

THE OKLAHOMA CITY PARK SYSTEM

By

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Bachelor of Science

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Stillwater, Oklahoma

1952

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of
the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
August, 1955

THE OKLAHOMA CITY PARK SYSTEM

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PREFACE

This geographic study considers the history and development of the Oklahoma City Park System from its beginning to the present. An evaluation is made of its present facilities, present needs, and plans for future growth and development. The importance of the parks to the community is also stressed.

The writer lived in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for two years during boyhood, and since has lived the major portion of his life nearby. He has developed an overall interest in the affairs of the city as well as a special interest in the park system.

Inasmuch as there is very little published material that would be of value to a study of this type, the writer has had to rely on field study, personal interviews with several members of the Oklahoma City Park Department, and on correspondence with the park superintendents of cities in this section of the country. Pertinent references have been utilized and cited. It should also be noted that many opinions listed are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily express the belief of the officials of the various cities concerned.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. David C. Winslow, Associate Professor of Geography, Oklahoma A. & M. College, for his valuable suggestions and supervision in preparation of this thesis. Sincere appreciation is also due Dr. Edward E. Keso, Professor of Geography, and other members of the Department of Geography for their aid and encouragement in its preparation.

To Mr. R. R. Murphy, Superintendent of the Oklahoma City Park Department, who so generously furnished information and material, and to members of his staff, Mr. Julian Frazier, Director of Lincoln Park Zoo, Mr. Alvin R. Eggeling, Recreation Director, and Mr. Henry Walters, City Horticulturist, the writer also expresses his gratitude.

The writer is also indebted to the park department officials of Dallas, Texas; Des Moines, Iowa; Fort Worth, Texas; Omaha, Nebraska; Memphis, Tennessee; Shreveport, Louisiana; and Wichita, Kansas, for their prompt and considerate attention to the questionnaire mailed them.

L. R. D.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma City Park System, which is the object of this study, is located within the municipality of Oklahoma City or its environs. Hence, a geographical analysis is made of the city itself with references to the parks.

Oklahoma City, the capital of the state of Oklahoma, is located in the southwest part of Oklahoma County, approximately seven miles from the geographical center of the United States.¹

Probably no city in the history of the United States sprang into existence any more spectacularly than did Oklahoma City. On the morning of April 22, 1889, the present site of Oklahoma City included the Santa Fe Railroad track, a depot, a section house, a water tank, an agent's house, and a few other small buildings. By sundown of the same day the land run, that opened the territory that included the site of Oklahoma City, had brought approximately 10,000 people to the fledgling city. The population tapered off in the ensuing months, but in 1890 the city had a population of 4,500. This figure rose to 64,000 by 1910, and by 1950 the city had grown to a population of 243,000 people.

Oklahoma City is located in a fertile agriculture region and it is in the midst of one of the leading oil and gas districts in the world. It is also the leading commercial, financial, industrial, and

¹C. J. Bollinger, Geography of Oklahoma, (Chicago, 1930), p. 7.

shipping center of the state, with some of its leading products being beer, feeds, flour, meats, petroleum products, oil field machinery, and tools.²

Oklahoma City was able to assume this importance largely because it was centrally located in the state, on the boundary between the hard winter wheat Belt and the Cotton Belt, and was early in its history served by a radiating network of highways and railroads.

Physiography

The site upon which Oklahoma City is built is a rolling, treeless, prairie with an average elevation of about 1,200 feet above sea level.

Two main stream channels cut this prairie in an easterly and westerly direction. The North Fork of the Canadian River is the more important of these and forms a serious barrier between the main business district and the south part of the Capitol Hill section. This stream has a wide flat valley and is subject to occasional disastrous floods.³ These floods have at times been a menace to the whole southern part of the city and several of the city's parks. The 1923 flood destroyed the zoo, which was at that time located in Wheeler Park, and was instrumental in its removal to another section of the city. A large flood control project is now under construction on the river in Oklahoma City.

The Deep Fork Valley, crossing the northerly section of Oklahoma City, is the sharper and more rugged of the two main stream channels which run through the city. This stream is occasionally subject to

²The Encyclopedia Americana, (New York, 1946), Vol. XX., p. 641.

³Bollinger, op. cit., p. 7.

flash floods that do considerable damage. For instance, on May 11, 1955, after several days of heavy rainfall, the Deep Fork left its banks and did widespread damage to the surrounding residential areas and park properties.

There is a low ridge which crosses Oklahoma City about half way between the two major streams. Generally, however, the townsite is free from topographical difficulties, and parks located on such lands are relatively easy to maintain. There is little solid rock, to increase the expense of utility construction, and the surface is level enough not to involve heavy gradients, yet level enough to provide an adequate drainage system.

Red beds of sandstone and shale form the bedrock in Oklahoma City and vicinity. These formations produce desirable natural building materials, and construction through the use of these bright colored materials has added to the beauty and utility of the Oklahoma City Park System. These beds, which are 1,200 feet to 1,600 feet thick, extend from the Kansas border on the north to the Red River on the south and from the area just east of Oklahoma City to the Oklahoma and Texas border on the west. The beds get their bright red color from their iron oxide content.

The soil around and in Oklahoma City is of the dark brown variety with clay subsoils. These come under the major classification of Pedalfers. Oklahoma City is, however, near the margin between Pedalfers and Pedocals and its minor classification would come under Prairyerths, which are unexcelled as humid soils. The rich soils help to account for the abundant vegetation that can be grown in the Oklahoma City Parks and in the city in general, providing enough moisture is available.

The natural vegetation in and around Oklahoma City, where it has not been removed, consists of bluestem prairie grass. There is, however, a difference in the vegetation of the river valley area around Wheeler Park as compared with the more upland areas in Lincoln and other parks.

Climate

Oklahoma City, according to the Trewartha Climate Classification system, is located in a humid subtropical climate region. (Caf) To be within this type of region its characteristics include the coldest month averaging below 64° F but above 32° F, and having at least one month above 71.6° F during the summer. The temperature in Oklahoma City during January, the coldest month, is 37.6° F and during July, the hottest month, is 81.6° F.⁴ Lacking extremes of temperature, the climate is particularly suitable for wild animals. In fact, Hugo, Oklahoma, is a favorite wintering place for circuses.

Rainfall in Oklahoma City is distributed rather equally throughout the seasons with no distinct dry season. The maximum amount of rainfall is received during May, with a secondary maximum occurring in September. The total average rainfall over a forty-year period was 31.15 inches. Park utilization is little handicapped by precipitation; rain falls quickly and the skies soon clear.

The average date for the last killing frost in Oklahoma City is March 28, and the average date of the first killing frost is November 7. This gives an average growing season for the city of 224 days, quite favorable for plant growth. However, a wide fluctuation from year to

⁴Glen H. Trewartha, An Introduction to Climate, (New York, 1954), p. 235.

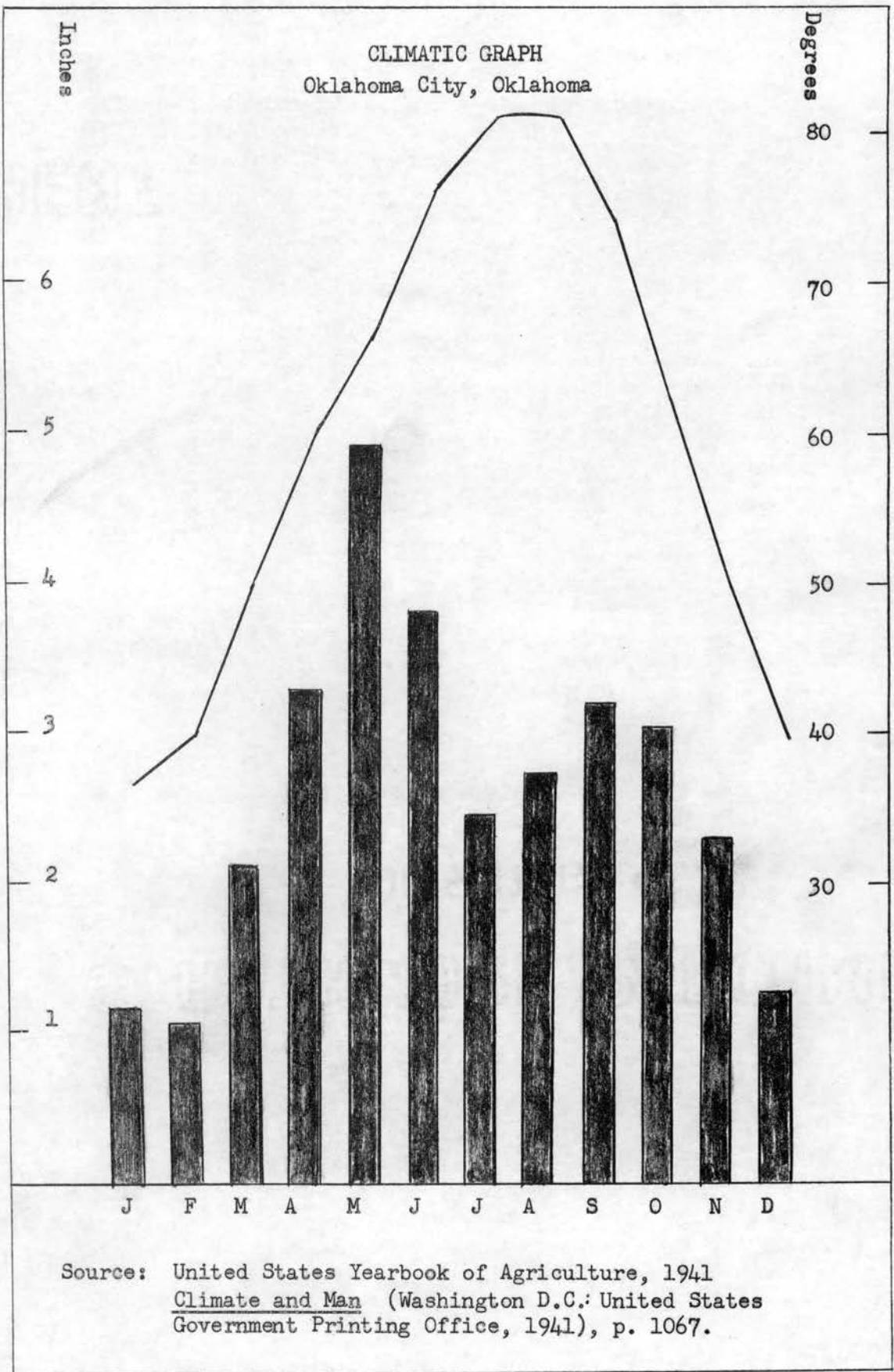


Figure 1

year has been recorded in the time of the first and last killing frost. The earliest Spring killing frost was recorded on February 21, 1955, and the latest last killing frost was recorded on April 30, 1907. This was a difference of over two months. The earliest Fall killing frost was recorded on October 19, 1917, and the latest Fall killing frost was recorded on December 1, 1934.⁵ Sometimes these frosts are damaging to the park vegetation and increase maintenance costs.

The very heavy late freeze occurring during the week of March 22-28, 1955, for example, did very heavy damage to all except the most hardy plants all over the city. Mr. Henry Walters, Park Department Horticulturist, reported that to say the freeze did thousands of dollars damage to the park department plants was a conservative estimate. The final story of the total damage according to Mr. Walters cannot be told for several months until it can be seen how many rose bushes, trees, and shrubs that were obviously heavily damaged by the freeze actually die.⁶

While the average growing season of 224 days is ample for most sub-tropical plants grown in the city park areas, the wide range in year to year growing seasons ranging from 194 for the shortest to 257 for the longest makes it extremely hard for some of the marginal plants to survive over a long period of years.

The prevailing wind direction for the city is southerly, although in December, January, and February northerly winds predominate. Wind-breaks are desirable in some of the parks. The average hourly velocity

⁵United States Yearbook of Agriculture, Climate and Man, (Washington, D. C., 1941), pp. 1067-1069.

⁶Henry Walters, Park Department Horticulturist, personal interview, Oklahoma City, April, 1955.

at Oklahoma City is 11.4 miles an hour, while the monthly averages vary from slightly more than nine miles an hour in August, to nearly 14 miles in March and April. The highest recorded wind velocity for a five-minute period at Oklahoma City was 57 miles an hour. Occasional high winds are damaging to plants and to park structures.

