

## **Participants**

Boys Scouts of America, Sea Scout Ship 131  
Central Oklahoma Sailing Association  
Lake Hefner Boat Owners Association  
Oklahoma Bicycle Society  
Oklahoma Bicycle Coalition  
Oklahoma City Beautiful  
Oklahoma City Audubon Society  
Oklahoma City Boat Club  
Oklahoma City Power Squadron  
Oklahoma City Runners Club  
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
Oklahoma Earthbike Fellowship  
TORKS Model Flying Club  
*Other Interested Individuals*

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments  
City Council of Oklahoma City  
Oklahoma City Game and Fish Commission  
Oklahoma City Golf Commission  
Oklahoma City Parks Commission  
Oklahoma City Parks and Recreation Department  
Oklahoma City Planning Department  
Oklahoma City Police Department  
Oklahoma City Public Works Department  
Oklahoma City Planning Commission  
Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust  
Trails Advisory Committee

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## **Introduction**

The Lake Hefner Recreation Master Plan has been developed to guide future recreational growth at Lake Hefner. First and foremost, Lake Hefner exists to provide and adequate supply of quality drinking water for the citizens of Oklahoma City. As development pressures occur around the lake, it has become apparent that the recreational uses must be preserved and enhanced.

The Recreation Master Plan comprehensively addresses the needs and desires of all recreational user groups at the lake. Existing conditions have been identified and ways to improve or enhance the recreational uses have been discussed with the various user groups. The Plan outlines an all-inclusive and cost effective method of developing the lake's recreational potential.

This recreational plan provides a flexible, dynamic structure for development. It favors development of infrastructure and amenities which meet the needs of a large and diverse collection of programs, each of which is operational within its own economic base of support. It seeks to enhance recreational activities which will not only improve the quality of life in Oklahoma City but will preserve the integrity of the lake.

The existing structure of user organizations brings enthusiasm and activity to the lake while contributing thousands of both dollars and volunteer hours annually for the improvement of Lake Hefner.

It is the opinion of the user groups that Lake Hefner should preserve the following:

- A beautiful natural setting of woods, grasslands, ponds, streams and shoreline.
- An excellent fishing lake that provides recreational and economical benefits to the local economy.
- A vigorous habitat for migratory and residential birds in conjunction with Lake Overholser, Rose Lake and Dolese Lake.
- Vibrant displays of wildflowers and remarkable tree planting compliments of Oklahoma City Beautiful and the Tree Bank of Greater Oklahoma City.
- The Historical Municipal Harbor and Marina, a heavily used and enduring structure built by the United States Navy.
- The reliable Oklahoma City wind, which makes Lake Hefner unique for family sailing, as well as a prime location for boating regattas.
- Highly successful organized sporting events that contribute to the economy of both the lake and the city.

### **Vision Statements for Lake Hefner**

- Enhance the existing native areas and work to protect existing wildlife habitat and water quality. (*Environmental Working Group*)
- Develop and implement a crime free environment at the Lake Hefner Reservation to provide for safe recreation. (*Crime Working Group*)
- Preserve and enhance the existing Lake Hefner Reservation outdoor recreational land and water uses while protecting the environmental aspects of the lake. (*Land Use and Development Working Group*)
- To improve the safety of all recreational users and enhance the accessibility of the lake. (*Traffic Working Group*)
- Enhance outdoor recreational uses that benefit the health and well being of the community. (*Recreation Working Group*)
- Preserve and enhance public outdoor recreational facilities on the Lake Hefner Reservation for the health and benefit of all. (*Public Improvement Working Group*)

As a whole, the working groups want Lake Hefner to be a safe place that provides recreational opportunities in a beautiful and preserved environment, in harmony with existing land uses and currently available outdoor activities, with an emphasis on community availability.

## **Plan Development**

The 1991 Lake Hefner Recreation Master Plan, Creating a "Great Park!" Conceptual Plan, was created by OKC Waterfront Consultants, Inc., in February of 1991. This plan's intention was to create a "blueprint" for the future growth and development for Lake Hefner. The original charge of the Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust was to develop criteria for developing the lake, both public uses such as parks, trails, beaches, sport facilities and commercial areas such as restaurants, marinas, golf facilities, etc. The plan was both a water use and a land use plan and is considered to be a public/private partnership between the general public and Oklahoma City to aid with the development of Lake Hefner.

In May of 2004, the Oklahoma City Council requested that the 1991 Lake Hefner Recreation Master Plan be updated, based upon recent development along the east shores of the lake. The Planning Department has been working with the Water and Wastewater Department, Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Department and the Police Department to develop the framework for the plan.

In the summer of 2005, user groups were contacted and asked if they would like to be involved in the planning process for the Lake Hefner Recreation Plan Update. Individuals from user groups as well as lake vendors, restaurant and office operators, and neighborhood associations were all invited to participate. The "kick-off" meeting was held on August 29, where over 160 attendees were informed on the plan update procedure and what they should expect from this process. The members were asked to select one or several working group topics, and meet to develop issues and action for each topic. These meetings occurred throughout October and the first part of November and consisted of the following six working groups: Environmental, Recreation, Land Use, Traffic, Crime, and Public Improvements.

## **Lake Hefner Background**

Lake Hefner is a 2,580-acre impoundment completed in 1947 and operated by Oklahoma City. Water is brought into the lake from the North Canadian River and from the Canton Reservoir in Blaine County.

Originally known as the Bluff Creek Water Supply Project, the lake is considered one of former Mayor Robert Hefner's greatest contributions to the growth and development of Oklahoma City. In 1940 when a \$7,000,000 bond issue was approved to build the 75,000 acre feet reservoir, opposition to the project delayed work for nearly a year. H.E. Bailey, an engineer, was given the responsibilities of building the dam while simultaneously serving as the City Manager of Oklahoma City. Despite an initial work schedule of twenty-four hour work days, seven days a week, construction was slowed during the years of World War II. The dam was completed in 1942 and the remainder of the project was ready in 1944. Lake Hefner was dedicated in 1947. A 15 million gallon per day filtration plan, part of the original construction, was upgraded to 37.5 million gallons per day in 1950 to accommodate a population of over 240,000.

The land surrounding Lake Hefner at the time it was built was undeveloped open space, primarily used for agriculture. It was spotted with streams, ponds and woodlands. Recreational activities have been a part of Lake Hefner from its earliest days. In 1941, Robert Hefner obtained financial aid from the federal Works Project Administration to provide \$250,000 worth of beautification around the lake, "to make it a recreation ground." The mayor and council agreed that a plan for using the lake as a recreational facility was needed. They also suggested that several million fish be purchased for the lake.

Fishing was one of the first recreational uses, beginning with the opening of the lake. Oklahoma City began stocking the lake with fish raised in its own hatchery north of the lake. Fishing piers and docks were built for the Oklahoma City Police and Fire Departments. Citizens were fishing from the wet slips and the breakwater in the municipal marina, from the dam, in boats and all along the shoreline. In the 1970's, two floating, covered and lighted fishing piers were built on the south and east shores. Hunting was allowed at Lake Hefner, and duck blinds were constructed by hunters at selected points around the lake. In the late 1980's, the practice was discontinued.

In the 1990's, an enclosed heated fishing dock was built for local anglers. The H.B. Parson's Fish Hatchery was renovated to future improve the fisheries management activities at Lake Hefner and other City fishing facilities.

Organized boating activities came to Lake Hefner in 1946. The Oklahoma City Boat Club moved to Lake Hefner from Lake Overholser, before any water flowed into the reservoir, and began construction of their new harbor and docks. A sailboat rental concession on the east shore immediately north of the Boat Club followed in the 1960's. In 1971, the

Central Oklahoma Sailing Association, an unlimited and open membership sailing club, was founded at the Sailorama rental concession. It later moved to the Marina and grew to over one-hundred members.

From that organization, the Hobie Fleet emerged as a club in its own right and moved to Hobie Point in the 1970's. A second catamaran organization known as the Oklahoma Catamaran Racing Association (OCRA) was formed. This organization soon grew to 120 members and was sponsoring several national class regattas annually, with production budgets reaching \$4,000, bringing an estimated 200 sailing crews and over 4000 vendors and visitors to Lake Hefner for each event. The home port of this organization became known as OCRA beach and was located on the east shore of Fireman's Cove east of the Municipal Harbor.

Another sailing group developed for board sailors began on the east shore, known as the Central Oklahoma Boardsailing Association or COBA. This organization has varied in size from 200 to 400 active members.

Today, dozens of active one design class and handicap racing fleets are active at Lake Hefner. These fleets are either members of larger organizations or are functioning as independent sailing clubs. Sailing programs have been established by the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of America, the American Red Cross, and the YMCA.

Lake Hefner has hosted numerous special recreational events including the Lake Hefner Streak cycling marathon, Heart Fund benefit regattas, Passageways benefit regattas, Cat Champs benefit regattas, Make-A-Wish benefit regattas, Red Cross benefit regattas, Ark Family Shelter benefit regattas, Cystic Fibrosis Bikeathon, the Redman Triathlon, North OKC Bass Club Fishing Tournament, and many other marathons and fishing derbies.

