

## **Focus 2020 Lake Development Committee**

**Date: 3-12-09**

### **Core Purpose/Focus**

Determine improvements and strategies that will create greater opportunities for the general public, both locally and regionally, to become more engaged with the uses of the lake and its surrounding shores.

### **Vision**

To see Lake Mitchell and the surrounding shores become a major destination for local and regional recreation and entertainment enthusiasts through increased awareness of improved and maintained trails, facilities, lake access, and water quality.

### **Findings & Supporting Information**

#### ***Information Gathering:***

The information was gathered through observation tours, community input, discussions from representatives who are either members of or employed by local organization i.e. (Bass Fishermen, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Mitchell Park and Recreation Department, Mitchell Bike Trail Committee, Mitchell Lake Development Committee, and Mitchell City Council).

#### ***Findings:***

The major inhibitors for development and usage of Lake Mitchell

1. Lack of proper maintenance at access points and lake shore
2. Lack of quality asphalt parking at access points
3. Lack of quality well maintained facilities and trails for boaters and recreation enthusiasts
4. Lack of marketing and signage to create an awareness of the current and future lake recreation opportunities
5. Lack of funding
6. Citizen's perception of Lake Mitchell
7. Water quality
8. Lack of a formal lake enhancement plan

#### ***Supporting Information:***

The Focus 2020 Lake Development Committee looked at some of the different events and recreation activities that occur or could occur with upgrades to infrastructure or facilities, on the lake or on its surrounding shores.

### ***Spring, Summer, and Fall Events***

1. Fishing tournaments
2. Fishing leagues
3. Sailing competitions
4. Wind Surfing
5. Wakeboarding/skiing/kite boarding competitions
6. Walkathons (once the trails are complete)
7. Triathlons (once the trails are complete)
8. Road bike races (once the trails are complete)
9. Roller Blade Races (once the trails are complete)
10. 5 or 10K beer run or a run for a nonprofit (once the trails are complete)
11. Dirt BMX or Mountain Bike Races
12. Lawn Bowling/Bocce Ball League and Tournaments
13. Golfing Leagues and Tournaments
14. Soccer Leagues and Tournaments
15. Bird Watching
16. Geocaching
17. Native Plant tours w/Indian Village
18. Indian Cultural Shows w/Indian Village
19. Art Shows
20. Music Festivals (Amphitheater)
21. Battle of Bands (Amphitheater)
22. Music Concerts (Amphitheater)
23. Plays (Amphitheater)

### ***Winter Events***

1. Ice Fishing Tournaments
2. Snowmobiling
3. Ice Carving
4. Ice Skating Area
5. Broom Ball / Hockey Area
6. Snow Shoeing
7. Cross country Skiing
8. Winter Survival Lessons (Indian Village)
9. Polar Plunge for Non Profit
10. Winter Festivals

With these activities in mind, and having consulted with a number of community members we considered what it would take to enhance and add facilities that make Lake Mitchell area a destination for recreation and entertainment enthusiast alike.

### ***Water Quality***

Water quality was discussed with representatives from the USDA. Their current main efforts occur on creating a buffer zone around the Firesteel Creek Watershed area to help filter out much of the nitrogen and phosphorus that enters in the watershed via livestock operations and fertilizers on agriculture fields. They currently send out mailers to lake residents recommending the use of non phosphorous or low phosphorous fertilizers, but otherwise do not work directly on the water in the lake. Their assessment of the lake was to determine a way to kill algae, or move water enough to disrupt its growth. Their focus is on the watershed, or the source of the problem, but they stated that it would be very positive if the city also looked at the potential solutions for the lake water specifically.

### ***Indian Village Amphitheater***

Indian Village Amphitheater Proposal was presented to the Focus 2020 quality of life committee, lake development committee, and visitor development committee. The major feedback from these three groups consisting of about 50 people total was very positive. Their recommendation was to see how this year's event worked out and then next proceed from there.

## **Recommendations**

Along with the below short and long term ***Areas For Enhancement***, the Focus 2020 Lake Development committee would recommend putting time and resources towards the following items on a short, medium, and long term basis.