The average annual number of clear days is 195, partly cloudy 90, and cloudy 80. Sunshine is abundant, averaging about 66 per cent of the possible amount.⁷ Park utilization, therefore, is heavier than in less favored cities. The relative humidity is, except in rare cases, quite low and as a result of this most of the animals in the zoo can stand the heat of over 100° F, so common in July and August, better than animals in some cities with a high relative humidity might stand a temperature of 85° F.

The dry air and hot winds, so common with the summer months, often have a very undesirable effect on plants. Usually only the most hardy can live through the late summer months without constant watering and many, even with the aid of supplemental water applications, often die. Maintenance is quite difficult at times and serious losses are suffered during some dry periods. The parks are little used during dust-blowing periods, to the detriment of concessions.

Physical factors are generally favorable for the development and maintenance of park facilities in the city proper and its environs. Only extreme elements of nature are particularly detrimental, such as heavy storms and dust-blowing periods. Present and future appear quite satisfactory in park planning as far as natural features of the environment are concerned.

⁷United States Yearbook of Agriculture, Climate and Man, (Washington, D. C., 1941), pp. 1067-1069.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF OKLAHOMA CITY PARK SYSTEM

The first land acquired for the Oklahoma City Park System was in 1902, thirteen years after the founding of the municipality, when Brock Park containing forty acres and Wheeler Park containing forty-three acres were purchased. Both of these original park properties are located in the southwest section of the city. Wheeler Park for a number of years was the city's most important park. It was here that the first zoo was established in 1902. It continued to serve in this capacity until 1933 when the animals were removed to Lincoln Park after a disastrous flood. Wheeler Park is steadily declining in overall importance because of increased use of other parks. The years in which the various park properties were purchased can be seen in Table I.

During the period 1909-1912 Lincoln, Prosper, Will Rogers, and Addison, the four largest parks, each located in what was at that time a corner of the city, were acquired. The idea behind these purchases was the establishment of a large outlying park in each direction beyond the central part of the city. The very rapid city growth that was later to occur was not anticipated and at the present time these four parks, once so far from the settled areas of the city, are now being bypassed by new housing and business developments.

As can be seen in Table II, the period between 1900, when there was no park acreage, and 1910, when there was 1,503.89 acres, was the period of largest growth, areally, for the Oklahoma City Park System.

TABLE I
PARKS IN OKLAHOMA CITY*

Name of Park	Location	Date acquired
Airport Heights	SW 36th & Tulsa	1929
Alice Barn	NE 15th & Classon	1911
Bath Center	NE 14th & Missouri	1947
Brock	SW 29th & Pennsylvania	1902
Campbell	Park to 13th & Broadway	1928
Canyon	NW 56th & Walker	1912
Civic Center	Shartel to Santa Fe R.R.	1928
Corbin	NW 12th & Tulsa	1930
Creston Hills	NE 19th & Merrimac	1928
Crown Heights	NE 38th & Shartel	1931
Culbertson	NE 13th & Stonewall	1919
Dolbear	Exchange-Western on Tona	1912
Dominston	SW 25th & Dominston Blvd	1939
Douglas	NE 75th & Walker	1911
Draper	44th & Oklahoma	1911
Eggenere	SW 33rd & Harvey	1928
Edwards (C)	NE 16th & Grand Blvd	1933
Englewood	NE 10th & Pennsylvania	1912
Fair	SE 8th & Eastern	1917
Flower Garden	SE 46th & Classon	1929
Frost Heights	SE 26th & Phillips	1930
Glen Ellyn	NE 23rd & Glen Ellyn	1931
Goff	NW 12th & Goff	1916
Goodholm	NE 25th & Robinson	1909
Harden	NE 27th & Creston Drive	1929
Hightley	NE 8th & Virginia	1912
Lafayette	SW 45th & Walker	1928
Lincoln	NE 36th & Easton	1909
Linwood	NE 19th & Drexel	1912
Linwood Center	NW 14th & Woodward	1946
May	SW 33rd & May	1929
McKinley	NW 12th & McKinley	1933
McMechan	NE 15th & McMechan	1931

* as of 1949; excluding parkways.

TABLE I (Concluded)
PARKS IN OKLAHOMA CITY

Name of Park	Location	Date Acquired
McLabb	NE 36th & Kelley	1911
Meadowbrook	NW 10th & Quapan	1950
Memorial	NW 35th & Classen	1922
Meridian	NW 16th & Meridian	1930
Military	NW 24th & Classen	1926
Oliver	SW 29th & Broadway	1923
Pilot Center	Washington & Dewey	1948
Ravenwood Manor	NW 63rd & Kelley	1931
Recreation Center	7th & Shartel	1907
Reed	NW 12th & May	1912
Riverside (C)	NE California & Central	1909
Rose	SE 40th & Highland	1925
Rotary	SW 15th & Blackwelder	1924
St. 14th (C)	SW 14th & Harvey	1948
Sparrow	NW 29th & Harvey	1909
St. Clair	SW 22nd & St. Clair	1928
Steri	NE Pioneer & Portland	1931
Stiles	NE 8th & Stiles	1907
Suntex	NW 29th & Youngs Blvd	1931
Terrace	SE 17th & Durland	1931
Tolan (C)	Reno & Blackwelder	1911
Topping	NE 50th & Robinson	1912
Trooper	SE 29th & Eastern	1909
View Point	SE 27th & Lindsay	1925
Washington (C)	WE 4th & High	1924
Webster	SW 10th & Shartel	1902
Wiley Post	17th & Robinson	1925
Will Clark	NE 12th & Stonewall	1941
Will Rogers	NW 36th & Grand Blvd	1912
Winans	NW 20th & Broadway	1910
Woodson	SW 29th & May	1909
Zurline	SW 25th & Woodward	1929

Source: Mr. R. E. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, February, 1955.

This was, of course, largely brought about by acquisition of the four large parks. The increase in area continued at a rapid rate although certainly nowhere near the 1900-1910 pace between 1910-1920. By 1920 a large percentage of the present acreage had been acquired and the rate of increase dwindled each decade until during the period 1940-1950 there were additions of only five parks totaling 24.83 acres. The remaining properties that were acquired in the last thirty-five years were nearly all of the small type including neighborhood parks, ornamental parks, and others. The parks incorporated into the system during the period 1940-1950 included: Mill Clark in 1941, Linwood Center in 1946, Bath Center in 1947, Pilots Center in 1948, Southwest Fourteenth in 1948.

TABLE II
GROWTH IN PARK ACREAGE IN OKLAHOMA CITY

Year	Total Park Acreage*	Total New Acres	Per Cent Increase
1900	0	0	0
1910	1503.89	1503.89	100 0
1920	1983.99	479.99	32
1930	2214.11	230.23	11
1940	2315.13	101.02	4.5
1950	2339.96	24.83	0.1
1955	2478.96	139.00	0.6

*Excluding parkways, Lake Hefner, and Lake Overholser.

Source: Harland Bartholomew, A Preliminary Report Upon Schools and Parks, (St. Louis, 1946), pp. 49.

Besides an early enthusiasm displayed in obtaining areas suitable for parks, there has always been a great interest in park development in Oklahoma City. In 1910, when the city had a population of only 64,000 people, W. H. Dunn was employed to make a study of the proposed outer parks, grand boulevard, and proposed connecting parkways. The land for the outer parks was under option and Mr. Dunn recommended acquisition and prepared general plans for proposed development of them because Lincoln, Trosper, Woodson, and Will Rogers Parks were so far from the center of the town, Mr. Dunn further recommended that a number of small parks be acquired that would be closer to meet neighborhood needs. He also suggested a system of parkways and boulevards.

In 1923, the George E. Kessler Firm was employed to prepare a comprehensive city plan and report including recommendations for park systems. Unfortunately, these plans were never completed because of Mr. Kessler's demise, and in 1926, the firm of Hare and Hare was employed to complete the work. The Hare Report contained recommendations for a system of parks and parkways and emphasized the need for more neighborhood parks in developed residential areas.

In June, 1946, the firm of Harland Bartholomew and associates submitted the report to the city on a long-range plan for a co-ordinated system of parks and schools to serve the future growth of the Metropolitan area. This was one phase of the overall improvement plan of the city. The Oklahoma City Park System is at present developing under this plan and the details of its suggestions are discussed later.¹

From the tent city of 1889, with no park system, and the two-park

¹R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, February, 1955.

system of 1902, containing eighty-three acres, the Oklahoma City Park System has grown to where it now consists of more than 70 parks with more than 3,000 acres of parkland.

It appears that physical conditions were conducive to this growth. The people sought the parks for their recreation and rest. Because of the desirability of such healthful and creative activities, enthusiasm was engendered and enthusiasm maintained for park development.

The remainder of this study will be devoted to the product of this growth with its merits and shortcomings and its overall value to the people of Oklahoma City.

CHAPTER III
PARK CLASSIFICATION AND CRITERIA

In order to understand or evaluate parks, it is first essential to know the various types that are found in Oklahoma City. Second, it is essential to understand the function of each type and to recognize its significance within the metropolitan community. The generally accepted classification system places each park in one of seven major types.¹ The seven types are established on the bases of purpose, location, size, and facilities.

By purpose is meant the intended use of the park. Some parks have as their only function the provision of ornamental beauty. These are aptly called ornamental parks. Outlying parks as their name implies are out away from the heavily populated sections of town and afford a more direct contact with nature. Playlots, playgrounds, and playfields afford recreation advantages to all, from young children to elderly adults. Finally, neighborhood parks in which the family can enjoy a picnic lunch, various group games, or other types of contact with nature when it is impossible, or impractical, to go to the larger, more secluded, outlying parks are desirable.

Each of the above mentioned types of parks has a characteristic location. Ornamental parks by virtue of limited area needed to accomplish their purpose can be, and indeed often are, located in the downtown

¹Harold Zink, Government of Cities in the United States, (New York, 1948), pp. 495.

sections of a city. Outlying parks are always located either near the edge of the city or beyond the city limits. Playlots, playgrounds, playfields, and neighborhood parks are located away from the business districts of a city within the individual neighborhoods.

The size of a park property varies from the very large outlying parks, which often contain more than 160 acres, to the very small ornamental parks, which quite often contain less than one acre. The remaining types, playlots, playgrounds, playfields, and neighborhood parks, vary in size usually from a few acres to seldom more than 50 acres in size.

Facilities for the various types of parks vary a great deal. The large outlying parks in certain cases do not have a great deal of facilities. If such an area is a nature sanctuary, then few facilities are needed. If the outlying park is used for housing the zoo, as is Lincoln Park, then it has some of the most elaborate facilities in the entire park system. The main facilities in playlots, playgrounds, playfields, and neighborhood parks are recreational material of a similar type, the main difference being in the age group from which the individual equipment is intended.

It might also be well to point out the main criteria for parks in a well developed park system. These essentials are listed in the following order:

1. Ample land area
2. Proper development
3. Proper location
4. Diversity
5. Supervised recreation

Large cities need a generous amount of space in their parks. Unfortunately, many large cities have neglected this feature until land became scarce in desirable locations and consequently very

costly to buy. However, in Oklahoma City this has not been a serious problem.

Mere area is not an adequate indication of the efficiency of a municipal park system for the development of parks is very important. Unless parks are laid out in such a way that they meet the needs of the people, they will prove more or less useless.

Parks lose much of their utility unless they are well located. Investigations have shown that parents will not often send their children more than one-half mile to playgrounds. Parks, as far as possible, should be located near the people who need them, or in other words, near to the respective neighborhoods and not all in isolated sections of the city.

Parks need to be diversified. Some parks might well specialize in certain features, while others might be of more general character. Englewood Park for example is important in that it offers a great deal of ornamental beauty, but beyond that it serves no other purpose. Rotary Park with its playground and picnic facilities is more of a general type park.

Finally, a park system will not be as valuable as it might be unless there is provided a supervised recreational program. Directed recreation has been discussed by cities but not widely developed until recent years. It remained for the depression years to give the impetus to large-scale supervised recreation. With limited space and facilities available for recreation in most cities, only through an organized and supervised program can all participate.² It was during the immediate

²Ibid., p. 495.

post World War II period that Oklahoma City began taking a very active part in supervised recreation.