The Lake Hefner Golf Course was constructed on the southwest shore, west of the municipal harbor. A clubhouse providing showers, lockers, pro-shop and grill concessions, and a golf cart rental facility was constructed. Even though there have been subsequent developments of several private golf courses in Oklahoma City, Lake Hefner Golf Course remains very active. The development of Stars and Stripes Park and the Lake Hefner Trails in the late 1970s and 1980s provided a more structured environment for some of these activities and are highly valued today.

The greatest displacement of natural areas occurred upon the construction of the Lake Hefner Parkway in the early 1990s, which eliminated all natural shoreline, grasslands and wooded areas along the east shore. The Parkway development also affected bank fishing access on the east shore. In the past, a large portion of the east shore was accessible through a series of dirt roads, where fishermen would drive and park next to their favorite fishing spot. Today, a series of parking lots exist, where anglers can park, but have to walk along the trails to reach the shoreline. In the early 1980s, creel survey data indicated that 80% of anglers fished from the banks at Lake Hefner. Since shoreline

accessibility has decreased over the past 25 years, the number of bank fishermen has also decreased.

In the early 1960s, the land on the east and west boundaries of the Lake Hefner Reservation had been developed into residential neighborhoods. While the city had grown to the north of the lake, development adjacent to the northern edge had not taken place. In fact, this land remains undeveloped and is part of the Oklahoma City park system. Pat Murphy Park is located west of Meridian on the north side of the lake dam. This park has a picnic area, playground equipment and 4 miles of mountain biking trails along Bluff Creek. These trails are open to runners, hikers and bicyclists, and are managed by the Oklahoma Earthbike Fellowship, (OEF). In the mid-90s, OEF entered into an agreement with Oklahoma City to plan, build, and maintain these trails, and the group has invested many volunteer hours and dollars into these trails.

## **Existing Recreation Conditions**

### **Fishing**

Fishing at Lake Hefner has been popular for many years. Lake Hefner provides fishing for walleye, white bass, crappie, channel catfish, sunfish, smallmouth bass and largemouth bass. The fisheries management program at Lake Hefner is conducted by the Oklahoma City Parks and Recreation Department, in cooperation with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Oklahoma City is fortunate to have its own fish hatchery just to the north of the lake dam, the H.B. Parsons Fish Hatchery.

### **Sail Boating**

Sail boating at Lake Hefner is a very popular activity due to the ample wind, the shape of the lake and the easy accessibility. There are many different boat clubs that call Lake Hefner home, including catamarans, centerboard sailboats, windsurfers, kayakers, kite sailors, and large sailboats.

### **Cycling/Running/Rollerblading/Walking/Mountain Biking**

Lake Hefner offers 9.5 miles of multi-use trails around the lake. This allows the trail user to travel around the lake on an off-street trail for most of the distance. This trail is by far the most popular trail in central Oklahoma and is used by those of all ages. The trail is primarily constructed out of asphalt and is generally 12' wide, however, the East Shore contains separate walking trails constructed out of concrete. Bluff Creek Park has nearly 4 miles of off-road mountain bike trails on the north side of the dam. This trail is used by hikers, runners and mountain bikers, and is maintained by Oklahoma Earthbike Fellowship.

### **Bird Watching**

Lake Hefner, including Prairie Dog Point, is located along the Central Flyway, a major migratory route for wild birds nesting in the far north and wintering on the Texas coast and southward. Prairie Dog Point is located on the western portion of Lake Hefner, just south of the lake dam structure. This area attracts a wide variety of birds, including many kinds of gulls, raptors and shorebirds. Birdwatchers in Oklahoma rank Prairie Dog Point as a favorite birding destination, and birdwatchers from around Oklahoma and the nation come here to bird watch.

### **Golf**

Lake Hefner Golf Course is located at the south tip of Lake Hefner in northwest Oklahoma City. Two different courses exist, a North and South, totaling 36 holes. The North Course was designed by Perry Maxwell, opened in 1951, and was redesigned by Randy Heckenkemper in 1994. The South Course was designed by Floyd Farley and opened in 1964. Amenities include a pro shop, restaurant and cart rental. Practice facilities include a driving range, putting green, chipping green, bunkers and 3-hole par 3 academy. The Clubhouse is located at 4491 S. Lake Hefner Drive, in Oklahoma City.

**Statistics for the North Course**

Par/Yardage: 72/6459 blues, 6970 blacks  
Course rating: 73.8  
Slope: 127

**Statistics for the South Course**

Par/Yardage: 70/6305  
Course rating: 71.4  
Slope: 123

**Windsurfing/kite surfing      Need Input****Model Airplanes**

The Oklahoma Radio Kontrol Society (TORKS) was established in 1956. The TORKS use the R/C flying site known as the Tom Jones Memorial R/C Model Airplane Field that was established in 1979. It is located in the Northwestern section of Oklahoma City, at the South end of Lake Hefner, midway between Meridian and Portland Blvd, off of South Lake Shore Drive. The flying field is 12.3 acres total size with 9 acres of grass and an asphalt runway that is 250 feet long by 32 feet wide and four active pilot stations. Presently there are about 100 active members, flying everything from small electric airplanes to 1/3 Scale Model planes.

**Playgrounds/Parks**

Metropolitan Parks – metropolitan parks are generally naturally based resource parks located along or adjacent to waterways or large bodies of water. These parks are open to a wide range of uses including preservation of open space, nature interpretation, bird watching, hiking, fishing, boating, mountain biking, horseback riding and radio controlled airplane flying.

Lake Hefner Park (Children's Playground, Prairie Dog Point)

Regional Park/District Parks – regional or district parks serve a broad purpose and are focused on meeting community needs and preserving open space. These parks can include all types of recreational uses due to their size.

Bluff Creek Park

Community Parks – community parks are larger parks that serve several adjoining neighborhoods or several square miles of residential development. These parks include active and passive recreational uses.

Stars and Stripes Park

Lake Hefner Park (NW Optimist)

Neighborhood Parks – the neighborhood park is the smallest of all the parks and is typically located within walking distance of neighborhood homes. These parks include active and passive recreational uses on a small scale.

Lakeshore Estates Park  
Pat Murphy Park

Specialty Parks – specialty parks are oriented toward a single-purpose use, such as dog parks, community centers, senior centers, community theaters, hockey arenas, golf courses, marinas, aquatic parks, sport stadiums, disk golf courses and skateboard parks.

Paw Park  
Lake Hefner Golf course  
H.B. Parsons Fish Hatchery

### **Softball, baseball, soccer, football fields**

Softball, baseball and football fields exist at the south end of Stars and Stripes Park. Many different groups use these fields throughout the year. An additional baseball field is located east of Lake Hefner Parkway in NW Optimist Park.

### **Nature preserve/open space Need Input**

Serves to buffer sound pollution, provide a sense of nature retreat, and creates habitat for wildlife. Important to the lake's image as a preserve which has been excepted from intensive development.

## Lake Hefner Survey Results

Two different surveys were completed by Insight Market Research & Consulting in the fall of 2004. The first survey was completed in September and consisted of a telephone survey of 411 Oklahoma City residents. The purpose of the survey was to determine attitudes and perceptions of Oklahoma City residents concerning commercial development at or near Lake Hefner, as well as recreational usage of the lake and its parks.

### September 2004 Telephone Survey Conclusions

#### Usage

- Lake Hefner is one of Oklahoma City's most popular locations for recreational use. The results indicated that 6% of Oklahoma City's adult residents visit Lake Hefner on a daily basis. While this percentage should be confirmed with an on-site usage survey, the results clearly suggest that resident usage is extremely high with over 15% of resident adults indicating that they visit Lake Hefner at least once during an average week.

#### Restaurants

- The restaurants located at Lake Hefner are also a popular venue for Oklahoma City Residents. Nearly half, 46%, of adult residents indicated that they had visited Lake Hefner at least once during an average 6-month time period. In addition, there is a significant segment of heavy users, 8% of adult residents, who visit Lake Hefner restaurants 5 or more times in an average 6-month time period. While the restaurant usage is not as high as the recreational usage of Lake Hefner in terms of percentage of adult Oklahoma City residents, the restaurants are clearly a popular location.

#### Commercial Development

- Attitudes toward additional commercial development of Lake Hefner is somewhat mixed. A slight majority of residents, 56%, indicated that they felt that new commercial development should be permitted near Lake Hefner. These attitudes are not strongly held as all respondents in favor of permitting new commercial development *agreed* with the statement as opposed to *strongly agreeing*.
- In addition, 49% of respondents indicated that they did not want to see additional new commercial development near Lake Hefner while only 33% disagreed with this view. A significant majority, 71%, indicated that more land at Lake Hefner should be used of active recreational facilities while only 10% disagreed with this view.
- A slight majority, 55%, also indicated that the only type of new commercial development that should be allowed is that which serves existing lake or park activities. Only 22% of residents disagreed with this view. A majority of respondents, 67%, also indicated that some commercial development of city owned land is a good way to fund city operations, as long as it does not interfere with lake views and recreational activities.

- In addition, offices, housing, concession stand and restaurants were also the leased desired additional activities that residents wanted to see at Lake Hefner. Additional running, walking, and biking trails, along with picnic areas, were desired by far more residents than new commercial developments. These results are the same across the heavy, moderate, and light users groups including non-users.