### ***Bike and Walking Trails:***

Create and maintain an extensive bike and walking trail system that runs around the lake creating a number of loops for variety, accessibility, and flexibility for users of all ages. With access to these trails from all parts of Mitchell, a system for recreation, exercise, and enjoyment is created for all the citizens of Mitchell and tourists or guest from surrounding regions.

### ***Completion Date Proposed***

- a. To the Soccer Field: Completion within 2 years
- b. Around east side of lake: Completion within 5 years
- c. Pea Rock trail along Indian village road: Completion within 2 years
- d. Bike Trail extension from North Ohlman Street to West end Bridge
  - i. Pea Rock or Gravel: Complete in 5 years
  - ii. Asphalt overlayment: Complete within 8 years
- e. Bike Trail extensions into residential areas around Mitchell: 8-20 years

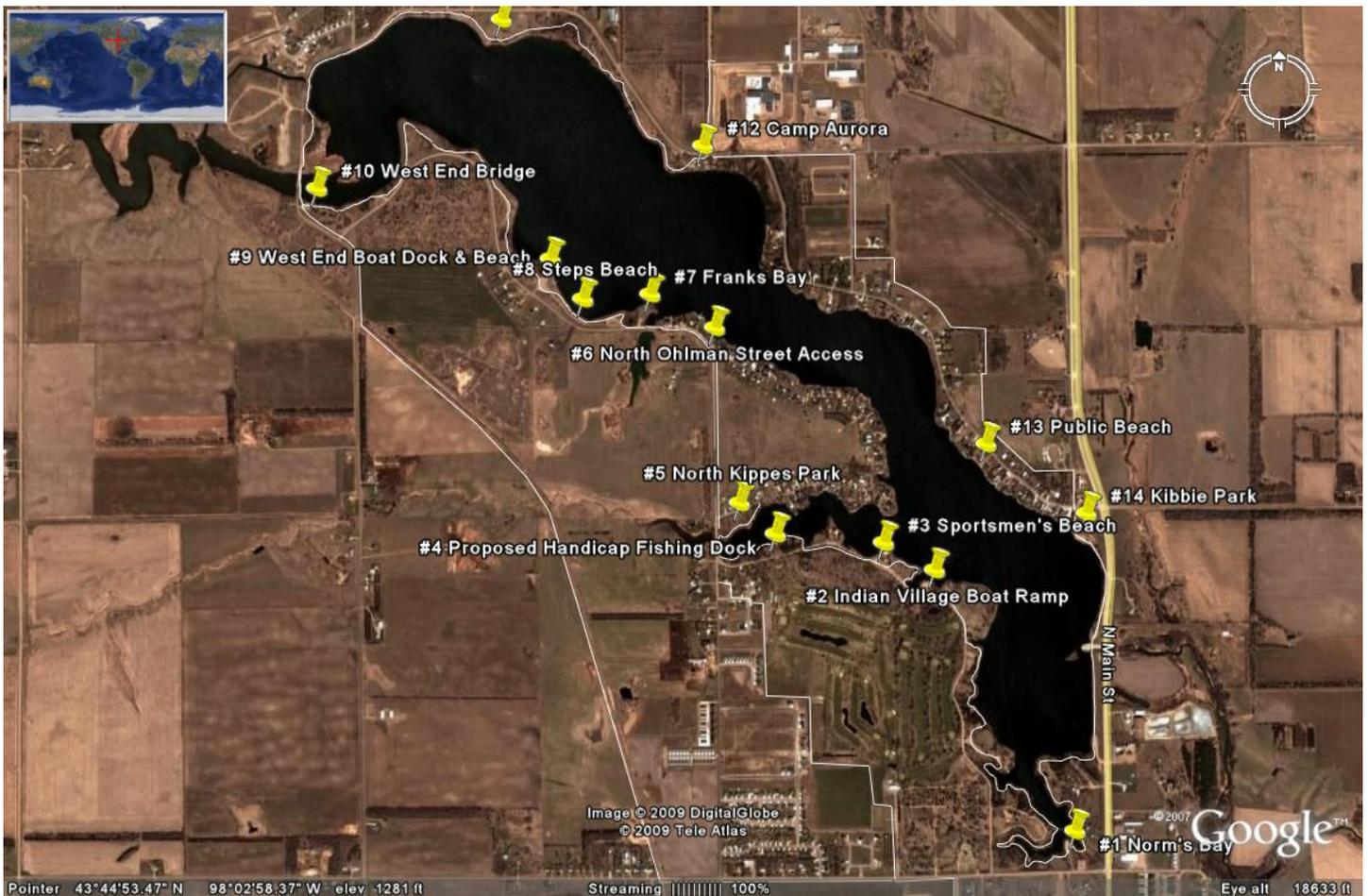
### ***Water Quality: Completion within 20 years***