The remainder of this chapter will consist of a listing and description of the seven park types, and their counterparts in the Oklahoma City Park System. Figure 2 shows the Oklahoma City Park System basically as it exists today and proposed additions and changes that are expected to be made before 1970. The favorable location of a large outlying park in each corner of the city, with connecting boulevards and parkways, is shown quite well on the map. The reasonably equal distribution of all park properties to all sections of the city is also visible.

Outlying Parks

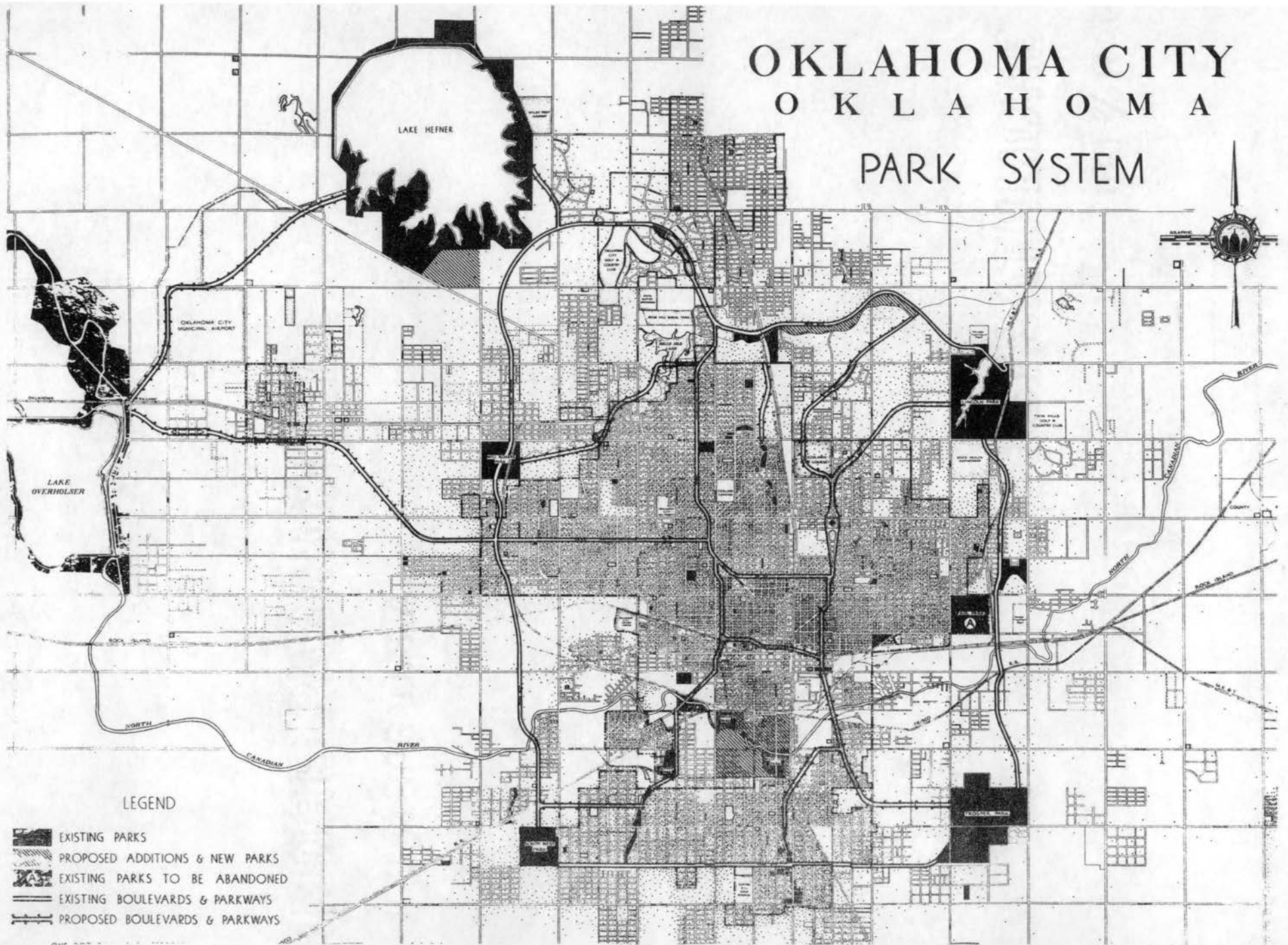
Outlying Parks, unlike neighborhood parks, do not have accessibility as one of their prime requisites. They can be, and indeed often are, beyond the city limits of a city. They should be larger than the other type parks and should range in size from 50 to 500 acres or over. There should be at least one large wooded area and if it is at all possible a natural beauty park should be chosen.³ Lincoln Park and Trosper Park are good examples of outlying parks in Oklahoma City.

Parkways






Parkways are important units of a park system. Pleasure driving is a popular form of recreation, and in addition parkways have proven pleasant routes of travel in many cities for people pursuing their daily activities. It is possible, in this way, to add to the joy of

³Austin F. MacDonald, American City Government and Administration, (Binghamton, New York, 1951), p. 562.

OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA PARK SYSTEM



LEGEND

-  EXISTING PARKS
-  PROPOSED ADDITIONS & NEW PARKS
-  EXISTING PARKS TO BE ABANDONED
-  EXISTING BOULEVARDS & PARKWAYS
-  PROPOSED BOULEVARDS & PARKWAYS

daily life. It is also possible to limit traffic congestion, as slow-moving trucks are often restricted to the regular highways.

In addition to scenic routes of travel, parkways, particularly those of variable width can often include at intervals areas sufficiently large to provide for the recreational needs of adjacent neighborhoods. The Woodlawn Parkway, along a branch of Deep Fork Creek between Lincoln Boulevard and Fifteenth Street, is a good example of a parkway in Oklahoma City.

Neighborhood Parks

The usefulness of a neighborhood park is largely dependent upon its accessibility to the population; consequently, there should be a neighborhood park close to the center of each neighborhood area. It is desirable for a neighborhood park to contain some land of scenic interest. The area of the park should generally not be less than 20 acres. Wiley Post Park with 59 acres and Brock Park with 40 acres are examples of neighborhood parks embracing sufficient territory.

In addition to its natural beauty which should be preserved and enhanced in order to fulfill the adult need for passive recreation, the neighborhood park often may include active recreational facilities such as swimming pools and tennis courts. Since there is a balance of the three elements of scenery and active and passive recreation to adequately meet such comprehensive requirements, neighborhood parks are in this way different from playfields or playgrounds where the main emphasis is on active play.

Rotary Park at Southwest Fifteenth and Blackwelder is a typical example of a neighborhood type park. This park has all the facilities needed in a neighborhood park for picnics and outings, and it also has a very modern recreation building and swimming pool.

Playfields

The playfield type of park should serve districts of from one to one and one-half mile in radius in the residential section of a city. These areas are designed for junior and senior high school students as well as adults and must be larger than the playgrounds in order to provide enough room for swimming pools, tennis courts, baseball and football fields. Playfields are often located in conjunction with junior and senior high school buildings and should cover 10 to 20 acres. This is the only type of park not represented in the Oklahoma City Park System. Actually, the schoolgrounds or building facilities usually meet these requirements.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are designed for children of elementary school age and should always be provided with supervision if they are to achieve their purpose. They should be at least five acres in size and if the number of children using the park is large there should be at least 200 square feet of space per child. It is thought by many that this is the most important park type and is estimated that twenty per cent of the total park area of the city should be in playgrounds. The ideal playground should have wading pools, sandboxes, and apparatus for the smaller children as well as ample area for softball and touch football for the larger children. Creston Hills Park, 7.8 acres in size at Northeast Nineteenth and Merriman, is one of many park playgrounds in Oklahoma City. Some other playgrounds are included in Table III.

TABLE III
PARTIAL LIST OF PLAYGROUNDS IN OKLAHOMA CITY

Park	Location	Acres
Crown Heights	NW 38th and Shartel	16.91
McKinley	NW 12th and McKinley	10.00
Memorial	NW 35th and Classen	19.00
Tolan	Reno and Blackwelder	10.00
Washington	NE 4th and High	19.00
Wheeler	SW 10th and Shartel	43.00

Source: R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, February, 1955.

Playlots

Children below school age must be under constant parental observation and their play needs can best be met in and around the home. In single family residential neighborhoods, private yards usually supply their need and except in congested areas the provision of fresh air and space for protected play for preschool children is primarily a family and not a public responsibility. Riverside Park at Northeast California and Central Streets is the only playlot in the Oklahoma City Park System.

Ornamental Parks

Ornamental parks are usually small, providing open space and area for rest and passive recreation within the more intensively developed portions of the community. Englewood Park located at Northwest Tenth and Pennsylvania is a typical example of an ornamental park in Oklahoma

City. It is only one-half acre in size. Another good example of a park of this type is Military Park at Northwest Twenty-fourth Street and Classen Boulevard, containing 1.5 acres.⁴

By having the parks of Oklahoma City classified according to the criteria set forth in this chapter into one of the seven major park types, it is much easier to determine which desirable characteristics of a good park system are found in the Oklahoma City Park System and which are non-existent or found in insufficient numbers.

Oklahoma City has enough total park area although it would be better if the distribution was such that the total park areas was broken down into a greater number of smaller parks.

Most of the smaller ones have been developed, leaving the larger ones such as Woodson Park and Trospen Park for the most part undeveloped at the present; however, work has been begun on Trospen to correct this deficiency.

For the most part the park properties are reasonably well distributed over the entire city. The newer area of the city, particularly to the north and west, lags in park area. The recent expansion of the city has been the greatest in these directions and it probably will be some time before the location of park properties can catch up with the new housing developments. The city appears to have a park system possessing most of the afore listed elements of a good park system.

⁴R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, February, 1955.

CHAPTER IV
ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

The Park Department of Oklahoma City is governed by a Board of Park Commissioners consisting of five members, not less than one from each ward, to be appointed by the Mayor, by and with the consent of the City Council, who shall hold their positions during the pleasure of the Mayor and City Council and serve without pay.¹

The Board of Park Commissioners is organized by the selection of one of its members as President, another as Vice President, and another as Secretary. The Board keeps books of account and a full, accurate record of all its proceedings. At the end of each month a full report of its proceedings is submitted to the City Manager, the Mayor, and the City Council. The books of account and records of the board are open at all times to inspection by the City Manager and the City Council.

The Board of Park Commissioners has the care, management, and control of all parks and grounds used for park purposes and all structures, and supplies on these premises as their responsibility.

All employees of the Park Department are employed by the City Manager. The compensation of all park employees is fixed by the City Council. Every park development purchase has to be made in accordance with the budget as approved and provided for by the City Council. All purchases must be approved by the City Manager and the City Council.

¹Charter of The City of Oklahoma City, Article IV, Section 5.

Any revenue received by the Park Department is made payable to the City Treasurer where it becomes a part of the General Revenue Fund, which is distributed as to need.²

Organization

As could be expected in an organization the size of the Oklahoma City Park System, the Park Department is divided for effective administration and operation into sections. These sections are set up according to what function they serve in the overall system. A total of six sections are administered by a Park Superintendent who is responsible to the Park Board for the efficient and effective operation of the entire Department.

Included in the six sections are (Figure 3) the Recreation, Zoological, Horticulture, Forestry, Maintenance, and Construction sections, with a grand total of 142 permanent employees.

Recreation Section

The recreation program for Oklahoma City, under the Recreation Section, unlike some cities, is incorporated into the Park Department and is headed by a Recreation Director. It is the purpose of this Section to assure the proper facilities and supervision for the recreational needs of the young and old of Oklahoma City. An entire chapter is devoted to the functions of this section later.

Zoological Section

The Zoological Section, as discussed in another chapter, has as its chief responsibility the provision of and maintenance of a

²Constitution Board of Park Commissioners, The City of Oklahoma City.