#### Recommendations

- An on-site usage study should be conducted to verify the approximate number of Lake Hefner users across various time frames. These results could confirm the very high percentage of Oklahoma City adult users of the lake for recreational purposes. In addition, an on-site survey could acquire more detailed perceptions about additional commercial development as well as provide resident satisfaction measurements of existing Lake Hefner features.
- These results also clearly indicated that any further development at Lake Hefner should focus on running, hiking, and biking trails as well as additional playground and picnic areas. These areas were also the most desirable features to add even among the non-users. Increasing these facilities at Lake Hefner may also increase the level of residential usage.

### **November 2004 On-Site Survey Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to determine attitudes and perceptions of Lake Hefner recreational and restaurant users concerning a variety of issues including commercial development at or near Lake Hefner, as well as recreational usage of the lake and its parks.

#### Quality of Life

- On-site users clearly value the activities and opportunities that the Lake Hefner Trail System and neighboring restaurants provide. 92% of users indicated that the Lake Hefner Trails improve their quality of life. 65% of users strongly indicated that the Lake Hefner Trails improves their quality of life. This clearly suggests that the Lake Hefner Trail System is a valuable asset to the residents.

#### Activities

- The most popular activities among Lake Hefner users are bicycling, walking, and running. 49% of trail users visit Lake Hefner at least monthly for bicycling, 47% visit at least monthly for walking, and 35% visit at least monthly for running.
- Restaurant usage is also significant as 23% of users visit the restaurants at Lake Hefner at least monthly.

### Reasons for Less Usage

- The primary factor why users do not visit Lake Hefner more often is a lack of time. 31% of users indicated that a lack of time prevents them from using Lake Hefner more often. The second most important factor is safety. 24% of users indicated that safety is a primary reason why they do not use Lake Hefner more often. Among daily recreational users, this percentage is 35% and among heavy recreational usage, this percentage is 20%. In these two segments, safety is a more important factor than a lack of time. Among light and non-recreational users, the primary factor for not coming more often to Lake Hefner is lack of time. In conclusion, for daily and heavy users, safety concerns are the primary reason why they do not use Lake Hefner more often while among light and non-users the primary factor is lack of time.

### Satisfaction Levels

- The factors that received the highest satisfaction rating from users were the cleanliness, condition of the parking lots, the amount of available parking, landscaping, availability of park facilities, the condition of walking and running trails, and the number of walking or running trails. The factors that received the lowest satisfaction levels were the number of water and drinking faucets.

### Additional Facilities

- 65% of users would like to see more running or walking trails while 59% of users would like to see more bike trails. The desirability for more running or walking trails is high across all demographics including daily and heavy restaurant users.
- Less than one-fourth, 24%, of users would like to see additional restaurants at Lake Hefner. As the level of recreational use increases, the desirability of additional restaurants decreases. Among daily and heavy restaurant users, only two-fifths, 41%, indicated that they would like additional restaurants at Lake Hefner.

### Additional Development

- 40% of users support only 'recreational' type of development such as new bike trails. 31% of users support new development as long as it does not impact the trails or block the view of the lake. 22% of users do not want to see any additional development of any type at Lake Hefner while only 5% indicated that they would be satisfied with any type of new development at Lake Hefner.
- Among daily and heavy recreational users, there is slightly more support for 'recreational' type of development only. Among moderate, light, and non-recreational users, there is more support for additional development as long as it does not impact the trails or block the view of the lake.
- Among heavy and moderate restaurant users, there is more support for additional development as long as it does not impact the trails or block the view of the lake. Among moderate, light, and non-restaurant users there is more support for only 'recreational' type of additional development such as new bike trails.

#### New Development Locations

- 38% of respondents did not want any new development at any of the potential locations. 22% indicated that new development would be acceptable anywhere as long as it does not block the view of the Lake or interfere with trails.
- Only 16% of daily recreational users and 13% of heavy recreational users preferred new development near the existing restaurants at East Wharf. However, 32% of moderate recreational users preferred new development near the existing restaurants at East Wharf.
- Light and non-restaurant users typically preferred no potential locations for additional development. 40% of daily restaurant users preferred new development on Grand Boulevard on the south side while 35% of heavy restaurant users preferred new development along NW Expressway.

#### Reasons for Not Supporting Development

- The most-often cited reasons that users gave for not supporting new development were blocked views (47%), a lack of peace and quiet (47%), too much traffic already (42%), too much commercialization already (42%), safety (41%) and environmental concerns (41%). Concerns about blocked views were particularly strong among heavy and moderate restaurant users and moderate recreational users.

#### Other Trail Usage

- 52% of respondents never visit other trail links such as Earlywine of S. Grand Boulevard. 25% of respondents, however, visit other trail links at least once a month. This usage of other trails is consistent across daily, heavy and moderate Lake Hefner users.

#### Reasons for Lake Hefner Preference

- Proximity (57%) and Lake Hefner settings (49%) were clearly the most important reasons why users prefer Lake Hefner. Among daily, heavy, and moderate recreation users, proximity was clearly the most important reason for preferring Lake Hefner. This was also found among daily and heavy restaurant users as well.

#### Demographic of Sample

- Respondents were spread across age categories. 27% of the sample were 45-54 year-olds while 8% were 65 years or older. The daily and heavy recreational users also had 45-54 year-olds comprise the largest age segment. This age was also the largest segment among the daily restaurant users.
- However, daily recreational users were 70% male compared with 56% of heavy recreational users. 60% of daily restaurant users were male while only 39% of heavy restaurant users were male.

## Vision Statement, Issues and Actions

- 1. Environment:** Enhance the existing native areas and work to protect existing wildlife habitat and water quality.

### Background Information

The Lake Hefner environment consists of many different ecosystems, ranging from wetlands to grasslands, wooded areas to mud flats.

- The south side of the lake contains areas that are primarily undisturbed and are home for many different types of flora and fauna. These native areas also create a buffer zone between the lake and the residential areas further to the south.
- Prairie Dog Point is located on the west side of the lake and is well known for its birding activities.
- Bluff Creek is located at the base of the lake dam and is on the north side of the lake. This area has the largest amount of undeveloped land and is adjacent to the fish hatchery, the water treatment plant, and the Cameron Soccer Complex.
- The east side of Lake Hefner is where the Lake Hefner Parkway is located. Wetland ponds have been built adjacent to the Parkway, which attracts many different types of wildlife.
- Development around Lake Hefner will adversely affect the natural environment. The Lake Hefner Parkway impacted the entire east shore of the lake. Additional development will negatively affect the lake environment and the water quality.

### Environmental - General

#### Goals and Objectives

- 1.1 Environmental – Foster compatibility between non-commercial recreational development and existing environmental ecosystems to preserve the natural environment and recreational uses.

*Comments: No more development. Minor recreational development would be permitted and should be compatible.*

#### Strategies

- 1.1.1 Identify potential light pollution sources and develop a mitigation plan to address these issues. Celestial viewing and sailboat navigation are affected by light pollution.

Action: *Develop a light pollution mitigation plan.*

*Comments: Light pollution mitigation plan will propose proper lighting for safety, designed to be efficient and only light up the area that is needed.*

- 1.1.2 Control of existing trash and pollution. Empty trash barrels at the lake on weekends if the need exists.

Action: *Promote the Adopt-A-Park program through the Parks Department and Oklahoma City Beautiful. Provide more trash barrels, double the numbers of*

*barrels by placing two at every existing location. Work with the Parks Department.*

## **Vegetation and Erosion**

### **Goals and Objectives**

1.2 Vegetation/Erosion – Preserve and enhance existing vegetation to help control erosion around the lake. Reducing erosion at Lake Hefner will improve water quality and improve fishing habitat.

### **Strategies**

1.2.1 Identify erosion problems at Lake Hefner and develop a plan to address the problem.

Action: *Identify erosion problem and develop an erosion mitigation plan. Work with the Water Department, Department of Environmental Quality, Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department, Water Resources Board, and Environmental Protection Agency.*

## **Water Quality**

### **Goals and Objectives**

1.3 Water Quality – Protect the lake reservation so that water quality remains high. Water quality is top priority for lake managers. Additional development and lake access could negatively affect water quality.

### **Strategies**

1.3.1 Follow the National Safe Drinking Water Standards to make sure that the water quality stays high.

Action: *Continue to follow standards.*

1.3.2 Support the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the City of Oklahoma City.

Action: *Continue to follow standards.*

## **Wildlife**

### **Goals and Objectives**

1.4 Wildlife – Enhance and protect existing wildlife habitat through proper management practices. Protect the existing fish and wildlife habitat and enhance what presently exists.

### **Strategies**

1.4.1 Develop an existing fish and wildlife inventory that will support preservation efforts. Develop a biological inventory study for the area to determine the existing conditions of the Lake Hefner environment.

Action: *Develop a Biological inventory study. Involve the following group to create a biological inventory for the lake; local colleges and universities – (use ecology, wildlife management classes to perform a “Bio-Blitz” of the lake), Audubon Society, and Sierra Club. In order to manage the environment properly, you must know what is there. Work with fisheries biologist and ODWC. Keep in mind the present drought if this is done anytime soon.*

Action: *Develop a Wildlife Management Plan for Lake Hefner. Work with ODWC.*

Action: *Develop a Recreation Use Impact Study, through the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Southern Nazarene University, the Audubon Society or the Sierra Club.*

- 1.4.2 Work with Oklahoma Audubon Society to develop a wild bird sanctuary at Prairie Dog Point, to improve the bird habitat and allow bird watchers accessibility.

