield Oaks County Park.



Mmmm
Nichole Hortick
Pics of the Parks

Golf courses debut food & beverage service

10



Oakland County Parks and Recreation became the operators of the grill rooms at Lyon Oaks and White Lake Oaks golf courses for the 2017 season, following the success of self operation at its two waterparks and Groveland Oaks Campground. Previously, OCPR contracted out food and beverage operations at these facilities.

Rebranded as “Bunkers Bar and Grill,” the operation features a fresh new menu and improved customer service for all golfers and leagues. Popular menu items include smash burgers, hand battered southern chicken tenders and house-made potato chips. Both locations also offer a full-service bar featuring a wide variety of domestic, import and craft beer and a wide selection of mixed drinks as well. A refreshed décor has transformed both grill rooms into golf-themed restaurants

with multiple large screen TVs for golfers to catch their favorite sports game before or after a round. The grill rooms have also become destinations for afternoon lunch meetings in a scenic setting.

“The staff has worked hard to transform these facilities while improving the food and beverage experience for all golfers and visitors,” Chief of Business Operations Phil Castonia said.

“We had lost many leagues due to poor food service and that wasn’t acceptable for how we treat our guests. We listened to what golfers want like coffee service early in the morning, quick lunches on the turn and healthy choices after their rounds.”



Controlling invasive Swallowwort in natural areas

Oakland County Parks and Recreation continues to be on the forefront of the battle to control invasive swallowwort in Oakland County.

Swallowwort is a tenacious vining plant native to southern Europe that has become well entrenched in Oakland County and is still an emerging problem statewide. The plant is detrimental to native plant and animal communities; its aggressive growth smothers forest floors and open fields. It also represents a major economic threat to livestock as it is innately toxic and has a tendency to invade fields used for haying and grazing.

The Oakland County Parks Natural Areas Stewardship Crew spends a large portion of the summer spraying invasive swallowwort with herbicide to prevent spread across natural areas as well as monitoring high quality natural areas for new populations.

While populations within parks are being controlled, surrounding properties often go without owner management, meaning they represent a continuous source of the plant’s wind-blown seed into parks.



Oak Wilt is a vascular wilt disease that affects members of the Red as well as White Oak family. In the last few years, Oakland County Parks and Recreation has lost many invaluable trees. Staff has used injections as well as trenching and removals for managing Oak Wilt. The best way to manage is prevention, which means no pruning during the growing season and reporting storm damage to the Natural Resources Management staff for tracking.

Safety path increases community walkability

Oakland County Parks and Recreation collaborated with Independence Township to create a pedestrian safety path along Sashabaw Road connecting Independence Oaks County Park with Independence County Park - North.

Approximately 1.6 miles of asphalt/boardwalk was constructed along Sashabaw Road. OCPR contributed nearly \$740,000 to the \$1.3 million project. Once the pathway is completed, the township will take ownership and be responsible for future maintenance.



The new pathway will provide an opportunity for additional programming for the park and increase visitors. Independence Oaks offers 12.5 miles of trails and an approximately 1/3-mile trail at Independence-North. The project also provides an important link within Independence Township's safety path master plan, connecting existing pathways along Oak Hill Road to the north and routes to Clintonwood Park and the Village of Clarkston via pathways along Sashabaw and Clarkston roads.

Never underestimate the power of imaginative play

When pool noodles and stickers transform into light sabers or tin foil and plastic cups become pirate hooks, that's the magic of Recreation Program and Services at play. The "Make a Splash Series" at Waterford Oaks Waterpark brought magic to life for kids of all ages with Wookiee Wednesday and Pirate Day.



New Twin Chimneys dock increases access for all

12

The Twin Chimneys dock at Crooked Lake in Independence Oaks has been replaced with a new universally accessible floating dock, expanding recreation opportunities for all abilities.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation staff members completed the project in early August. The dock is an integral component of the Twin Chimneys facility, which hosts many programs, including the popular Wheelchair Daze event. The new accessible dock was completed before the Aug. 5 event.

The dock also serves as a fishing pier and an access point for the pontoon boat during various programs.

In addition to the new accessible dock, other upgrades were recently made to the Twin Chimneys area. Parking areas, pathways, playgrounds and restrooms were improved to meet ADA standards.



ORV Park gets the green light

Oakland County Parks and Recreation is initiating plans to partner with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to develop and operate an off-road vehicle park in Holly and Groveland townships.