ORGANIZATION CHART
PARK DEPARTMENT
OKLAHOMA CITY
1955

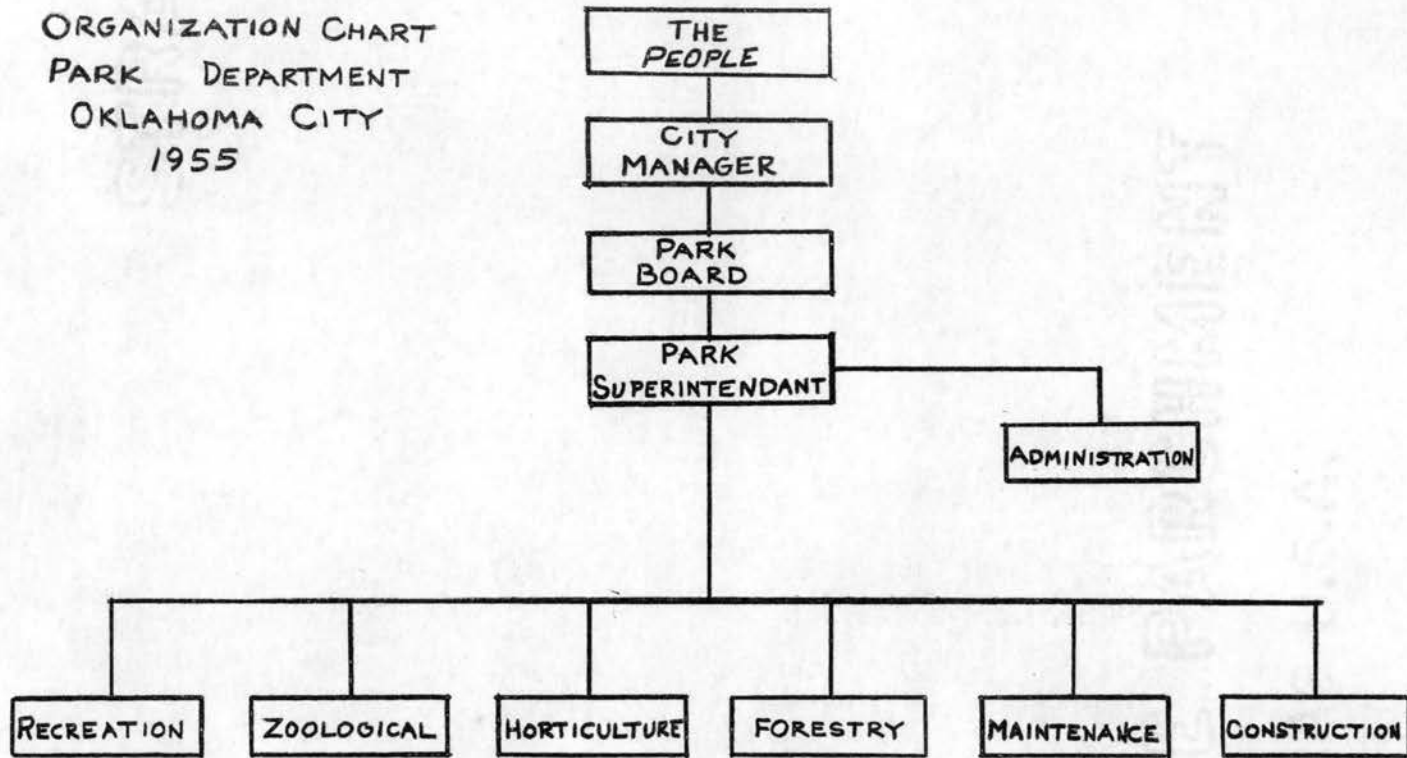


Figure 3

Zoological Garden. Its purpose is to give the people of Oklahoma City and the surrounding area a chance to see as many animals and birds not usually native to Oklahoma. Natural habitats are established for the edification of the public and for the accommodation of the wildlife. This Section has eleven full-time employees.

Horticulture Section

The Horticulture Section, under the direction of the City Horticulturist, has its primary task the job of providing the Park System of the entire city all the various grasses, flowers, and bushes necessary to give it an attractive appearance. It also maintains display gardens where greenhouses are equipped and controlled. In one display are to be found typical tropical plants from as far away as Brazil, Burma, and Bougainville actually living and in another are shown desert plants from Mexico to Uruguay. Natural habitat settings are used. A formal rose garden with over 400 varieties of roses is also furnished by this section. A total of ten permanent employees is augmented by seasonal laborers.

Forestry Section

The Forestry Section of the park department is charged with the responsibility of all shade trees in the public parks, parkways, and boulevards of the city. The work of the section is divided primarily into five phases.

1. Inspections--This involves not only inspecting to make sure all trees are healthy and of the proper variety but to also make sure that trees are not planted too near sidewalks or streets, where there will, at a later date, be the cost and trouble of their removal.

2. Combating Insects and Disease--The Forestry Section must wage

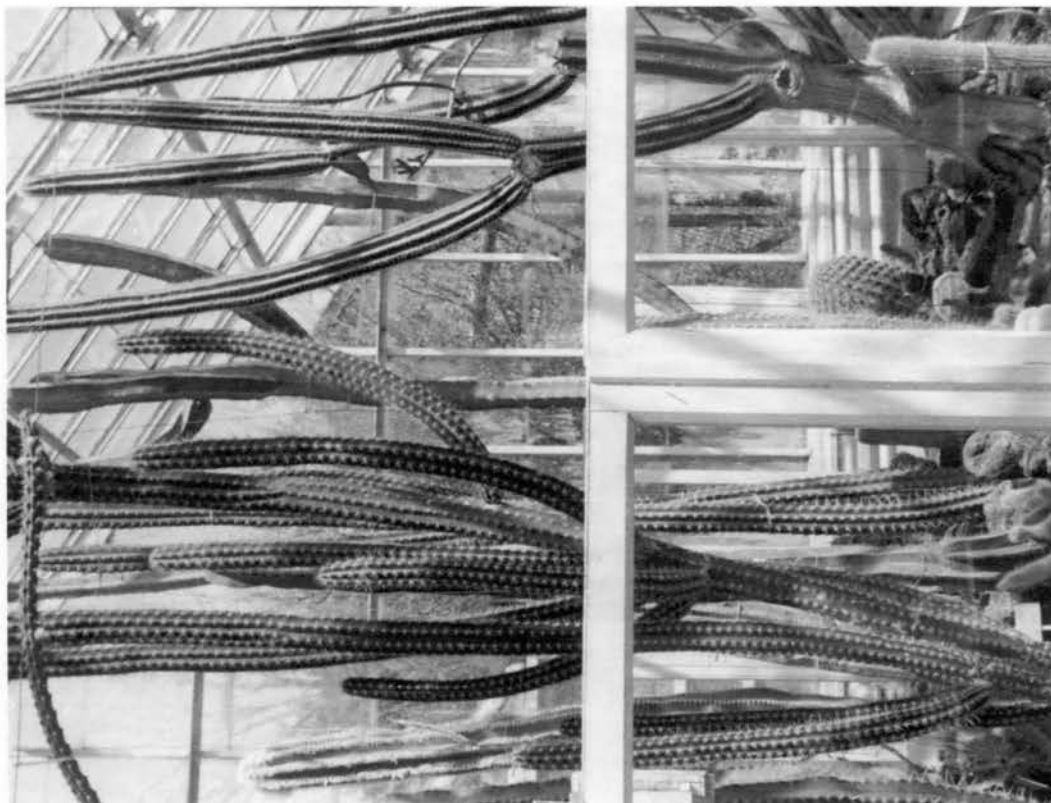
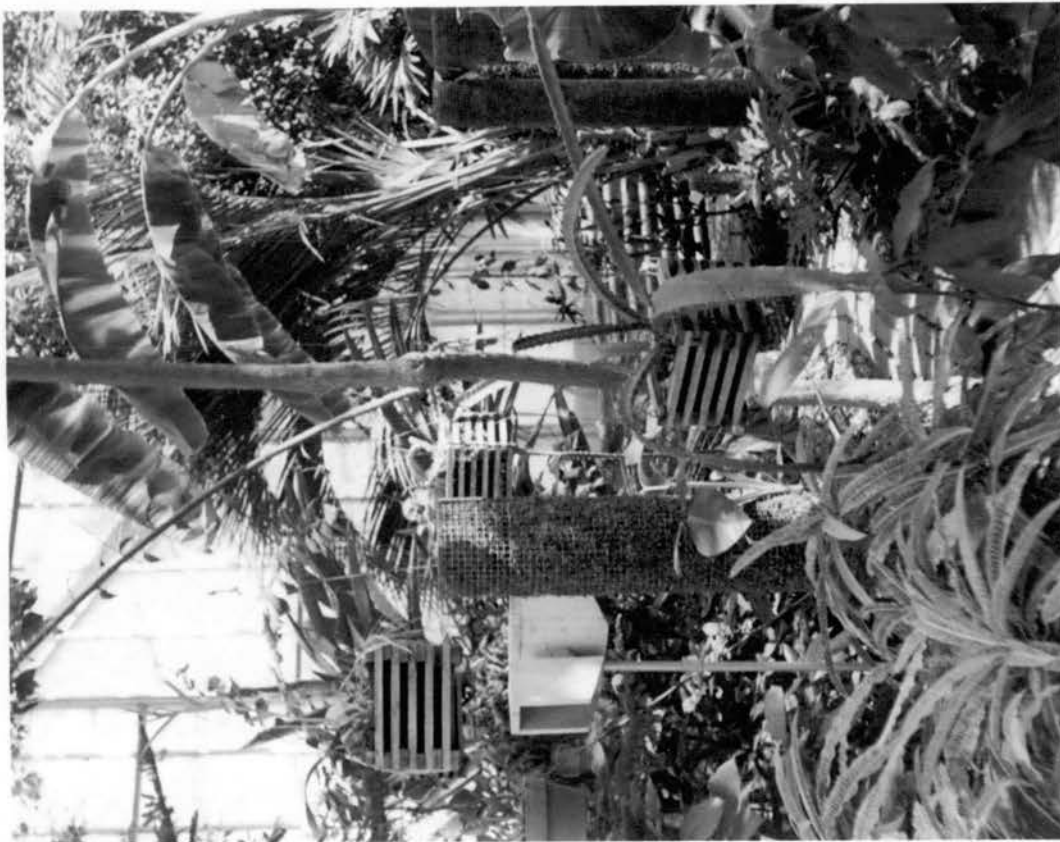


Figure 4

a constant war against the principal insects and diseases that can ravage the parks' trees. Facilities are available to spray the trees of all the parks when they are needed. While Poison Ivy and Poison Oak are not insects or diseases, they are obnoxious weeds, very undesirable in any park, and considerable effort is spent in keeping them to a minimum.

3. Planting--The Forestry Section has the responsibility of planting all the trees in the parks. Considerable skill is required to insure that the trees are set out at a time and in a manner to insure them a good chance of growing to maturity.

4. Pruning--The operation of pruning is quite necessary, particularly if trees are near telephone or electric lines. Also, as a general rule, trees that are properly pruned and not top heavy with foliage will not only look better but will stand the heavy winds, so common in Oklahoma City, with much less danger of limbs being broken or being uprooted.

5. Removal--When a tree is damaged to the point where it cannot recover, or where a tree is found to be in the way, the Forestry Section has the responsibility of removing it. A common procedure is to top the trees to about 15 feet and leave them until winter slack season, when the time-consuming job of removing the roots can be accomplished.

Maintenance Section

Largest of the six sections in manpower is the Maintenance Section, utilizing 57 of the 142 permanent employees in the Park System. This Section is charged with the overall maintenance and service of the park areas. Among the more important functions of this section are:

1. General Maintenance of Grounds, Streets, Drives, Walks, and Fences.

a. Mowing---One of the main responsibilities of this section is the mowing of grass in the park system. Several hundred acres of lawns must be mowed very frequently during the summer months by skilled operators. During some of the winter months, obviously, there is no need for a mower, and it sometimes is difficult to carry over enough skilled operators from one season to the next.

b. Watering---The adequate watering of trees, shrubs, and lawns is a problem during any summer season. But the extreme drought and water shortage in Oklahoma City the last few years has made this a critical problem which has created serious problems of maintenance. Lake Overholser Reservoir proved inadequate during the 1940's, and Lake Hefner Reservoir was added. During extremely dry periods the combined facilities of both these lakes do not meet the municipality's demands for water. As early as May 1, 1955, the city was forced to announce that water rationing would begin within a week unless a large quantity of water was received in the watershed. Rationing in itself is not too unusual for Oklahoma City, as it has happened frequently in the past. The important fact is that it was made necessary during what is normally Oklahoma City's wettest month and not in late summer as usually is the case.

c. Miscellaneous Activities---Many services could be listed under this title, but a few of the more important would include cleaning of rest rooms, sanding of walks during icy weather, transporting picnic equipment, etc.