Action: *Work with Oklahoma Audubon Society. Clean up this area and discourage cars from going off the designated roads. Enrich existing wildlife habitat.*

- 2. Crime:** Develop and implement a crime free environment at the Lake Hefner Reservation to provide for safe recreation.

### Background Information

The Oklahoma City Police Department has limited resources and manpower to patrol the 621 square miles in Oklahoma City. Currently, the Police Department is operating at 1986 staffing levels, while serving a larger population.

The Lake Hefner Area is relatively crime free with the exceptions of a few areas. Auto burglary and boat larceny are two of the more common crimes at the lake. Oklahoma City residents visit Lake Hefner for recreation, entertainment, work and leisure activities. As usage of the lake increases, so will the number of crimes that are committed.

### Goals and Objectives

- 2.1 Police Presence – Continue to support and enhance funding opportunities to increase police presence around the lake.

#### Police Presence Strategies

- 2.1.1 Identify funding sources to re-establish a Police Boat Patrol on Lake Hefner. Work with the Coast Guard Auxiliary to develop a lake patrol through existing programs that are available.  
Action: *Identify funding sources for boat patrol.*
- 2.1.2 Where possible, increase Police presence around Lake Hefner to deter crime.  
Action: *Work with the Police Department to see if an Ambassador program can be developed for Lake Hefner, similar to the program downtown.*  
Action: *Develop an "All User Group" watch program where the user groups meet on a regular basis and talk about the issues within the different area around the lake. These users groups can define criminal activity in their location to report back to the Police. Reduce auto burglary and boat larceny at the lake through user group watch programs. User group watch programs can be the eyes and ears at the lake to report illegal activities.*
- 2.1.3 Identify alternative funding sources to assist with funding needs.  
Action: *Identify funding sources for additional police including a dedicated sales tax. Look into a volunteer program to assist with the need. Work with the Police Department.*

## Goals and Objectives

- 2.2 Crimes – Provide resources to address crime areas around Lake Hefner.

### Crime

#### Strategies

- 2.2.1 Develop ways to eliminate deer poaching that has become prevalent on the north side of the lake near Bluff Creek and the Fish Hatchery.  
Action: *Work with Wildlife Officials and the Oklahoma City Police Department.*
- 2.2.2 Identify and target drug and alcohol use in problem areas around the lake.  
Action: *Work with Police Department.*
- 2.2.3 Develop and expand a litter elimination program at the lake through volunteer groups. Encourage and promote the adopt-a-park program, where users groups can adopt a portion of the lake. The group would be responsible for picking up trash, maintenance and watching out for illegal activities.  
Action: *Work with Litter Blitz and Oklahoma City Beautiful.*
- 2.2.4 Expand the existing trail system on the south side of the lake into the native areas where illicit activities occur. New trails will eliminate a small amount of natural area, but will place “eyes” within these areas that will become a deterrent to crime.  
Action: *Work with Parks Department to expand trail system in this area.*
- 2.2.5 Actively pursue additional funding for additional Impact Officers to concentrate on problem areas.  
Action: *Work with the Police Department and identify additional funding.*

### City Facilities

#### Goals and Objectives

- 2.3 Facilities – Identify additional funding resources for physical improvements that increase the safety and security of lake users.

#### Strategies

- 2.3.1 Enhance the existing emergency telephone system along the trail. Look into various grant programs to fund these improvements. Install additional “Call Boxes”, with blue lights. These would be easy to identify and should be placed periodically along the trail.  
Action: *Work with Police and Parks Departments. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Boating Access funds can possibly help with funding.*
- 2.3.2 Maintain and enhance the safety and security elements for all city property, such as lighting, fencing, locks and gates at Lake Hefner. Where economically feasible, install lights along the trails, on the fishing piers and docks, in the parking lots and in the harbor/marina.  
Action: *Work with Water Department and OCWUT.*
- 2.3.3 Improve and update security program at the City docks, video surveillance, and better lighting.

Action: *Identify funding sources to implement and work with Water Department.*

- 2.3.4 Investigate different grant programs that could provide funding for various crime prevention and capitol improvement projects.

Action: *Look into federal, state and local grant programs to implement crime prevention projects and capitol improvement projects.*

- 2.3.5 Look into 911 addressing issues that have hindered the ability to pinpoint locations of crimes around the Lake Hefner Reservation.

Action: *Talk with the Police Department to see what has been complete.*

## Regulations

### Goals and Objectives

- 2.4 Regulations – Update existing lake ordinances and regulations and look into ways to increase enforcement.

### Strategies

- 2.4.1 Identify vague rules from the City's ordinance and update the ordinance accordingly. Also look into "Use Regulations" to see if they need to be updated with an ordinance revision.

Action: *Identify vague rules and work with Water Department. Use focus groups to identify problem regulations and gather input from the public.*

- 2.4.2 Review the existing fine structure for violations and update the City's ordinance as needed.

Action: *Identify deficiencies to be addressed.*

- 2.4.3 Review the boating regulations and update the City's ordinance as needed.

Action: *Identify regulations to be updated.*

- 2.4.4 Increase enforcement of existing fishing regulations by providing additional Police presence at Lake Hefner. This includes creel limits, size and number limits.

Action: *This is a problem, too many people fish without a fishing license or permit and they do not obey the possession/length limits for fish. It is the responsibility of the Oklahoma City Police Department and the State Game Warden to enforce the regulations.*

- 2.4.5 Educate the public on the rules and regulations for Lake Hefner.

Action: *Develop a public education process for rules and regulations.*

- 3. Land Use & Development :** Preserve and enhance the existing Lake Hefner Reservation outdoor recreational land and water uses while protecting the environmental aspects of the lake. Prohibit any commercial development at Lake Hefner.

Comments: Oklahoma City has plenty of other land for development other than Lake Hefner. No, we need more...There is room for lake and commerce. Yes, this is a park, not an opportunity for developers and city fat cats to make money. I agree. Take development off of the lake reservation. It is the peoples land, not the politicians.

### Background Information

Since the lake was completed in 1947, pressure for development around the lake has occurred. A large amount of open space remains today, and the Lake Hefner Recreation Plan Update Working Groups consensus' is to retain the existing open space with no more commercial, office, or residential development. Improvements should be consistent with the vision for the future of the Lake Reservation as long as it is used for outdoor recreational purposes and should benefit the public as a whole. The Lake Hefner Reservation is currently used for passive and active outdoor recreation. Further commercial development will reduce the recreational atmosphere by increasing density and traffic patterns. Park land development should be compatible with lake uses.

Comments: Yes. Disagree!

### Land Use - Commercial

#### Goals and Objectives

- 3.1 Land Use – *Commercial* – Preserve and enhance the existing quality of life while protecting existing and future recreational uses.

#### Strategies

- 3.1.1 Investigate ways to amend the City ordinance that would prevent any new commercial, office or residential development on the lake reservation. Update existing city ordinances to regulate growth and land use around Lake Hefner. Action: *Look into growth control techniques for Lake Hefner, such as covenants, overlay zoning and re-zoning – Planning Department.* Comments from meeting – More development = 1 comment, No more development = 14 comments.
- 3.1.2 Where possible, research methods should be used to see if a compromise with developers to leave the maximum amount of area for natural trails and parks, yet provide for some commercial/recreational development. Commercial development should be limited and regulated so as to not interfere with nature. Action: *Develop guidelines to protect the environment and recreational uses.* No commercial development. Reasonable. Development is needed, but for only lake improvements only. Not commercial development, this should be the premise of the whole plan. Absolutely not – can't trust them. Leave

- reasonable amount. No compromise with commercial development. Rezone for no development. Don't compromise our land away.
- 3.1.3 Prohibit any townhouse, condos, apartments, resorts, hotels, motels, restaurants, and office buildings on the Lake Hefner Reservation.  
Action: *Establish developmental guidelines, covenants or overlay zoning.*  
Comments – Keep as a park, no more commercial or housing development = 6, condos are good for the community at the lake = 1.

## Buffer

### Goals and Objectives

- 3.2 Land Uses – Buffer - Protect the existing character of residential and recreational land uses around Lake Hefner.

### Strategies

- 3.2.1 Preserve and maintain greenbelt as a buffer zone between lake and surrounding uses. Maintain open space for natural habitat and as a buffer for neighborhoods. Preserve green space in this urban area.  
Action: *Create an environmental overlay to protect open space. Identify existing greenbelt and other areas to protect and buffer.*  
Comments: *Create an environmental overlay to protect open space.*
- 3.2.2 Develop an open space plan that will enhance existing open space at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Develop open space plan. Rezone "open space" for park or environmental conservation.*
- 3.2.3 Establishment of wildlife habitat areas around the lake would benefit water quality and help to preserve the open space buffers. Identify ways to fund and implement the preservation of sensitive land uses around the lake.  
Action: *Determine sensitive areas, through biological survey. Retain trees on the south side of the lake. Leave trees and ground cover for wildlife.*  
Action: *Work with Planning Department.*
- 3.2.4 Protect natural and residential areas from noise pollution generated by any present or future land use.  
Action: *Identify point source for noise and light, and ways to address the issues.*
- 3.2.5 Improve the park like setting with more trees and other landscaping with special attention to buffering between the various uses. Provide funding for landscaping and buffering that will protect sensitive areas.  
Action: *Identify area to be improved and the type of improvements. Retain natural setting. Must be well planned, with correct tree trimming. Trim limbs up to 5'.*
- 3.2.6 Increase the amount of landscaping on the Lake Hefner Reservation to improve the lake's aesthetics. Plant trees and other plant material that are

drought tolerant and requires little if any maintenance, this should include native and ornamental grasses and native turf grasses such as Buffalograss.