At its December 6, 2017 meeting, the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission voted to move forward with negotiations with the MDNR to create an operating agreement for the ORV park, which could be open in some form as early as fall of 2018. The 235-acre site sits south and west of Mount Holly and is comprised of two sand and gravel mining operations. Current extraction is still taking place on a portion of the property, which will become available for additional park land as mining is completed over the coming years. The vision for the park is that it will be operated by Oakland County Parks and Recreation in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

In 2014 Oakland County Parks and Recreation hosted two successful Dixie Gully Run test events just south of the park site to gauge the level of interest in ORV recreation in Oakland County. The overwhelming positive response to those events, combined with data and research from the MDNR and Michigan State University, indicate that an ORV park in Oakland County

will be utilized heavily not only by residents of the county, but also users from across the state and country. In Michigan, the vast majority of ORVs are registered in the southeast portion of the state. The new ORV park will provide a place for people to recreate close to home, while helping to prevent illegal riding on private property.

"We're excited to bring this form of recreation to the residents of Oakland County and hope it brings new people into the county as well," OCPR Executive Officer Dan Stencil said. "This park will benefit not only the local campgrounds, but also restaurants, gas stations, hotels, parts and repair shops, grocery stores – you name it. We're excited about the opportunity to bolster the economy in this portion of Oakland County."

The proposed ORV site is across Dixie Highway from Groveland Oaks County Park which offers camping, yurts, cabins, a swimming beach, boating, fishing, a hiking trail and other recreation amenities.





Yurt debuts on Cottage Island

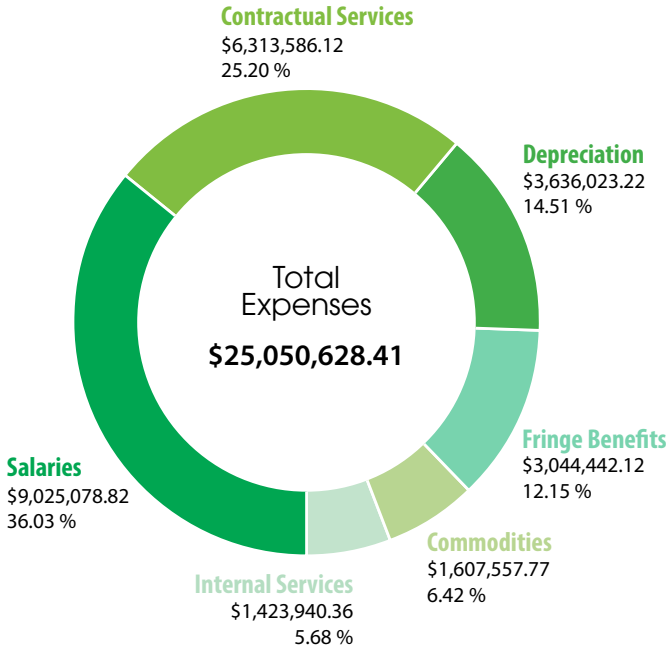
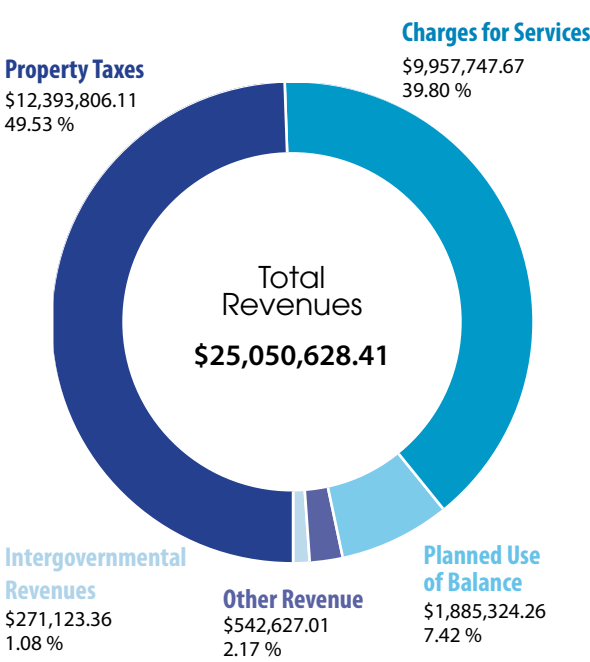
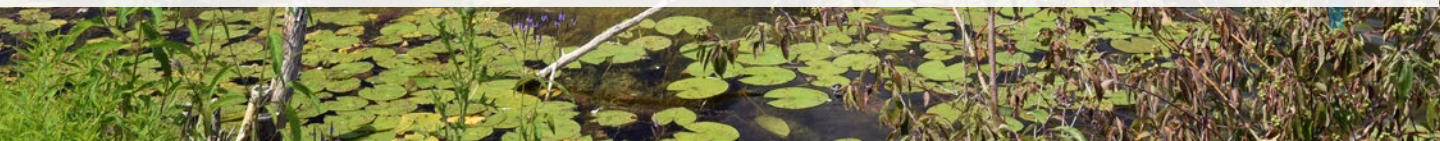
Yurts have had a history in Central Asia for several thousand years. The popularity is now rising as alternative living or camping structures.