2. Repair and Minor Construction. The Park Department is charged with the repair of all tools, equipment, machinery, and structures

throughout the park system. Maintenance work often involves the repairing of electrical systems, drinking fountains, and the painting of tools, equipment, swimming pools, bath houses, and rest rooms.

3. Police Protection. Park Policemen are employed by the Park Board to safeguard park property, protect citizens using the parks, and to afford other surveillance. Unless a visitor has been guilty of a serious breach of the law the violator of park rules and regulations is generally only reminded courteously of his misconduct. Very few cases of trouble between park policemen and visitors ever occur.

4. Trash and Garbage Removal. The task of removing trash and garbage from the parks, particularly during the summer months, when people flock to the parks for picnic lunches, is a major operation involving several full-time employees.

Construction Section

The Construction Section has the job of handling any new building projects that are handled by the Park Department. Minor projects are undertaken when it is determined to be more economical for the Park Department to do the work than by contract.³

By having the employees of the Park Department separated into each of these Sections, it is possible for each to become acquainted with one particular phase of park operation. Thus, an employee may be trained to work for the Horticulture Section alone wherein he may develop proficiency.

This system is also beneficial in that it is much easier to

³R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, April, 1955.

determine the amount of money and supplies that are needed for the Department's operation in a year if it is figured for each of the individual Sections and then totaled. Also, it is much easier to detect whether or not a particular Section of the Department is being operated efficiently or not under this system.

CHAPTER V

LINCOLN PARK ZOO

Oklahoma City's Lincoln Park, home of the city zoo, as could be expected annually draws far more visitors than any other because of this attraction. It is estimated by Mr. Julian Frazier,¹ Director of the Lincoln Park Zoo, that more than 900,000 persons visited the park in 1954 and that as many as 35,000 people have visited it on a single Sunday, primarily to see the caged creatures.

The largest number of visitors come to the zoo in late Spring and early Summer. The great number of school groups coming to visit from as far away as Kansas and Texas usually arrive during the last few weeks of school to help to give it a seasonal influence in visitor numbers. The winter months, with their many unpleasant days, are the least active ones from a standpoint of zoo patronage.

Purpose of Zoo

According to Mr. Frazier, the zoo is designed to serve three purposes. First, the educational value of being able, in one afternoon, to see animals from all over the world is of great significance. Teachers have reported the tremendous increase in interest on the part of students in a number of studies, such as geography and biology, as a result of a visit to the zoo. Second, another purpose of the zoo is that it offers one of the best forms of passive recreation known.

¹Julian Frazier, Director, Lincoln Park Zoo, personal interview, April, 1955.

Some persons not caring for the rigors of a tennis match can get a great deal of enjoyment from casually strolling through the zoo. Third, having a zoo in the park system of a city provides the biggest attraction, and through this interest the entire park system gains publicity and interest in its work.

History of Zoo

A person visiting the present zoo today with its fine collection of 138 animals and adequate facilities would probably find it hard to visualize the humble way in which it was started.

The first animal, a young deer, for the original zoo in Wheeler Park was donated in 1904. The zoo remained in this Park until 1923, when a spring flood caused much damage. Most of the animals were rescued and were temporarily housed in the stock pavilion of the State Fair Ground. It was decided to permanently establish the zoo in 19 of Lincoln Park's 640 acres. This area was fenced and a large rock barn was converted into a cagehouse for bears, cats, and other animals. This arrangement had been in operation only a short while when fire destroyed the cagehouse. All the larger animals perished, but most of the smaller ones were rescued. Two years later the city began the task of building a modern zoo satisfactory in its facilities. By 1930 an excellent collection of animals had been acquired.

In 1935 Federal funds became available through the Works Progress Administration, and the entire Lincoln Park Zoo area was reconstructed. Native red sandstone, abundant in Oklahoma, was used almost exclusively in the construction of the new homes for the animals. One element of this new development stands out, and in some cases it is almost as interesting as the animals; it is the great effort extended to put the

animals in a natural setting. (Figure 5) Modern paddocks, grottoes, heating facilities, lighting facilities, and drainage were installed as integral parts of the zoo.

The housing and den arrangement for the bear and cat animals are unique in that they are down in the ground, making artificial heat for their winter protection unnecessary. The den rooms and doors are so arranged that it is possible to shift an animal through nine different pens without touching the animal being transferred. Yet there is no connecting hallway. Along the walks throughout the park are "overlooks" which make it possible for the spectators to look down into the pens without the obstruction of a fence between the pens. Planting of trees and shrubs has been established in an effort to create an appearance of a huge wilderness.

From the one deer of 1904, the zoo population has grown until in 1955 there are 138 animals, representing 71 species, and 350 birds. Some of the larger animals are shown in Table IV.

Value

The monetary value of Lincoln Park is at least one and one-quarter million dollars. The total worth of the various types of shelters for the animals alone is approximately \$1,000,000, and the animals are conservatively estimated to be worth \$200,000. The price of the individual animals will vary a great deal depending on how difficult it is to trap and transport. The rarer the creature, the higher the cost. For example, a giraffe such as the one in the Oklahoma City Zoo would cost about \$3,000, plus about \$300 transportation expense. This giraffe is from a relatively common specie and would cost less than the rarer species. A young elephant of average quality would cost about \$3,500.



Figure 5

TABLE IV
LARGER ANIMALS REPRESENTED
IN LINCOLN PARK ZOO IN 1955

Animal	Number
Alligators	6
Bears (all types)	18
Camels	3
Elephants	1
Giraffes	1
Kangaroos	5
Lhamas	2
Lions	2
Monkeys	40
Sea Lions	3
Tigers	1
Water Buffalos	3
White Bearded Gnus	3
Zebras	2

Source: Julian Frazier, Director, Lincoln Park Zoo, personal interview, April, 1955.

Animal Feeding

Preparing the menu to feed and water the large number of zoological animals is no small task. Total amounts of various types of food consumed in a year are hard to imagine. Hay, fodder, and salt are purchased in huge amounts.

The horses to supply the horse meat are butchered in Oklahoma City by employees of the zoo. The fish, however, are not all so easy to come by as herring and smelt are purchased from as far away as Bayfield, Wisconsin. They can be purchased in Wisconsin and transported to Oklahoma City cheaper than they can be bought in Oklahoma City. Some of the feed items are shown on Table V.

TABLE V
 YEARLY CONSUMPTION OF CERTAIN
 TYPES FOOD BY ZOO ANIMALS

Item	Pounds
Bread	31,200
Carrots	8,320
Fish	24,000
Horsemeat	25,000

Source: Julian Frazier, Director, Lincoln Park Zoo, personal interview, April, 1955.

Personnel

Even though the zoo is equipped with very modern and safe facilities for housing of the animals, a man cannot be assigned the job of keeper to the ferocious cats and bears until it has been ascertained that he has had the proper background and training with wild animals. If new employees have not worked in a responsible position in another zoo, they must work around the animals as apprentices in the company of experienced keepers until they, too, are deemed qualified to work alone. The city has no veterinarian as such, and all treatment of the animals is done by veterinarians in private practice. Tending of the animals and the general maintenance of the zoo requires the services of eleven full-time employees.

Methods Used to Finance New Additions to the Zoo

Additional and new buildings for the zoo are acquired in several ways. One of the more unusual, as well as effective, is through the efforts of "Friends of the Zoo Inc.," an organization that buys animals

for the zoo from the money received for membership in the organization. The dues run from one dollar for the title, "Honorary Monkey" to \$500, for the title of "Zoo Benefactor." (Figure 6) At the present time one zebra, one camel, one hippopotamus, two chimpanzees, and two giraffes have been bought for the zoo in this manner. At the present time a drive is under way to secure funds to buy a giraffe to replace one of the old ones that died recently.

Private donations are another way in which the zoo has benefited. The very modern giraffe building recently completed was made possible largely by the contribution of structural steel, glass, concrete, fencing material, etc. by Oklahoma City firms interested in the zoo program. Some of these contributions were outright gifts and others were such that the firm sold the materials at a fraction of the actual retail cost.

A third way the zoo grows is through Oklahoma City Bond issues. The new primate building which will be modern in every detail, and one of the finest in the country, is under construction and will be finished in May, 1955. (Figure 6) It was financed by a bond issue.

Purchasing Procedure

When funds for the purchase of a new animal are secured, the usual method followed is that Mr. Frazier contacts a dealer. If the animal is to come from Africa it is brought through New York; and if the animal is to come from India, or other parts of Asia, it is obtained through a dealer in San Francisco or Los Angeles. With the terms of the sale settled, the animal is shipped through the dealer to the Lincoln Park Zoo. In some special instances it is necessary for Mr. Frazier to deal directly with the people in the animal's native habitat.



Figure 6

Regardless of the method of purchase the movement of the animal is under the strictest type of control. For example, before the animal can leave Africa, it must undergo a two-month quarantine to ascertain that it is not carrying a disease. When the animal arrives in New York it is taken to New Jersey where it must remain in a similar type of quarantine before it can be released for shipment to its final destination. This elaborate mode of handling makes it necessary to order an animal as much as six months ahead of the expected date of delivery.

Another very effective way of insuring a variety of animals in the Zoo is by trading with other cities. For example, if the director of Lincoln Park finds that he has two more bears than are necessary, he may trade for three excess kangaroos belonging to a zoo in another city. Too, a certain kind of a bear may be traded for another kind. Such a natural trade situation often leads to beneficial transactions.

Oklahoma City is fortunate in having a type of climate that is favorable to most animals in the Zoo. This is brought out rather forcefully by Oklahoma City's proximity to Hugo, Oklahoma, long noted as an ideal circus wintering site. The usually mild winters in Oklahoma City make it relatively easy for the animals of low latitudes to adjust to the environment. While the summers sometimes are excessively hot, in terms of actual temperature, the absence of high humidity plus the breeze that blows a large portion of the time makes it possible for even the Arctic-type animals, such as the polar bear, to thrive provided there is supplied a sizeable pool of water. These climatic conditions with a minimum of artificial protection enable Oklahoma City to have just about any type animal that the city desires.

Future of the Zoo

Plans for future development of Lincoln Park Zoo call for the construction of a special new building for the housing of animals in the elephant family, among which are the elephant, hippopotamus, rhinoceros, tapir, and others. It will be rather costly and has been delayed until the need increased and money was available.

Through continued expansion of shelters, other facilities, and facilities, and animals the Oklahoma City Zoo will progress. Growth from the one-animal zoo of 1904 to a 138-animal zoo in 1955 is encouraging. It may be judged as one of the Southwest's better zoos.

CHAPTER VI

RECREATION SECTION

A few years ago little thought was directed towards a program of organized playgrounds and recreation. The merits of a park system were evaluated primarily on its ornamental beauty and total size. Only two or three decades ago the playground was generally regarded only as a haven for slum children. It was assumed that the children who lived in better neighborhoods could find adequate play space near their own homes. Today, particularly in the larger cities, that assumption is no longer justified. Suitable open places of sufficient size have practically disappeared. Urban boys and girls, the rich as well as the poor, find that they have no natural play places. So playgrounds must be provided and the recreation must be arranged and scheduled to permit all to participate.

Some years ago the idea was prevalent that the chief function of playground leaders was to act as law enforcement officers. If they put a stop to a free-for-all fight and prevented the bad boys of the neighborhood from tearing up park property nothing else was asked of them. Today, however, a totally different principle prevails. Playground workers, directors, playleaders, and supervisors are expected to be as thoroughly trained for their jobs in physical education and youth leadership as in the schools.¹

¹Austin F. MacDonald, American City Government and Administration, (Binghamton, New York, 1951), p. 565.

The current thought in most progressive cities is that the proper development, both mentally and physically, of the junior citizens of the city as well as maintaining the physical fitness of the senior citizens is important enough to sacrifice a measure of the ornamental beauty if necessary. Expressed in simpler terms, if it becomes necessary to kill the grass in some park areas by permitting children to play on it in order to provide ample space, then this use is justified. This was not true a few years ago when half the area of some of the parks had "Stay Off The Grass" signs with enforcement against trespassers.

It is also the belief in many modern communities that the proper supervision of playgrounds is important enough to pay the amount of money necessary to hire the proper type of qualified people to take charge of the recreation program.

This philosophy of directed and supervised play is true in Oklahoma City and it has the support of the Oklahoma City Park Department. To supply the needed supervision for the recreation program, the city has twenty-four recreation leaders employed on a yearly basis.