Action: *Develop design guidelines for Lake Hefner Reservation. Must consider wildfire dangers.*

## Recreation

### Goals and Objectives

- 3.3 Land Use – *Recreation* – Protect, enhance and preserve the existing recreation uses around the lake. Preserve and expand outdoor recreational opportunities. Keep recreational activities foremost while planning for the area. Study ways to enhance and protect existing recreational uses. Promote non-development ideas in order to preserve the recreational uses.

### Strategies

- 3.3.1 Evaluate the need for a recreation center/bait house, as new development. *Oklahoma City has been unsuccessful in the past. The City ends up subsidizing the operational budget for the facility.*
- 3.3.2 Ensure that a "safety buffer area" is maintained at the windsurf beach and kiteboard launch area. *A buffer is difficult to enforce and regulate on the water, may not be possible.*
- 3.3.3 Upgrade Stars and Stripes Park.  
Action: *2000 Bond Issue.*  
*Comments: Foolish. Only to non-outdoor uses. We need more recreation.*
- 3.3.4 Enhance active sports areas on the west side of the lake while retaining natural areas. Stopped  
Action: *Create more ball fields.*  
*Comments: Keep active sports etc., away from birds. This is not like other City parks. Keep it wild and natural.*
- 3.3.5 Encourage more sailboat and bike rental vendors around the lake. Identify areas that would support facilities for bicycle and sailboat rentals. Develop a plan to increase concessions that support outdoor recreation. Boat rentals, (quality) bike rentals, and snack stands.  
Action: *Designate specific areas and develop strict guidelines for vendors that reflect the goals of this plan.*  
*Comment: Limit vendors. Limit vendors and place controls on what type. Be careful, this could be an excuse for more development. Louis' was supposed to be a spot for trail users, not a bar. Louis' has no recreation value.*

## Environment

### Goals and Objectives

- 3.4 Land Use – *Environmental* – Protect and enhance the existing environmental character of the Lake Hefner Reservation.

## Strategies

- 3.4.1 Preserve the existing Prairie Dog Point as a wildlife sanctuary. This is a very unique area for migratory birds. Identify ways to preserve and enhance existing wildlife areas.

Action: *Identify resources and ways to preserve. Work with OAS. Also preserve northwest side of golf course – has no access and is where migratory bird congregate.*

Comments: Also preserve NW side of golf course, this area has no access and is where migratory birds hang out.

- 3.4.2 Mitigate traffic noise from surrounding streets and highways.

Action: *Noise study – Identify sources of noise pollution and develop a mitigation plan to address the source.*

Yes!

- 3.4.3 Encourage the use of wildflowers and native grasses for beautification and for wildlife habitat. This practice will also reduce the maintenance requirements.

Action: *Identify areas and funding sources for beautification projects that include wildflowers and native grasses. Add to landscaping, more native grasses, evergreens and more trees on the east side. More trees or "landscaping" so the lake has a more park-like feel around the east side of the shore and south side along the trail.*

Comments: Must consider wildfire dangers. Use more trees and control cedars. Leave low brush for wildlife habitat. Use more trees, no more cedars. Leave trees, but trim them up.

## Land Uses & Development Miscellaneous

### Goals and Objectives

- 3.5 Land Uses – Protect existing land uses around Lake Hefner that are more sensitive to intensively used property such as commercial, office, multi-family and industrial. Regulating future development will control future parking and traffic problems. Ensure that the lake remains a safe and inviting place by controlling and/or eliminating development.

Comments: This is a community recreational area. Commercial development will not be allowed to continue unless it is recreation related. Boat rental shops, skate shops, bike shops, etc. Not bars and restaurants. Yes, protect our land. Foolish, we can use more commercial development. I think no. Take commercial development off the lake reservation to promote development inside the community. Rentals only, no retail sales. If you allow anything, you open the door to commercial development.

## Strategies

- 3.5.1 Amend the 1992 plan by eliminating the new marina, lodge and other new development.

Action: *The updated plan will accomplish this task.*

- Comments: Yes. This plan update will accomplish this. No commercial development.
- 3.5.2 Research current regulations concerning what type of signs the commercial uses can post within their parking lots. Existing signs are posted that state, "No Parking – Tow Away Zone" at Louie's Restaurant parking lot.  
Action: *Investigate this to see what type of signs can be posted. Work with the Water Department.*  
Comments: Who owns the parking lots, city or restaurant owners? Maybe begin charging for parking at these areas to generate income for upkeep and road improvements. Good idea.
- 3.5.3 Promote and encourage water safety.  
Action: *Look into this to see if there is a problem.*
- 3.5.4 Provide access from Pat Murphy Park to the dam road at Meridian Avenue.  
Action: *Discuss this project with the Water Department to see if it is possible or feasible.*  
Comments: Install steps along the backside of the dam near Pat Murphy Park.
- 3.5.5 Improve signage along the trails to inform the trail user of what is expected.  
Action: *Install trail etiquette signs at all trail heads and at other locations.*
- 3.5.6 Construct a meeting place to serve as a community center for lake users.  
Action: *Look into how feasible it would be to construct a new community Center, check with the Parks Department.*  
Comments: construction something away from lake, Meridian and NW Highway. Why can't something already at Stars & Stripes be used for this? How many buildings do you want?
- 3.5.7 Add picnic areas, BBQ pits and fresh drinking water fountains.  
Action: *Check with the parks department concerning future plans for these improvements.*  
Comments: As long as it was recreation related development.
- 3.5.8 Provide overlay zoning to further define compatible uses.  
Action: *Work with Planning Department to determine how this could be done.*
- 3.5.9 Create a design oversight committee that will review all new development proposals.  
Action: *Work with Planning Department.*  
Comments: We need an oversight committee to plan and organize the lakes future – with a plan for the community to follow. Do not leave it to City Council – nominate members from public sector. City Council is elected by citizens. No new development.
- 3.5.10 Expand the existing survey to cover all lake users and OKC citizens.  
Action: *Look into performing a complete survey that includes all lake users. Rename the first two surveys as "Trail User Surveys".*

## 4. Recreation:

Enhance outdoor recreational uses that benefit the health and well being of the community.

### Background Information

Lake Hefner has many different recreational uses around the lake. These uses change over time, depending upon current trends and the level of popularity for the activity.

### Recreation – General

#### Goals and Objectives

- 4.1 Recreation – preserve, enhance and develop recreational opportunities at Lake Hefner for the citizens of Oklahoma City. Address concerns with existing and future development and how it will affect existing users. Maintain the safety of recreational users when development is considered. *Comments: Future projections will show more and more recreational users will use the lake. Lake Hefner is small, not large enough to support commercial development and recreation uses. Do not ban commercial development, just move it away to outer areas of the lake reservation. No new commercial development. Safety first for recreational users – in recreational plan. No Commercial Development.*

#### Strategies

- 4.1.1 Evaluate current uses and determine their compatibility with the Lake Hefner Reservation. Determine the carrying capacity of the Lake Hefner Reservation, as it pertains to recreational uses.  
*Action: Expand the existing survey to cover all lake users and OKC citizens. Extensive user survey, survey all user groups.*
- 4.1.2 Citizens can create a Lake Hefner users group association where the various groups can come together to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues. Issues can be reported back to the appropriate Oklahoma City department.  
*Action: Work with all user groups to develop a user group association.*  
*Comment: Great idea.*
- 4.1.3 Increase funding for recreational facilities.  
*Action: Investigate ways to fund improvements to the recreational facilities. Look into different recreational grant programs. Work with Parks Department to accomplish this task.*

### Fishing

#### Goals and Objectives

- 4.2 Fishing – Enhance the existing fishing facilities at Lake Hefner and increase access for fishermen. Avoid new development that will have a negative effect on the existing and proposed fishing habitat and fishing access. Increase the access to the shoreline at the Lake Hefner Golf Course.