Continue the effort to minimize the algae and improve the water quality of Lake Mitchell and the Lake Mitchell Water Shed. Improved water quality will only enhance the perception of the lake as a top notch recreational destination for local residents and tourists alike.

**Indian Village Amphitheater: Completion if approved within 5 years**

Pending findings by the city of Mitchell for this year's Indian Village 4<sup>th</sup> of July Brule Performance, the Lake Development committee strongly recommends the development of this site for outdoor concerts, plays, and other entertainment opportunities specifically for the effect a major tourism draw of this scale could have on the overall tourism dollars spent in the city of Mitchell. A recent survey done by the Mitchell Chamber of Commerce found that people who stopped to stay overnight in Mitchell were looking for entertainment opportunities during the evening hours. The Indian Village Amphitheater would fill that void and potentially persuade even more visitors to stop and stay in Mitchell for at least one evening. Though more information gathering needs to occur in the future, we feel the amphitheater project has great potential and should be pursued now and in the future.

**Lake Mitchell Points for Enhancement Map**



## **Short Term Areas for Enhancement Goals by Priority**

*Completion Within 5-10 years*

### **1. Frank's Bay: #7**

- a. Handicap fishing pier
- b. Side walk to fishing pier
- c. Enlarged asphalt parking
- d. Handicap restroom facilities
- e. Clean up and add sand to enhance beach area
- f. Fill swamp area to include a slight grade and rain garden for drainage, plant native buffalo grass, and build picnic shelter within this area surrounded by the current large deciduous trees. Trim off dead branches from trees.

### **2. Indian Village Boat Ramp: #2**

- a. Asphalt parking area
- b. Fill in swamp while creating rain garden for natural drainage and then expand parking
- c. Widen boat ramp area to allow 2 Lanes for boats to load and unload
- d. Take 3 trees out that are directly in line with boat ramp. Plant 3 trees in other location
- e. Seawall for 3 to 5 boats to tie to, with a connecting board walk for easy and clean transition from boat to vehicle and trailer.
- f. Improve small beach area to east
- g. Boat wash down area
- h. Fish cleaning area with rinse station
- i. Running water bathroom and shower/rinse off area
- j. Boardwalk or maintained trail from boat ramp to Sportsmen's club park

### **3. Sportsmen's Beach: # 3**

- a. Add Dock to East Side of Beach
- b. Add Sand
- c. Grade gravel parking
- d. Add Round rocks between Sportsmen's Beach and Day Camp for bank stabilization and fish habitat.

### **4. North Ohlman Street Access: #6**

- a. New dock
- b. Sand maintenance

### **5. Public Beach: #13**

- a. Add jetties to hold sand (See Design By Larry Jirsa and Randy Ahrendt at Park & Rec.)
- b. Maintenance of sand beach
- c. Bathroom maintenance or add bathrooms with running water & shower
- d. Add access point from potential future bike trail

**6. Sandy Beach: #11**

- a. Create Shelter in the middle of the horse shoe to stop circular access
- b. Add grass around shelter
- c. Add Asphalt Drive and Parking to both sides of shelter
- d. Allow grass around the rest of the hills to grow longer for better natural filtration and less mowing expense.
- e. Add Boat Dock for Boats to tie to for those using beach for skiing lessons.
- f. Stabilize all shoreline areas except for beach area with Round rock.
- g. Add Bathrooms/shower with running water.