To administer the recreational needs of the city, the Park Department has a Director of Recreation and a seven man Recreation Commission. Two of its members come from the Park Board, two come from the Board of Education, emphasizing the close co-operation between schools and parks, and three more are selected by these four men.

Since the recreation program is designed to hit its peak during the summer months when children are on vacation from school, the number of recreation leaders are increased by the hiring of eighty more for the summer months. In addition to these, seventy-five summer employees are hired as Life Guards in the Swimming Pools, etc.

The eighty leaders hired for the summer months are not picked haphazardly. Seventy-five per cent of them are teachers in public school systems mostly in or near Oklahoma City. This makes for a desirable situation. It gives the teachers summer employment for which they are trained and it assures the city of qualified personnel working with the children. About fifty per cent of these leaders have a Masters Degree either in elementary, secondary, or physical education. The remaining twenty-five per cent, who are not school teachers, usually include college upperclassmen majoring in physical or elementary education, or in sociology, who are believed to possess leadership ability and who enjoy working with young people.

These leaders are spread over the twenty-two areas containing 268 acres that are classified as supervised parks. These recreational parks are fairly well distributed over all portions of the city.

To insure that there are proper facilities to aid these trained recreation supervisors, the city has established them as shown below (Table VI). The facilities that are listed are only those that come under park department control and does not include the various types that are privately owned.

It should be pointed out that in establishment of a recreational facility the Recreation Commission realizes that even with young people there are a certain number who prefer a passive form of inactive recreation to an active form. Many people have the idea that the less active forms of recreation are for elderly people alone. This is far from true and it is the opinion of the Recreation Director that if a boy prefers to spend his spare time building model airplanes he should be encouraged in his work and he should have facilities furnished to him. It is just as important as to a boy who wishes to play softball

TABLE VI
PARK RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Facilities	Number
Community Centers (Year round)	8
Swimming Pools (Adult)	4
Swimming Pools (Junior)	18
Wading Pools	12
Softball Diamonds (Lighted)	8
Tennis Courts	25
Golf Courses (18 hole)	2
Golf Courses (36 hole)	1

Source: Alvin R. Eggeling, Director of Recreation, personal interview, April, 1955.

and needs a diamond. Too, the most active child likes to participate in inactive pursuits part of the time.

The functional program set up by the recreation commission is designed to be diversified with interests stimulated in these categories: (a) apparatus for children; (b) arts and crafts; (c) dramatics; (d) music; (e) nature; (f) social recreation; (g) sports; and (h) specialties. The program is not designed so that the parks will work independently of school, church, and community; on the contrary, its program is planned for a maximum of co-operation with all of these institutions.

The eight community centers, one of which is shown in Figure 7, operated even during the winter months in Oklahoma City, are a good

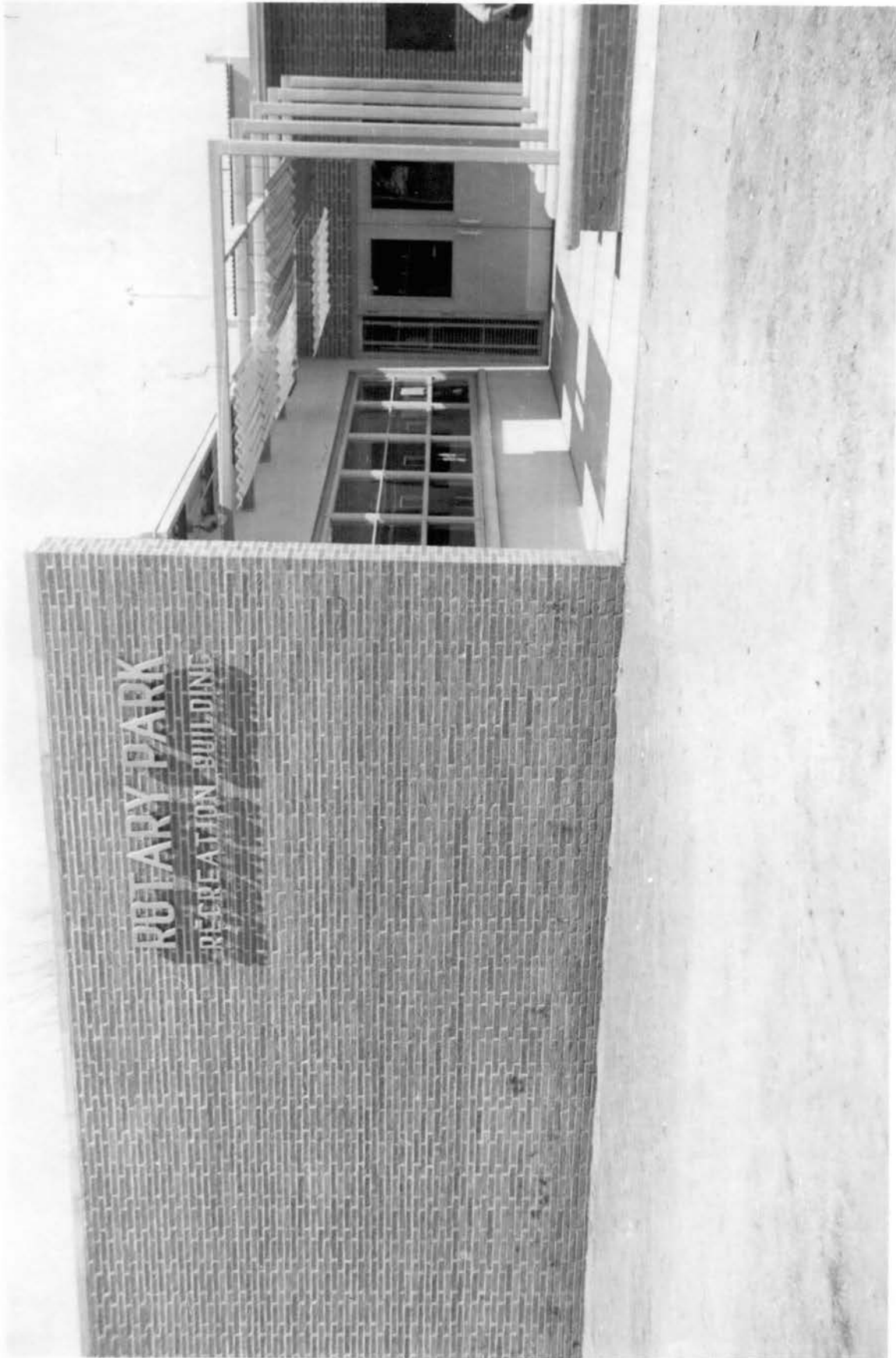


Figure 7

example of the wide scope of the recreational program provided for both young and old, active and inactive.

A few activities taken at random from the Oklahoma City Park and Recreation Department's Community Center Clubs "Special Events Calendar" for Fall and Winter, 1954-1955, show the wide diversity of its program. (Table VII)

TABLE VII
COMMUNITY CENTER ACTIVITIES

Special Event	Date
Square Dancing (Adult)	October 1, 1954
Tap Dancing (Class for children)	October 1, 1954
Hobby Shop (For boys)	October 1, 1954
Puppet Club	October 1, 1954
Pre-teen Fun Night	October 1, 1954
Ceramics (Special class for adults)	October 4, 1954
Rhythm Band	October 5, 1954
Baton Twirling Class	October 5, 1954
Drama Club (Ages 9-14)	October 6, 1954

Source: Alvin R. Eggeling, Director of Recreation, personal interview, April, 1955.

The Young Men's Christian Association is assisted in its fine junior baseball program by the Park Department, which supplies seventy-five per cent of the diamonds for the games. Also, close co-operation is maintained with the Camp Fire Girls, Boy Scouts, and other youth clubs.

To illustrate that the program is not by any means limited to children is the fact that 105 adult softball teams were organized last year by the Oklahoma City Recreation Department.

All the above mentioned recreation personnel and equipment cannot possibly help but keep hundreds of boys and girls out of mischief annually, nor can it help but make the life and health of the adult population better.²

This is accomplished by the installation of a progressive recreation section within the park system. One that by careful planning and organization has been able to find the needs of a well-developed recreation program, and provide the properly trained personnel to put the program into action.

² Alvin R. Eggeling, Director of Recreation, personal interview, April, 1955.

CHAPTER VII

COMPARISON WITH OTHER CITIES

It was the opinion of the writer that one of the best methods of checking the merits and shortcomings of the Oklahoma City Park System lay in comparing it in certain ways with other cities of comparable size and in the same section of the country. In order for the comparisons to be valid it was desirable to have as many natural conditions alike in all cities as possible. The idea behind this decision might better be explained by this example: To say that a city spends \$500,000 annually on its parks might be an inconclusive statement as to its attainment. If this city had a population of 10,000, then obviously it would be operating under quite a large park budget. However, if it was the budget for a city with 1,500,000 population, it would be, obviously, quite insufficient. These are two rather extreme examples in size.

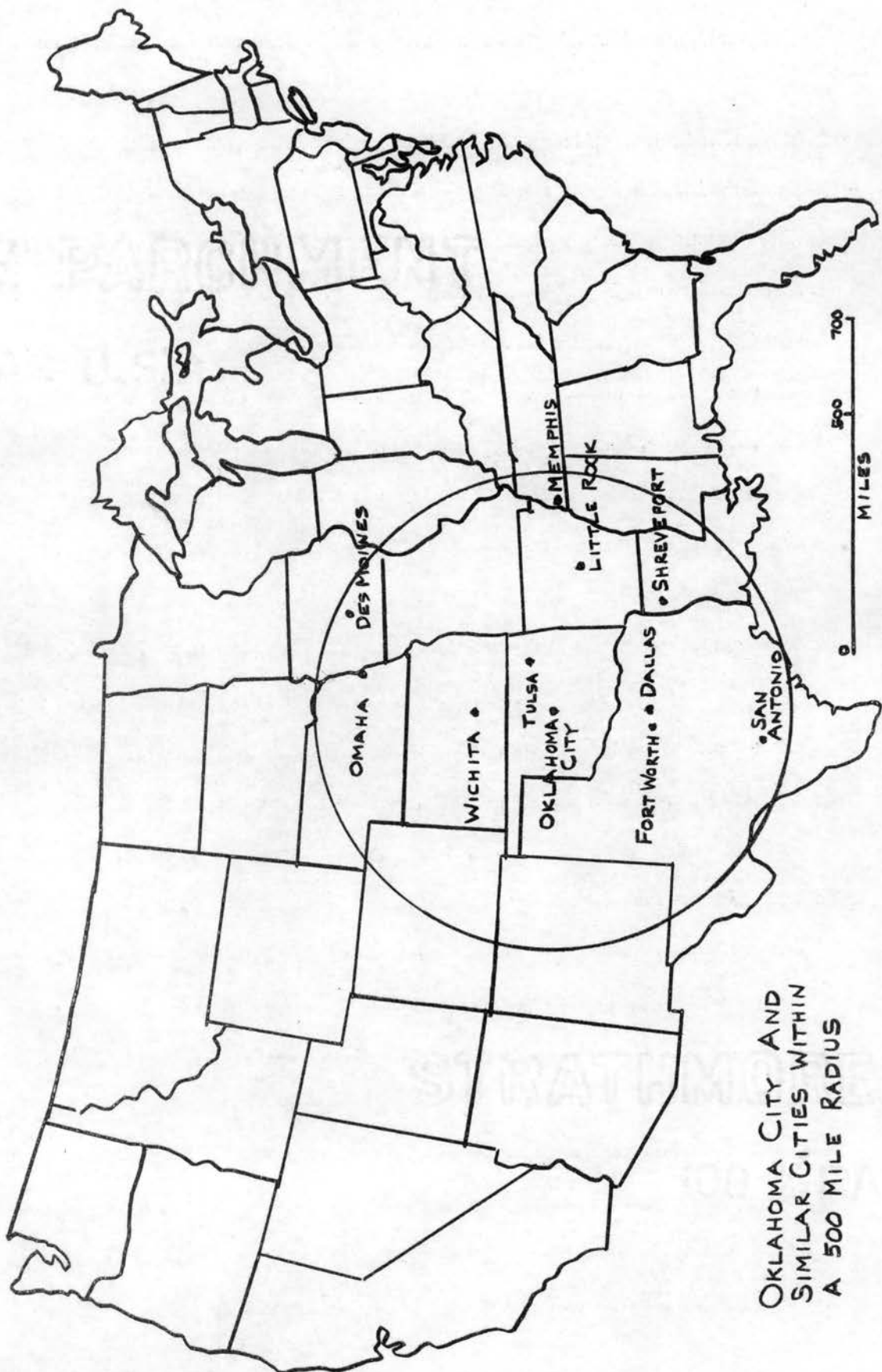
To take a city the size of Oklahoma City, which would certainly be a long way from either population extreme, the only really accurate means of evaluation of the adequacy of its park budget would be by comparing it with similar cities. If, then, it is found that five other cities have spent more money than Oklahoma City and none have spent less it would not be too presumptive to guess that the budget is too small. If the reverse were true, and no city spent more, than did Oklahoma City, it would be within reason to expect that the budget was quite adequate, assuming, of course, that proper administration of

funds were assured. This then is the method involved in evaluation and comparison of several of the park systems in this region with Oklahoma City.