## Strategies

- 4.2.1 Evaluate the access for fishermen on the dam and the south shore and identify deficiencies.  
Action: *Develop a work program that will increase accessibility for fishermen on the dam and along the south shore area.*
- 4.2.2 Identify commercial development around the lake and indicate how it is not conducive to present recreation uses.  
Action: *Determine the compatibility or incompatibility between existing commercial uses and recreational uses.*  
Comments: Commercial development can benefit the lake and the community, only if it is placed outside of the Lake Hefner Reservation. Promote development outside of the reservation for economic development purposes. No new commercial development on the lake reservation.
- 4.2.3 Enhance bank fishing opportunities around the lake.  
Action: *Develop a work program that will increase accessibility for fishermen around the lake.*
- 4.2.4 Enhance fish and wildlife habitat around Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Investigate methods to increase the aquatic and shore line vegetation, beneficial to water quality and fish/wildlife habitat.*  
Comments: Cooperative management.
- 4.2.5 Maintain stable lake levels, good for fishing and fish populations.  
Action: *Check with the Water Department to see if this is possible.*
- 4.2.6 Increase the number of fishing docks and relocate the fishing docks in appropriate places. Enhance existing fish habitat with aquatic and artificial structures, keeping in mind boating and sailing needs.  
Action: *Work with the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department to utilize the Sport Fishing Restoration Funds that enhance the fish and wildlife habitat. Work with Parks Department.*
- 4.2.7 Identify areas for additional access points to the lakeshore for fishing and recreational uses. Preservation of fishing access to waters impacted by shoreline development.  
Action: *Create a fishing access plan for the lake and identify funding opportunities to improve fishing access at the lake. Identify additional fishing/recreational access points.* Comments: Keep golf course road accessible. Take into consideration additional trail crossings may be created.
- 4.2.8 Promote and educate the public that Hefner is an outstanding fisheries.  
Actions: *Work with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to develop an educational/marketing program to promote fishing at Lake Hefner. Work with Parks Department. ODWC has \$10,000 available now to do this.*  
Comments: Market Lake Hefner better.
- 4.2.9 Improve and enhance the fish habitat at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Work with the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department to develop work program, (natural and man-made).*

## Trails

### Goals and Objectives

- 4.3 Trails – Maintain the trails system around Lake Hefner and enhance the system to better serve the trail users. Increase connectivity between surrounding neighborhoods and the lake by building sidewalks to allow access to the recreational aspects of the lake.

### Strategies

- 4.3.1 Identify trail maintenance issues and provide funding to implement a maintenance program.  
Action: *Develop an "Adopt-a-Trail" program for supplemental maintenance. Trail user groups could develop this program. ("Team Oklahoma" skating club frequently sweeps the areas that need sweeping.) Work with Parks Department and Public Works.*
- 4.3.2 Develop an expansion program for the overall trails system that includes linkages to other trails to address overcrowding problems. Preserve and expand the existing bike and walking trails at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Work toward completing the Oklahoma City Trails Master Plan.*
- 4.3.3 Create wider paths for multi-use trails for bicycles, walkers and in-line skaters. Pursue funding to enhance the existing trail system.  
Action: *Construct new trails that are wider than 12'. Existing trails in Oklahoma City are 10'-18' wide. AASHTO sets the National Standard for trails at 10' wide.*
- 4.3.4 Expand trail system with links to Lake Overholser.  
Action: *Work toward completing the funding for the Meridian Avenue bridge and the NW Highway bridge. Hefner to Overholser trail complete in 2007.*
- 4.3.5 Upgrade and maintain the existing trails.  
Action: *Develop maintenance program that includes funding sources. Work with Parks Department. Develop an "Adopt-a-trail/park" for the lake, (work with OKC Beautiful and the Parks Department).*
- 4.3.6 Expand trail system – create new multi-use trails in other areas of Oklahoma City and create connections.  
Action: *Identify space and funding needed to complete this task. Oklahoma City Trails Master Plan will help to complete this goal.*

## Boating

### Goals and Objectives

- 4.4 Boating – Create facilities that will address all the various boat users needs.

### Strategies

- 4.4.1 Identify areas around the lake that could use an addition boat ramp. Identify funding methods to improve boat facilities at Lake Hefner. Improve and maintain existing boat ramps.

- Action: *Identify funding sources and locations. Need a boat ramp on the north end of the lake and near the Marina. Can use Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Boating Access dollars with Oklahoma City Match (75/25). The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Sport Fishing Restoration Grants are available to assist with these types of projects. Work with Water and Parks to address this issue. Identify City matching funds.*
- 4.4.2 Increase the number of large boat slips. Install floating boat docks near the existing marina.  
Action: *Identify need and funding sources. Work with the Water Department.*  
Comments: *Floating docks are a great idea. Are motorboats a good idea to have on a drinking water supply lake?*
- 4.4.3 Update the small, outdated courtesy dock.  
Action: *Identify funding source and work with Water Department. ODWC Boating Access dollars with Oklahoma City Match (75/25).*  
Comments: *Under design contract to complete.*
- 4.4.4 Provide additional boat docks next to the restaurants at East Wharf, mainly for access to the restaurants from the lake. Presently there are only a few public boat docks in this area.  
Action: *Work with the Water Department.*  
Comment: *They aren't used much.*
- 4.4.5 Identify an area to construct a kayak launching and use area.  
Action: *Work with the local kayak groups, Parks and Water Department to identify an area. Determine the funding needs to construct a launching area.*
- 4.4.6 Create a boat facility on the south shore specifically for small sailboats.  
Action: *Identify a location where small sailboats can launch and beach. Identify ways to fund and construct this facility.*  
Comments: *Shallow draft boats just need access to a beach, no ramp necessary. Very shallow areas would require expensive facilities due to the fluctuation of the lake's water level.*

## Wildlife

### Goals and Objectives

- 4.5 Wildlife – Identify existing conditions and work to preserve and enhance the wildlife habitat.

### Strategies

- 4.5.1 Identify existing wildlife around Lake Hefner and its habitat. Identify funding for a wildlife study plan for the Lake Hefner Reservation.  
Action: *Involve the following groups to create a biological inventory for the lake; local colleges and universities – (use ecology, wildlife management classes to perform a "Bio-Blitz of the lake), Audubon Society, and Sierra Club. In order to manage the environment properly, you must know what is there.*  
Comments: *Graduate study through local university.*

## **Windsurfing – Kite sailing**

### **Goals and Objectives**

4.6 Windsurfing – Kite Sailing – Create facilities that will address all the windsurfing and kite sailing users needs.

4.6.2 Promote windsurfing and kitesurfing as recreational uses and as a spectator sport. These uses should be preserved by not allowing other development nearby.

Action: *Identify ways to improve the windsurfing/kite sailing area. Work with the windsurfing and kitesurfing groups to promote the sport at the lake.*

Comments: *Preserve the wind. Windsurfers need additional access.*

**5 Traffic:** To improve the safety of all recreational users through proper transportation facility design. *Does this sound OK?*

### Background Information

Various modes of transportation around Lake Hefner consists of; automobiles, motorcycles, delivery trucks/vans, bicycles, pedestrians, in-line skaters, sailboats, catamarans, motorboats, windsurfers, kitesailors, wheelchairs and golf carts. The Lake Hefner area has a large variety of transportation modes. When various modes are mixed, challenges for transportation planners are created. Conflicts between these different uses are constant and when these uses collide, it generally results in injury mainly due to the vulnerability of some of these uses. The Lake Hefner Recreation area should be a pedestrian/bicyclist safe zone. In the Lake Hefner Recreational Area, cars are the non-users, allowed but not preferred.

### General

#### Goals and Objectives

- 5.1 General – Create a safe and efficient transportation system for all Lake Hefner users.

#### Strategies

- 5.1.1 Emphasize the need to control motor vehicles and bicycle speeding.  
Action: *Work with the Police and Parks Departments. Issue citations to users who fail obey the law. Enforcement is vital to achieve a safe recreation facility.*
- 5.1.2 Install signage to educate trail users about the rules of the trails. Educate all trail users on the proper trail etiquette to reduce the conflict between runners/walkers and bicyclists.  
Action: *Install Trail etiquette signs, as approved by Parks Board. Work with Parks Department to complete this. Look into speed limits for trail users, and ways to enforce. Designate an area for bicyclist to ride fast, away from everyone else. Inform trail users that there are many different users at the lake and they must be respectful of others. Check with the Oklahoma City Traffic Division.*
- 5.1.3 Identify the areas along the following roads where speeding occurs and develop a program to reduce the violations; Lake Hefner Dam Road, W. Lake Hefner Drive, Grand Boulevard, west of May Avenue, S. Lake Hefner Drive, Hefner Road below the Dam.  
Action: *Work with the Police Department to address this problem. Increase Police patrols to control speeding along streets and trails.*
- 5.1.4 Install signage just north of the Canal on the west side of the lake where vehicles drive on the grass and dirt areas, stating, "Stay on designated roads".  
Action: *Check with the Oklahoma City Traffic Division to determine if this can be completed.*

## Traffic Facility Design

### Goals and Objectives

- 5.2 Design – Design and construct transportation facilities to eliminate or reduce conflict between users.

### Strategies

- 5.2.1 Eliminate conflict between multi-use trail users and vehicles (on the street and in the parking areas). Increase driver and trail user awareness at trail/vehicle intersections.  
Action: *Identify conflict areas between multi-use trail users and vehicles. Identify areas of conflict and then ways to fund the improvements. Look into traffic calming techniques. Educate all users on awareness issues. Redesign all mixed traffic intersections for safety. Install lights at intersections for better nighttime vision. Look at all of the conflict intersections to see if the issues can be resolved. Investigate the cost to address these conflicts between different users. Work with the Oklahoma City Traffic Division.*  
Comments: Underpasses and overpasses where recreation users and vehicles have to cross each other. Eliminate trail/street crossings. Investigate the use of some additional tax or fee from the existing restaurants to pay for a solution to this conflict. Big problem at East Wharf. Not feasible due to expense, look into other solutions.
- 5.2.2 Install blinking lights at appropriate street/trail intersections.  
Action: *Identify street/trail intersections that need attention and ways to fund the improvements.*
- 5.2.3 Design trails around Lake Hefner for user safety.  
Action: *Follow AASHTO, (American Association of State, Highway and Transportation Officials), design standard for trails and pathways. All Oklahoma City trails will be constructed based upon these standards. AASHTO standards were developed with safety in mind for all users.*
- 5.2.4 Educate recreation users as to the rules of the land and water. Educate lake users to keep everyone aware of the rules and regulations.  
Action: *Develop a marketing plan to educate recreational users at Lake Hefner. Work with the Parks Department.*  
Comments: How to get the word out? Signage, brochures, marketing, & etiquette signs.
- 5.2.5 Identify transportation issues at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Develop a transportation study for Lake Hefner transportation system. Look for ways to fund this through grants or other means. Develop traffic study to address "right-of-way" patterns for recreational areas. This will address conflict between recreation users. Hire a consultant to perform a transportation study for the lake area.*  
Comments: Is there a need? How much usage is there?