**7. West End Bridge: #10**

- a. Maintenance of Bathroom Facilities
- b. Remove small trees from round rocks around bridge

***Long Term Areas for Enhancement by Priority***

*Completion within 10-15 years*

**1. West End Boat Dock and Beach: #9**

- a. Asphalt Parking and Drive
- b. Boat Wash Down
- c. Fish Cleaning Area
- d. Bathrooms/Shower
- e. Improve and grade low slope access to beach
- f. Add Shelter in Tree Area for extra shade and access to grass.

**2. Norm's Bay Gateway to the Lake: #1**

- a. Large Signage showing location of lake area's recreation opportunities
- b. Asphalt Paving & Parking
- c. Create low sloped walking access to Lakes Edge
- d. Rent 1 or 2 Solar Bee Aerators for Testing Purpose (Up to 35 surface acres per unit), or some other technology to test in this area.
- e. Buy Commercial Property on corner of Cemetery Road and North Main Street/Hwy 37 and create the gateway to the lake by expanding this area to have access to bike trails, walking trails, the lake, fishing, canoe access, the campground, Indian Village Amphitheater, and more.
- f. Create statues of recreation opportunities that are available on and around the lake, that start at 7<sup>th</sup> and Main and are place every block or two until North Main turns into Hwy 37. This will create an awareness and a reason for tourist

**3. Kippes Bay Handicap Accessible Fishing Pier: #4**

- a. Asphalt Parking
- b. Trimming of trees to access and see lake
- c. Asphalt Low Slope Trail to Fishing Dock
- d. New Handicap Fishing Dock

**4. North Kippes Park: #5**

- a. Asphalt Access Road and Parking Area
- b. Park Playground Area and Playground Equipment
- c. Picnic Shelter
- d. Bathrooms

**5. Kibbie Park: #14**

- a. Asphalt Parking and Drive
- b. Maintenance of Bathroom Facilities

**6. Steps Beach: #8**

- a. Shoreline Stabilization
- b. Add Sand
- c. Add Shelter
- d. Add Trees
- e. Make a single road and convert to grass other area

**7. Camp Arroya: #12**

- a. Enhance structures and nature area
- b. Promote through marketing efforts
- c. Look at potential of adding small cabins for rent
- d. Create complementary service off of the soccer complex either through recreation, accommodation, or sales of food or other in demand items.

**Project Champion**

The project champion for Lake Development will be the City Lake Development Committee.

It is our recommendation that the City Lake Development Committee be restarted with the option for the mayor to appoint the Focus 2020 Lake Development Committee to be the new City Lake Development Committee. Since the current City Lake Development Committee has been inactive for the past 12 months we feel this is a reasonable option. Other members from the current city lake committee would be welcome join this group as well.

1. We also look to team with the chamber beautification committee on projects that can be complete by volunteers and a minimal amount of funding.
2. The Mitchell Park and Recreation Department will be a major component to making enhancements to the lake shores a reality.
3. The Coordination and integration of other entities such as the Kiwanis Club, Bike Trail Committee, Soccer Association, and many other organizations throughout the community will be imperative to making the above goals become a reality.

### **Funding Source Options**

1. \$50,000 in park and recreation funds currently set aside for access enhancements
2. Beautification funding from Chamber/City
3. Reducing some mowing funds and using them to accomplish tree trimming or access maintenance.
4. Potential access sales of access points that are the smallest and are the least accessible for local residents.
5. Sell two lots near Camp Arroya
6. City Funds
7. Private Donations
8. Fund Raising through races, or other recreation events
9. Adopt a trail or portion of lake area to maintain
10. Sales of signage sponsorships
11. Grants for Trails
12. Grants for Accessibility Programs
13. Grants for Clean Water (EPA)

### **Areas for Further Study:**

1. Further Study on Camp Arroya
2. Further Study of a primitive campground near the current campground or at Camp Arroya
3. Extension of trail system to James River area