Since there are, obviously, no cities exactly the size of Oklahoma City and few that would range within a few thousand of this same population total, it was decided to draw a 500 mile radius around Oklahoma City and include in the survey all cities ranging in population from 100,000 to 500,000 people. Since Oklahoma City had a population of 243,000 in 1950, this meant that some of the cities would be considerably larger and others considerably smaller. It was felt, however, that none would be so small that it could not have a well developed park system and none so large as to bring it beyond reasonable comparison. To strengthen the evaluations, most comparisons were made on a per capita basis, such as park acreage per one hundred people or dollars per capita basis in the annual park budget.

It was found that ten cities ranging in population (according to the official 1950 census) from 102,000 for Little Rock, Arkansas, the smallest, to 432,000 for Dallas, Texas, the largest, were within a 500 mile radius. (Figure 8) Questionnaires were sent to all ten of these cities which included Dallas, Texas; Des Moines, Iowa; Fort Worth, Texas; Little Rock, Arkansas; Omaha, Nebraska; Memphis, Tennessee; San Antonio, Texas; Shreveport, Louisiana; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Wichita, Kansas.

From the ten questionnaires that were sent out, seven answers were received. While not always definite or absolute conclusions can be drawn from the answers received from the questionnaires, a number of trends and likely comparison material was received. The remainder



OKLAHOMA CITY AND
SIMILAR CITIES WITHIN
A 500 MILE RADIUS

Figure 8

of this chapter will deal with the findings and analysis of questionnaire findings.

Seven answers were received from the ten cities and those not answering were Little Rock, Arkansas; San Antonio, Texas; and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Comparison

Since the scope of the jurisdiction of the park departments vary from city to city, it might be well to start with a comparison of the various facilities under park supervision of the several cities from which answers were received.

As shown in Table VIII, Oklahoma City, like four of the seven reporting cities, has a combined park and recreation program as its only responsibility. One city, Fort Worth, has only the parks without the recreation program. The Des Moines, Iowa, Park Department, in addition to the park and recreation responsibility, is in charge of the care and maintenance of all the municipal cemeteries. The Wichita, Kansas, Park Department is the only reporting city that has jurisdiction over the municipal airports, although this is a common function. In all other cities concerned, they are operated by a separate department.

Park Area

In figuring the park acreage for comparison between the various cities it was found that on a per capita basis even the cities that had the largest amounts had a figure that was only a fraction of one acre per person. It was decided that it would be more desirable to work with whole numbers so the park acreage was figured in terms of park acreage per 100 people instead of per capita.

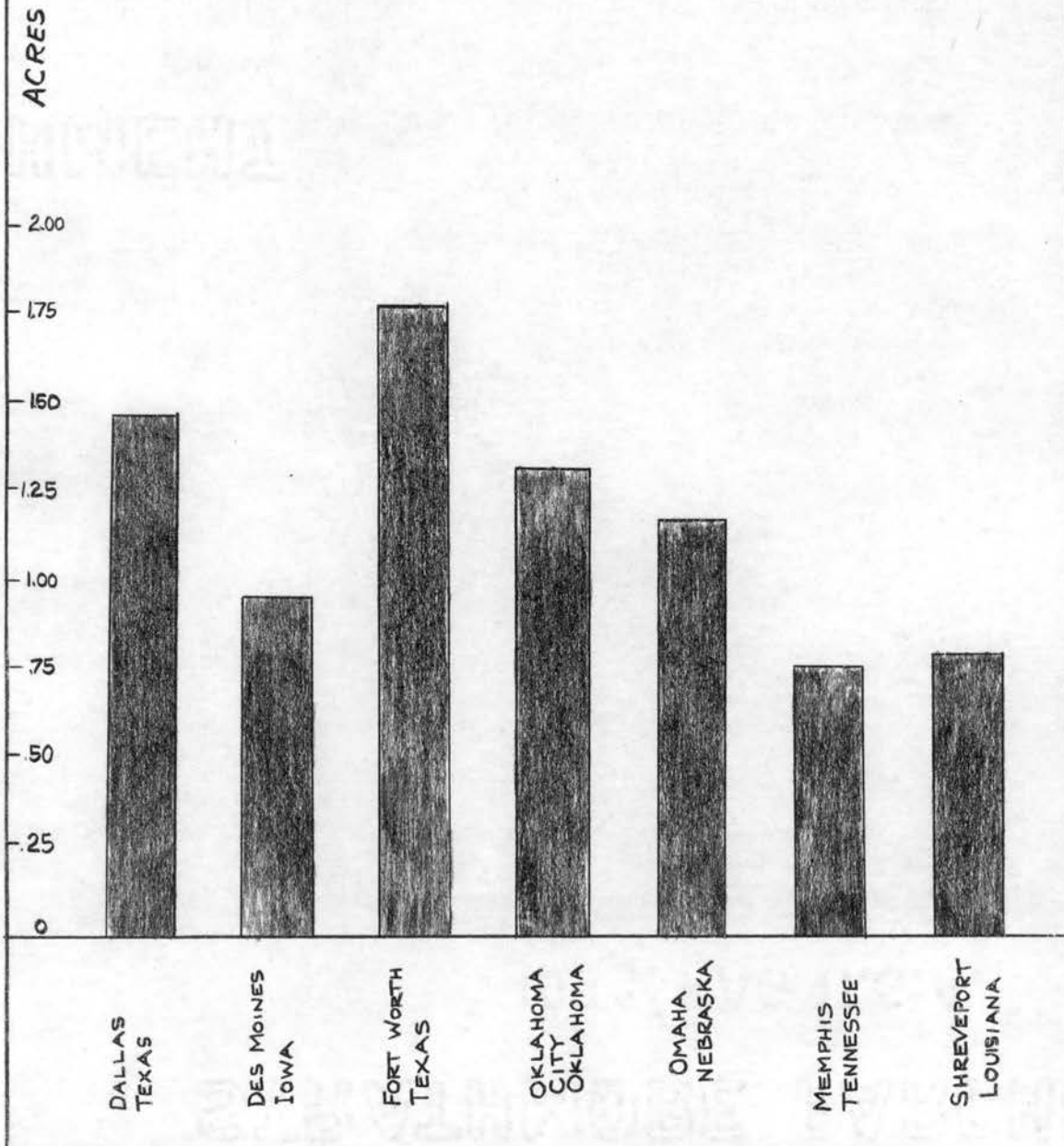
TABLE VIII
PARK DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

City	Facilities Under Park Department Control
Dallas	Parks and Recreation
Des Moines	Cemetaries and Parks
Fort Worth	Parks Alone, Recreation Separate
Oklahoma City	Parks and Recreation
Omaha	Parks and Recreation
Memphis	Parks and Recreation
Shreveport	Parks and Recreation
Wichita	Parks, Recreation, and Airport

Source: The questionnaires were sent to all the park superintendents

The size of the seven park-systems reporting varied from .76 acres per one hundred people for Memphis, Tennessee, to 1.77 acres per one hundred people for Fort Worth, Texas. Dallas with 1.45 acres per one hundred people placed a strong second. Des Moines with .92 and Shreveport with .79 acres per one hundred people barely outranked Memphis in per capita park acres. (Figure 9) Oklahoma City with 1.80 acres per one hundred people ranked third. It might be well to note that the average for Oklahoma City was figured without the 6,865 acres that make up Lake Hefner and Lake Overholser which are under the jurisdiction of the Water Department. Even though these lands are technically park lands, it was felt by the writer that in order to get a true picture of effective park acreage it would be better to omit these areas at least until they are more widely developed and used

PARK ACREAGE PER 100 PEOPLE IN OKLAHOMA CITY AND SIMILAR CITIES 1955



SOURCE : QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO PARK SUPERINTENDANT
OF EACH CITY LISTED (SEE APPENDIX A)

Figure 9

for park purposes. However, if these areas were included in the total used for comparison, the average for Oklahoma City would be much higher than any of the other cities.

Park Budget

In comparing the park budgets of Oklahoma City and other cities, it is well to consider how the various cities receive their funds. Oklahoma City's Park Department receives its funds from the city general fund. Of the cities compared with Oklahoma City only Memphis, Tennessee, and Omaha, Nebraska, operated on this type of fund. All other cities listed were operating on various types of special funds.

Oklahoma City's annual park budget of \$800,000 can be broken down to a per capita expenditure of \$3.29. (Figure 10) This would place Oklahoma City in third place in per capita park expenditure behind Dallas, Texas, with a \$4.25 expenditure per person and Memphis, Tennessee, which ranked second with \$3.42. Since three of the seven cities reporting on the park budget had an expenditure of only a little over \$2.00 per person, it would appear that Oklahoma City fares better than average on funds to run the parks and more could reasonably be expected of the Oklahoma City Park System than could be in some of the less prosperous city park departments.

Zoological Gardens

The Oklahoma City Zoo ranked quite favorably with those of the six cities with which it was compared. This holds true not only for numbers of animals but also for the varieties on hand. The only city ranking above Oklahoma City was Memphis (Figure 11), which not only had a larger variety of animals but also a vastly superior number. In partial explanation for this it might be pointed out that in 1950 the