This summer, the system’s first yurt on an island debuted at Groveland Oaks Campground. Visitors can experience camping on Cottage Island for an overnight, weekend or week’s stay. A second yurt will be constructed in 2018. OCPR offers the yurt experience at two campgrounds.

“The video really got people excited about the yurt. They were intrigued by the construction process and by staying on an island. The demand for yurt camping is high. It’s a great way for first time campers to test the waters or people to just come out for a few days without having to bring a tent or trailer.”

*Parks Supervisor
Boyd Brokenshaw*

Parks staff constructed the yurt working around an operational challenge of getting water and electricity to the island via pedal boat. A time-lapse video showing construction was featured on OCPR’s Facebook page and website.





**"Best in Category" and
"100 Brilliant Ideas at Work
in County Government"**
OUCARES Day Camp
and Staff Training Program
Achievement Award



Oakland County Executive
L. Brooks Patterson
Recognition of Lifeguards



**MUST PLAY PUBLIC
GOLF COURSE**
Springfield Oaks
Golf Course

Project Manager:
Desiree Stanfield

Graphic Design:
Garrett Ebbling

Writers:
Brittany Bird
Patricia Brockway
Phil Castonia
Sarah Cook-Maylen
Donna Folland
Jane Peterson
Melissa Prowse
Kegan Schildberg
Desiree Stanfield
Mary Zednik

Print Production:
Mary Zednik

Photography:
Vaughn Gurganian
Julee Erskine
Thomas Hughes
Mary Zednik

Printed with vegetable
based inks on recycled
paper by Dearborn
Lithograph, Livonia



Golden Wrench
Accessible hay wagons



Parks Design
For enhancing water and trail
access and Americans with
Disabilities Act improvements



Fellowship Award
Susan Wells



**Karen Medve Award for Outstanding
Achievement in the Therapeutic
Recreation Profession**
Sandy Dorey



New Professional
Kelley Marcaccio



Lifeguard in Action Award
Rebecca Dorey; Joe Heaton; Sam
Kuznia; Dillon Lemond; Zach
Owczarzak; and Joshua Turner



Volunteers
Barb and Gary Smithson



Oakland Uncorked
at Oakland County
Farmers Market



edible WOW cooking
demonstrations at Oakland
County Farmers market

Photo:
Oakland County, Michigan

Making lemonade from lemons

The 10th Anniversary of Fire & Ice, thanks to Michigan's unpredictable climate, was celebrated in balmy 50 degree weather.

Creative Parks staff didn't let that detract from the winter's outdoor festival, held for three days annually in downtown Rochester. The popular sledding hill, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing were replaced with a zip line, Get Outdoors! Golf Unit and wheeled sled dog rides.

"The Recreation Program and Services Team brought out as many mobile units and games as we could. We wanted to make sure the event was still a huge success. It was the 10th anniversary and we were going to make it special one way or the other," Chief of Recreation Program & Services Brandy Boyd said. "Everyone worked to make Fire and Ice exciting at 50 degrees, just as we do when it's five degrees."

The ice sculptures from the collegiate ice carving competition didn't fare well, but attendance was estimated at 45,000, including some shorts-wearing attendees.



PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ROYAL OAK MI
PERMIT 14



Ⓐ Northern Lights at Addison Oaks County Park
Memorial Day Weekend 2017

“Perfect viewing conditions with clear skies and a new moon in combination with one of the strongest solar storms this year allowed for a great show. This photo was taken from the south end of Adams Lake looking north over the lake.

The image is a combination of 30 pictures stacked together to get the stars to trail along with the northern lights.”

Thomas Hughes
Chief - Park Operations and Maintenance South District