- 5.2.6 Develop paths for runners that are something other than concrete and asphalt.  
Action: *Natural material would be the best. Work with the running/walking groups to develop design criteria for improvements.*
- 5.2.7 Widen the trails on the east side of the lake to provide adequate space for all users.  
Action: *Look into this to see if it is necessary.*  
Comment: *Very expensive, existing trails are 6' wide, 12' wide and 18' wide.*
- 5.2.8 All intersections should be consistently signed and have the same right-of-way hierarchy for trail users and vehicles.  
Action: *Develop a program to address the conflicts at trail/street crossings between automobiles and trail users. Create a consistent signage system along the trails and lake road streets to eliminate the trail conflict between automobiles and trail users.*  
Comments: *Right now, every trail crossing has a stop sign for the trail users but not for vehicles. Sometimes the intersections have all-way stop signs for trail users and vehicles.*
- 5.2.9 Install pedestrian level lights at every location where a trail crosses a street. This will add to the safety of both trail users and vehicles in low light conditions.  
Action: *Identify intersections and funding sources for these improvements. Work with the Oklahoma City Traffic Division.*
- 5.2.10 Look into ways to control traffic by using traffic calming techniques for trail users and for automobiles.  
Action: *Investigate the different techniques to control traffic for trail users and for automobiles. Use traffic calming techniques, such as round-a-bouts and elevated pedestrian crossings.*

## User Conflicts

### Goals and Objectives

- 5.3 User Conflicts – Develop a program that reduces or eliminates conflicts between users at Lake Hefner.

### Strategies

- 5.3.1 Identify and address the conflicts between users on the Dam Road. Reducing conflicts between vehicles and trail users through proper design and regulations.  
Action: *Work with the Police Department, the Parks Department, Planning, Traffic/Public Works, and the Water Department to solve these issues, (speeding, accidents and conflicts). The outer lane of the Dam Road has traditionally been a difficult lane to travel in, especially for in-line skaters.*
- 5.3.2 Identify issues with the "cut-through" traffic along the dam road and address the problem.  
Action: *Work with the Police on this issue. Make it inconvenient for cut-through drivers. Use traffic calming techniques.*

- Action: *Install "Trail Etiquette" signs – new people using the trail need to be educated and informed.*
- Comments: Pedestrians need to pay attention to their surroundings.
- 5.3.3 Redesign the trails to avoid high and low speed of mixed-use traffic situations.  
Action: *Look into the separation of high and low speed trail traffic.*  
Comments: An enforced 25 mph speed limit would allow high-speed cyclist to use the road around the lake with no additional cost, must be enforced. Very expensive. Look into ways to solve the conflict. New trail for just high speed cyclists, (lake dam service road)?
- 5.3.4 Signs for all users to yield to slower traffic, be courteous to trail users.  
Action: *Investigate how to develop, fund and install trail hierarchy signs.*  
Comments: Need more enforcement.
- 5.3.5 Separate bike and walking trails to avoid conflict between trail users.  
Action: *Look into the possibility of completing this task.*  
Comments: Multi-use trails are very common in all major cities, along with bike routes. This is not necessary, cyclists need to announce themselves to pedestrians - trail etiquette from all users. Very Expensive to construct.
- 5.3.6 Lake Hefner reservation property - conflicts occur when recreational users and automobiles are mixed. Who has the right-of-way? Within "trail" areas, motorized vehicles should be subject to "yield to non-motorized traffic".  
Action: *Investigate to see how other cities and lake reservations have addressed this issue.*  
Comments: All recreational users, walkers, runners, in-line skaters, cyclists, etc., should specifically be given the right-of-way everywhere. Consistent signage – "Recreation/Trail User Focused" – where stop signs are only put in place for cars, consistently at every crossing around the lake. For safety reasons, it is preferred to have all users stop at each trail/vehicle intersection.
- 5.3.7 Conflict between pedestrians and bicyclists, how to reduce the number of injuries between the two users on the multi-use trail.  
Actions: *Walkers and runners should face traffic on the trail just as they would on the street.*  
Comments: How to do this on the 12' wide, multi-use trail.

## Trail/Lake Accessibility

### Goals and Objectives

- 5.4 Accessibility – Create a recreation facility where all modes of transportation can access Lake Hefner safely and conveniently.

### Strategies

- 5.4.1 Address the issue where northeast lake access from Hefner Road is a traffic hazard. During peak travel hours, it is very difficult to get on and off of Hefner Road, due to the number of cars.

Action: *Look into traffic accidents for this intersection. Consider putting up "right turn only" signs during high traffic times. Work with the Traffic Division of Public Works on this issue.*

- 5.4.2 Improve access to Lake Hefner for pedestrians and bicycles by installing bike lanes and sidewalks. Travel to and from the lake is difficult for non-motorized travel. Create trails that lead from the neighborhood to the Lake Hefner Reservation. Surrounding neighborhoods need/want access to the lake and it's trails. Bike routes and sidewalks that lead to the lake, making it convenient to bike or walk to the lake, thus reducing the need for additional parking. Enhance residential access to the trails with sidewalks and bike paths.

Action: *Develop access plan to construct sidewalks and bike lanes that lead to the lake. Provide funding for a Lake Hefner access plan that allows pedestrians and bicyclists to have proper access to the lake without the use of an automobile. Investigate funding for this, SAFETEA-LU. Use AASHTO standard for trail construction.*

- 5.4.3 Improve the parking facilities for fishermen on the east side of the lake. Presently it is difficult for fishermen to get to certain areas of the lake without having to walk a long distance.

Action: *Investigate and identify areas on the east side of Lake Hefner where fishing access can be improved.*

Comments: *New fishing access roads should not cross over existing trails.*

- 5.4.4 Parking should attract users to their activity.

Action: *Investigate future parking locations for different uses. The parking location should be convenient for the users; i.e. fishermen on the east side of the lake.*

## Other

### Goals and Objectives

- 5.5 Other – Improve and preserve access to Lake Hefner.

### Strategies

- 5.5.1 Preserve the Prairie Dog Point area for bird watching. Clean up this area and discourage cars from going off the designated roads.

Action: *Work with the Oklahoma Audubon Society to accomplish this task. Need Wildlife Management Plan first to determine what is needed.*

- 5.5.2 Designate a special area for cyclists to go fast, maybe Lake Overholser or part of the Lake Hefner Dam service roads.

Action: *Investigate if this is possible to provide an area for fast cyclists at Lake Hefner.*

- 5.5.3 No new trails along Prairie Dog Point, keep this area in a natural state to promote bird habitat and bird watching. No more additional parking lots along Prairie Dog Point.

Action: *Work with the Oklahoma Audubon Society to accomplish this task.*

- 5.5.4 Plant wildflowers and native grasses in open space areas keep the area natural.  
Action: *Work with the Parks Department.*

## 6 Public Improvements:

Preserve and enhance public outdoor recreational facilities on the Lake Hefner Reservation for the health and benefit of all.

### Background Information

Public improvements consist of any capital improvements on public property. This may include; improvements to boat docks, fishing piers, boat ramps, lighting, streets, trails, signage, landscaping, gravel roads, parking areas, native areas, lake dam, parks, playground equipment, benches, water fountains, and bridges. Provide design guidelines and users review of preliminary and final development plans. Trail user safety is important, we must work to prevent accidents and educate the trails users that the Lake Hefner trails are for all users and not just one group. Increase in trail use will increase the number of conflicts and accidents.

### Multi-Use Trails

#### Goals and Objectives

- 6.1 Multi-use Trails – Improve trails around Lake Hefner that will provide a safe and efficient system.

#### Strategies

- 6.1.1 Develop a trail system that is handicap accessible and safe for all users.  
Action: *Identify areas to improve accessibility for handicap citizens and locate funding sources.*
- 6.1.2 Identify and address the conflict between different trail users.  
Action: *Reduce the number of trail/street crossings. Identify areas where conflicts occur between trail users and automobiles and work to eliminate these street crossings.*

### Fishing

#### Goals and Objectives

- 6.2 Fishing – Improve fishing facilities that provide proper access and convenience.

#### Strategies

- 6.2.1 Improve the fishing access on the East Shore of Lake Hefner and other areas of the Lake. Create additional access points for fishing around the lake.  
Action: *Create accessible areas for bank fishing on the east side of Lake Hefner near Hefner Road and Britton Road. Use Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Sport Fishing Restoration funds to accomplish this action. Identify funding sources and areas that need to be improved. Identify matching dollars to apply for Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Funds.*
- 6.2.2 Improve dam road fishing access, especially for the handicapped.  
Action: *Create areas around the lake that allow handicap fishermen access to the lake.*
- 6.2.3 Improve deepwater fishing with a floating dock, ADA compliant.

