

Getting to know our Parks

Our Project

Katherine Almonte

The purpose of our project, *Improving our Opportunities for Recreation and Physical Activity: Engaging Youth in Research and Local Policy Advocacy*, is to assess the quality and condition of parks in Lawrence. Our research team is working to spread-the-word about some of the great parks in our community, while collecting information to make our

parks better. We are studying our parks to learn more about what is great about them as well as how they can be improved. We are also collecting information on how members of the community use the parks and the number of people that visit the parks at different times of the day and week.

We are studying 32 of our parks! We started this research project in April and will keep collecting information



until October. We want our parks to be the best they can be, so they are great, fun, and safe places for everyone in our community.

Who We Are and Why We Care

Rumaira Balborda

Our project is focused on places where people in Lawrence enjoy a lot of their time, the parks. Tufts University, Groundwork Lawrence, and the Lawrence Community Development Department are working together to collect information that will improve the health of our residents. There are five youth who are all Lawrence residents involved with the project, and we care very much about our city and want to make a difference:

Tanya, who wants the best for the city, is working to make Lawrence and its parks comfortable places to be; Daniel, who grew-up in Lawrence, and has always wanted to give back to his city and by joining the project he is accomplishing his goal; Juana, who just graduated from Lawrence High School and joined this project because she cares about the community and wants Lawrence to have a positive attitude; Katherine, who is excited about the project and thinks it is a great

opportunity to help the community of Lawrence; and Rumaira, who grew-up in Lawrence, thinks the people of Lawrence need to feel some pride for their city, and joined this project to prove that Lawrence is a great place with some beautiful parks that we should care for.

If all our parks were cared for, people would be able to play and exercise in them more often. Everyone would be more fit and healthy! This project has been a good experience. We are working to make change and better our city, so we can be a safe and healthy community!

What a Park!

Daniel Lopez-Martinez

We have some wonderful parks in Lawrence that are in great condition. One of the best parks in Lawrence is Reservoir and Water Tower. People always seem to be motivated to exercise at this park.

This shows that people actually care about their wellbeing and want to take steps to be in better health. I once saw a 6-year-old motivating his grandfather to

jog at the park and get some exercise. There are a lot of positive and smiling faces at this park and it always seems as though the park is being taken care of because the lawn is mowed and maintained. People also respect the rules of the park, which is important to make sure the park stays in great condition so people can use it.



Reservoir and Water Tower park is located at the site of the former open reservoir between Reservoir Street and Ames Street.

This Park Needs Some TLC!

Tanya Borrero

There are some parks in Lawrence that are not treated with care, and we intend to improve this situation. Many parks have beautiful open areas that encourage kids to use them, whether it's walking on a trail or playing on a jungle gym. Sullivan Park is one park that needs a little TLC. We have observed a lot of trash scattered around the area and a lot of graf-

fiti. The park is very well equipped with a tennis court, two full basketball courts, benches, chairs, swings, and a jungle gym; but, the area and the equipment are being treated very poorly and that is unfair to both the people who currently use the park and people who would like to use it in the future. It is really important to use



the parks in a positive way for now and for the future!

Appreciating Our Parks As A Community

Juana Matias

We have seen many excellent parks in our city, but also many that need a lot of work. Our goal is to inform the community of Lawrence about how to keep our neighborhood parks clean and attractive. We want the parks to be clean and safe for us to use, and also for the next generation of Lawrence children and youth to

use. This way, we can continue the cycle of children and adults enjoying the parks in our community.

Everyone in Lawrence has ownership of the parks. Often times, we go to the parks for our children's enjoyment, but we also go for ourselves. One of the goals of this project is to create a better and more

united community. This project will inform everyone about what goes on in the parks as we find out more about them, and how we as a community can help keep them safe and clean. We want to set an example for how to take care of the parks within our community, and provide information to our community so we can all pitch in!

Tip of the Month

Pick it up and throw it in!

If you see garbage in the park, pick it up and throw it in the garbage can. Let's all help clean up our parks!

This project is a collaboration between Tufts University, Groundwork Lawrence, and the Lawrence Community Development Department

Groundwork Lawrence, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, that has been making change happen in Lawrence, Massachusetts since 2001. Through environmental and open space improvements, community food programs, youth education and employment initiatives, and community programming and events. The formal mission of the organization is "to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships which empower people, businesses and organizations to pro-

mote environmental, economic and social well-being."

The Lawrence **Community Development Department (CDD)** focuses on improving the quality of life in Lawrence. As the city's chief agency for community planning and urban development, the CDD oversees programs in housing, economic development, land use planning, and transportation. Among the grants that the department administers is the Community Development Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, one of the largest sources of



funds to help the community. The CDD aims to enhance the physical environment and improve the quality of life for the diverse community of Lawrence.

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