- Action: *Identify areas for deepwater fishing and funding to construct the new dock.*
- 6.2.4 Identify improvements to the existing fishing piers and enclosed fishing dock.  
Action: *Determine the need for improvements and a funding source.*
- 6.2.5 Improve the fishing habitat at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Work with the Oklahoma City Fisheries Biologist and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to identify a need and develop a program. This could include natural, man-made structures and aquatic vegetation.*  
Comments: This should already exist through the Parks Department's fish hatchery program and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.
- 6.2.6 Create a new fish cleaning facility and weigh-in station.  
Action: *Install an area for fish cleaning near the fishing docks. Identify an area for such improvements and a funding source.*
- 6.2.7 Upgrade existing fishing docks and piers.  
Action: *Install proper lighting at the fishing piers and docks. These docks and piers should also have electricity.*

## Boating

### Goals and Objectives

- 6.3 Boating – Create a boat facility that is both secure and functional.

### Strategies

- 6.3.1 Improve existing boat dock facilities.  
Action: *Develop a boat facility maintenance program for the city docks, gates, locks and electricity.*
- 6.3.2 Improve the public boat ramps and docks and install a new service ramp.  
Action: *Extend the existing shallow boat ramps and construct a new service ramp.*  
Comments: Is a new ramp needed, or just update/improve what is there? May be expensive due to the shallow water depth.
- 6.3.3 Increase the number of natural areas where boats can beach. Create a soft beach area where boats can beach.  
Action: *Work with the Water Department to determine if a soft beach area is appropriate.*
- 6.3.4 Maintain harbor lights to assist boats through the harbor.  
Action: *Work with Water Department.*  
Comments: Navigation lights and illumination exists already, but is not maintained.
- 6.3.5 Install a new sailboat ramp at Hobie Point, for catamarans and smaller sail boats.  
Action: *Work with the following groups, catamaran group, Hobie Point group, kayak group, Water Department and Parks Departments.*  
Comments: This is a very shallow area, the boat ramp may not be usable at certain times of the year.

## Sailing

### Goals and Objectives

- 6.4 Sailing – Enhance the existing sailing facilities for Lake Hefner.

### Strategies

- 6.4.1 Develop a public launch area for catamarans, could be combined with small centerboard boat launch area. Improve the boat launching area at Hobie Point that will allow a launch area for the small sailboats, catamaran, and kayaks.  
Action: *Install a new boat ramp at Hobie Point. Work with the Water and Parks Departments to determine a location and a funding source.*
- 6.4.2 Locate catamaran launch area should be near the storage area.  
Action: *Work with the Water and Parks Departments to determine a location and a funding source.*  
Comments: The launch area should be close to the boat ramps. With the present situation, the ramp and launch area are located away from the storage area. This means that the catamaran owners have to load their boats, take down the mast and road them to the storage area, which results in a lot of extra work.
- 6.4.3 Preserve existing wind patterns for sailboats at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Restricting development through overlay zoning or other controls will work to achieve this goal.*
- 6.4.4 Preserve existing natural setting of Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Set design guidelines/criteria for any new development that will preserve the natural beauty of Lake Hefner. Example, 1-story height limits for new structures, create a buffer where new development cannot be placed near the lake.*
- 6.4.5 Preserve recreational uses at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Set guidelines where any new development should be for recreation use only.*

## Water/Sewer

### Goals and Objectives

- 6.5 Water/Sewer – Address any deficiencies in the existing water/sewer system around Lake Hefner.

### Strategies

- 6.5.1 Provide more amenities for recreation users at the lake.  
Action: *Install additional restrooms around the lake. Install additional temporary toilets around the lake. Install additional temporary toilets in additional locations around the lake, maybe one at Kids Lake. Clean at least twice a week.*  
Comments: Permanent restrooms will not be installed, mainly due to maintenance and vandalism issues.

- 6.5.2 Determine if there is a need to improve the sewage lifting station located near the East Wharf.  
Action: *Look into the sewage lift station near East Wharf, to see if there is a problem. Check with the Water Department.*  
Comments: *Problem exists, the odor continues.*
- 6.5.3 Provide water stations for recreation users.  
Action: *Add new water fountains and keep these open year round.*

## **Streets**

### **Goals and Objectives**

- 6.6 Streets – Maintain the existing street system around the lake and keep automobile traffic at a minimum. Safety of recreational users is important.

### **Strategies**

- 6.6.1 Improve the existing gravel roads on the west side of the lake, north of the canal, making them an all-weather, hard surface.  
Action: *Discuss this with the Water Department to determine if it is feasible.*  
Comments: *This means, more surface run-off, will the Water Department allow this?*
- 6.6.2 Control the speed of traffic coming into the East Wharf area.  
Action: *Use traffic calming techniques, such as speed humps and elevated pedestrian crossings to slow automobile traffic and trail traffic.*
- 6.6.3 Control cars driving off of the paved or gravel roads.  
Action: *Determine ways to control vehicles from driving off the gravel and paved roads. Work with the Parks and Water Department to address this issue.*  
Comments: *Increase enforcement.*
- 6.6.4 Retain the low volume traffic status on the lake roads. Action: *Work with the traffic division.*  
Comments: *How to accomplish this?*
- 6.6.5 Control vehicular traffic around the Lake.  
Action: *Designate all roads around the lake as low-volume, low speed roadways. Work with the traffic division.*  
Comments: *How to accomplish this?*

## **Golf Course**

### **Goals and Objectives**

- 6.7 Golf Course – Enhance the existing golf course without negatively affecting other recreational uses.
- 6.7.1 Identify golf course improvement needs, and provide a funding source to make improvements at Lake Hefner Golf Course.  
Action: *Work with the Parks Department to identify needs. Should be in the City's Capital Improvement Program.*

**Parks****Goals and Objectives**

- 6.8 Parks – Develop a useable, aesthetically pleasing and functional park space around Lake Hefner.

**Strategies**

- 6.8.1 Consider an outdoor theater/community center for group entertainment, i.e. concerts by high school bands, choral groups, Stars & Stripes Park area.  
Action: *Look into building a Community Center at Stars and Stripes Park. This development should have strict noise, traffic and light controls. Work with Parks Department.*  
Comments: *Maybe consider the Northwest Expressway site as a location for a community center.*
- 6.8.2 Develop a sustainable maintenance program for Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Natural grasses should be used, ones that do not need to be maintained, resulting in lower maintenance costs. Wildfire control should be taken into consideration. Work with Parks Department.*
- 6.8.3 Develop control over new or proposed development. Involve lake user groups into the design of the facilities. An oversight design review process.  
Action: *Develop design review guidelines for any development around Lake Hefner that includes user group review of preliminary and final development plans. Work with the Planning Department.*

**Kite Sailing/Sailboarding****Goals and Objectives**

- 6.9 Kite Sailing/Sailboarding – Develop a plan to enhance and maintain the kite sailing and sailboarding area at Lake Hefner.

**Strategies**

- 6.9.1 Identify and address present beach area needs.  
Action: *Evaluate existing conditions to determine what improvements are needed at the Kite Sailing/Sailboarding beach area. Work with the local Kite Sailing/Sailboarding groups to determine the needs and concerns.*
- 6.9.2 Beach erosion appears to be a problem that needs attention. Determine the amount of erosion that has occurred and address the issue.  
Action: *Work with the Water Department. Erosion mitigation plan.*

**Other****Goals and Objectives**

- 6.10 Other – Maintain existing facilities to improve the usability and safety of the lake facilities.

**Strategies**

- 6.10.1 All utilities should be underground for safety. Many boats have tall masts that need to be transported on the road. Relocate all existing above-ground utilities to below ground.  
Action: *Look into the implementation of this request.*  
Comments: Relocating utilities below ground is very expensive. Identify funding source to address this issue.
- 6.10.2 Develop land area south of Grand Boulevard with a picnic areas and a kids fishing pond.  
Action: *Work with the Parks Department.*  
Comments: Need to identify this location and justify the need for additional picnic area.
- 6.10.3 Investigate an overlay zone similar to the scenic river.  
Action: *Work with Planning Department.*
- 6.10.4 There is a need to look into the East Wharf leases with the City to see if any of the proceeds can be used to make improvements at the lake.  
Action: *Check with the City Clerks Office or the Water Department.*  
Comment: This is public record.
- 6.10.5 Determine the best use for the land south of Grand Boulevard.  
Action: *Work with the Parks and Water Departments.*  
Comments: The ponds located on this property could be used for fishing. Check into the "Close to Home" grant program for this project.
- 6.10.6 Develop an oversight committee that could meet on a regular basis to identify and resolve issues.  
Action: *This would be a non-city organized committee that could report issues back to Oklahoma City to be addressed. City staff could attend the meetings and gather input from citizens.*
- 6.10.7 Develop a consistent signage system at Lake Hefner.  
Action: *Work with the Parks Department and the Water Department to develop a consistent signage program at Lake Hefner. Integrate signage that is consistent with other recreational areas and have specific directional signage, informational signage and traffic signage. Develop design standards for signage.*