ANNUAL PARK EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA IN OKLAHOMA CITY AND SIMILAR CITIES

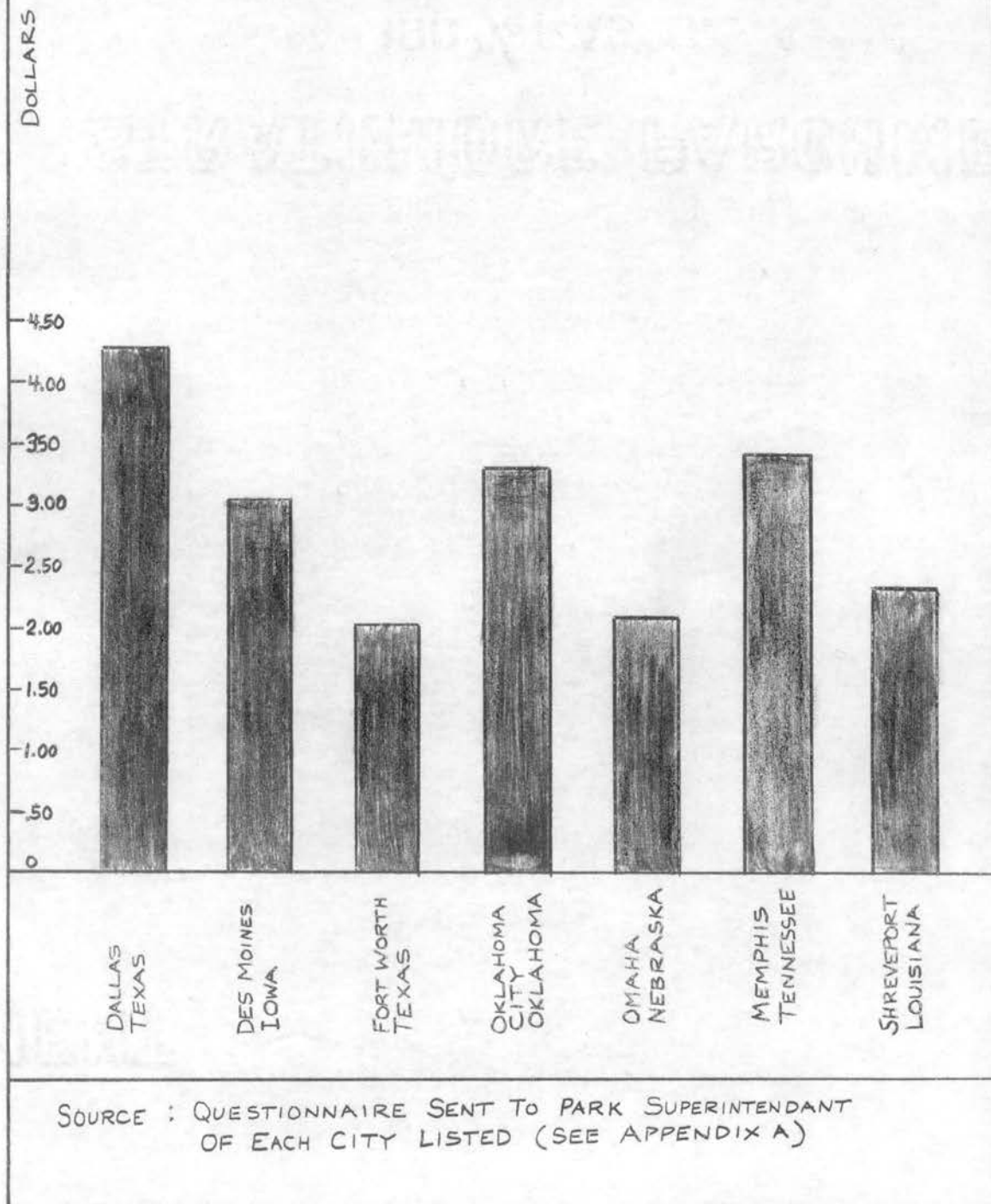


Figure 10

COMPARISON OF TYPES AND TOTAL NUMBERS OF ANIMALS IN ZOOS OF OKLAHOMA CITY AND SIMILAR CITIES

	BEARS	CAMELS	ELEPHANTS	KANGAROOS	LEOPARDS	LIONS	MONKEYS	TIGERS	OTHERS	TOTAL NUMBER	RANK
DES MOINES IOWA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
FORT WORTH TEXAS	7	2	2	1	1	3	19	2	4	41	6
OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA	18	3	1	5	1	2	40	1	67	138	2
OMAHA NEBRASKA	6	0	0	0	0	2	17	0	27	52	4
MEMPHIS TENNESSEE	22	2	2	5	4	4	134	2	725	900	1
SHREVEPORT LOUISIANA	6	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	30	56	3
WICHITA KANSAS	7	0	0	0	4	4	22	1	26	64	5

SOURCE: QUESTIONNAIRES SENT TO PARK SUPERINTENDANTS OF EACH CITY LISTED (SEE APPENDIX A)

population of Memphis, Tennessee, was 396,000 compared with Oklahoma City's 243,000 or a difference of over 150,000 people. Besides this, the population of Memphis has increased rather rapidly since 1950 to further broaden the population gap between the two cities. It should also be pointed out that Memphis, being a much older city than Oklahoma City, had a park system and a zoo when Oklahoma City was still a barren plain. None of the other cities listed, whether larger or smaller, ranked close to Oklahoma City.

Recreation Program

It would be almost impossible to actually judge with any degree of accuracy the effectiveness of the recreation program of a city by comparing it with other cities through the use of a questionnaire mailed to various cities. However, the actual physical assets available to the recreation program of a city are quite tangible and in this respect an accurate comparison can be made.

Adult Swimming Pools

The number of adult swimming pools available in the various cities ranged from three in Omaha to seven in Wichita. Oklahoma City with four would rank below average; on the other hand, the 18 junior pools, with maximum depths of 36 inches, and the 12 wading pools with maximum depths of 18 inches, that are available in Oklahoma City would put Oklahoma City in a more favorable position.

It is the opinion of the writer that the addition of three new swimming pools distributed strategically to the various sections of the city would be a tremendous boost to the overall value of the recreation program.

TABLE IX
 COMPARISON OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
 IN OKLAHOMA CITY AND SIMILAR CITIES

City	Number Adult Swimming Pools	Number Golf Courses	Number Surfaced Tennis Courts
Des Moines	5	2	6
Fort Worth	5	4	20
Oklahoma City	4	3	25
Omaha	3	4	29
Memphis	5	6	30
Shreveport	5	2	22
Wichita	7	3	21

Source: Questionnaire sent to park superintendent of each city listed.

Golf Courses

The greatest number of public golf courses found in any of the cities compared with Oklahoma City was found in Memphis, where six exist. Des Moines had the dubious distinction of having the least with two. Oklahoma City ranked fourth among the seven cities with three. The city is doing something to correct this deficiency with the construction of a new 18 hole golf course in Trosper Park. Due to the fact that a golf course while important in the overall recreation program, is not as important as assuring the children of the city a proper recreation program. It is felt by the author that other recreational facilities should be extended before too much emphasis should be put on expansion of golfing facilities. This is particularly true in light of the fact that several very good private golf courses are available in Oklahoma City.

Tennis Courts

In the total number of surfaced tennis courts, only Memphis with 30 and Omaha with 29 had more than Oklahoma City's twenty-five. Since the number of courts ran as low as six in Des Moines, Iowa, and since over half of these cities reporting had less than did Oklahoma City, it could be stated that the city probably has an adequate number of tennis courts. This argument is further strengthened by the fact that the city possesses numerous tennis courts that, while not surfaced, offer a satisfactory place to play tennis.

While there is no reason to believe that the information received from the questionnaires was not accurate, it is not possible to draw a definite conclusion on the overall merits of the various park systems on this basis alone. There are too many factors that must be considered that could be determined only by direct observations in the various cities. It is, however, possible to measure the degree of efficiency of certain individual aspects of a park system by this method, with the hope that an overall park evaluation trend can be formulated.

This was done in the comparison of the park systems of Oklahoma City and the six other cities. From the results it was learned that, while Oklahoma City did not rank first in any individual comparison, it did rank in the upper half of all of them. It is then not too unlikely to assume that this general trend would be found if the evaluation could be carried out on all phases of the various park systems.

CHAPTER VIII

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

The Bartholomew Plan, completed in 1946, under which the Oklahoma City Park System is now developing, laid out an extensive program for improvement and expansion of the park system over a twenty-five year period. This ambitious plan will carry through 1970, and if present indications are correct it will meet its goals.

Basically, it is an expansion program to meet a 1970 population need estimated to be about 360,000. This estimate was established on the assumption that since the 1944 population was about 240,000, or a gain of about 36,000 over the 1940 population of 204,000, that the growth would continue at a fairly uniform rate. As the official 1950 census shows, the population in 1950 was 243,000, about the number estimated six years earlier. Therefore, if the population growth continues at the rate of increase shown between 1940 and 1950, the population in 1970 (Figure 12) will be about 320,000.

Even with a population as much as 40,000 short of the 1970 estimate, most of the improvements suggested by the Bartholomew plan will be necessary if the park system now serving over 200,000 inhabitants can effectively serve a city with a population of over 300,000 by 1970.

The remainder of this chapter treats the major points for improvement of the Oklahoma City Park System that were pointed out by the Bartholomew plan. Obviously, only the basic ideas for improvement and few details can be taken into consideration in a brief survey of this nature.

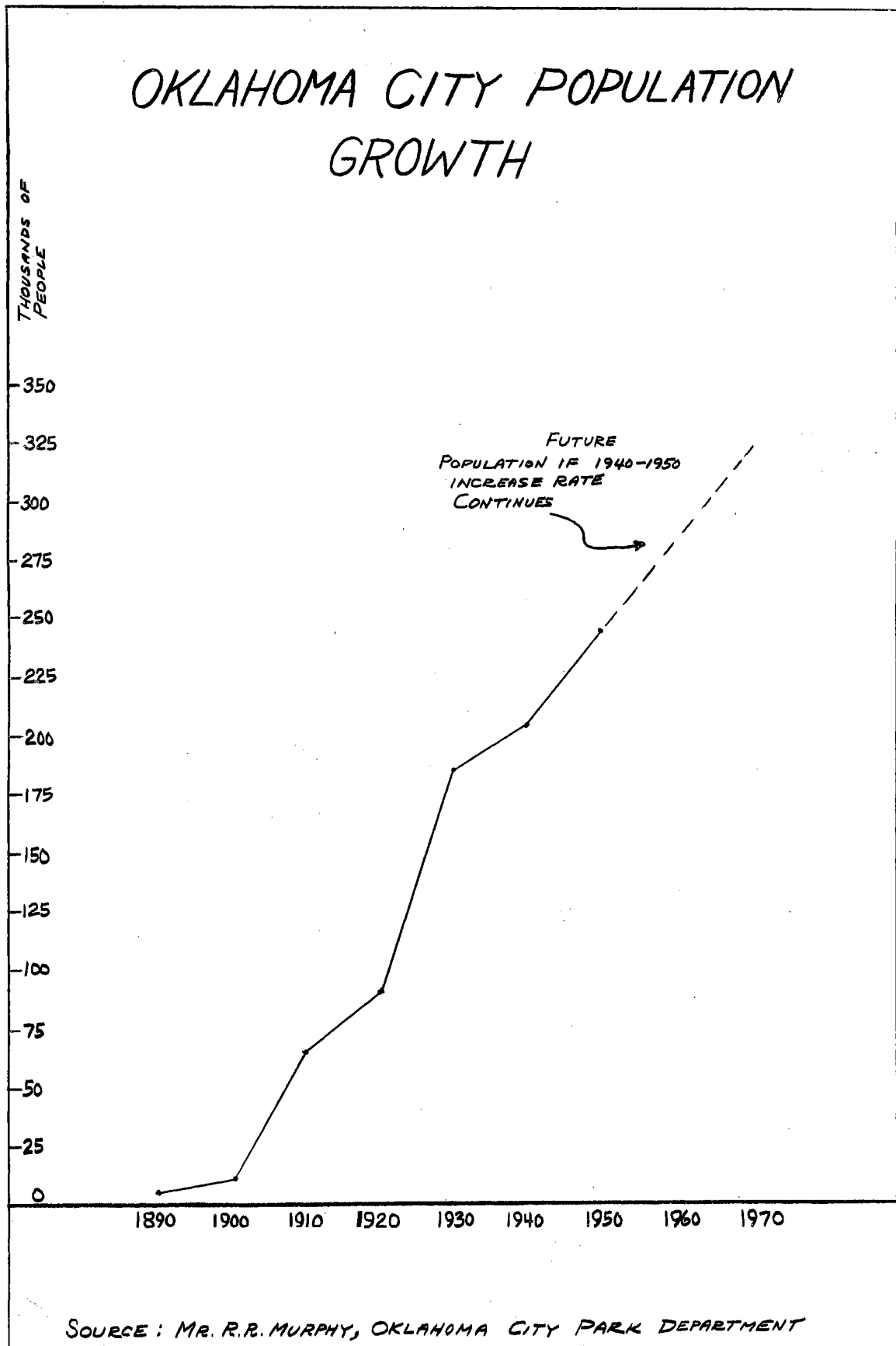


Figure 12

Proposed Large Central Park

As the capital of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City attracts visitors from all over the state. The city is also quite important as a convention community, both for business men and school groups, with an average of about 600 convening annually. Transients and tourists, because of the central location of the city on main routes of travel, are numerous; yet there are no parks, of any size, near the downtown area to serve these people or the regular residents of this area.

A short distance south of the central business district (Figure 2) lies the Canadian River Bottoms. The area between the Frisco Railroad and the Canadian River and between the Santa Fe Railroad and Western Avenue is at present largely occupied by sub-standard, shoddy, and cheap development that is a disgrace to an otherwise progressive community. This property is readily accessible to the business district and to both the North and South parts of the city by important radial streets. Utilized for a park it would add much to the facilities of the central section.

It is seen not only by many visitors entering and leaving the city over the important state and Federal highways, but also by those entering and leaving over the principal railroads.

It was proposed by the authors of the Bartholomew Plan that a large central park should be constructed in this area, partially on existing park areas and partially on new lands. (Figure 2) According to this plan, Wheeler Park would become the Northwest corner of the new park and Wiley Post Park would form the Southeast section of the park. All of the land within the area, roughly about 500 acres, would then be cleared off. All unattractive housing, junk, and debris would

be removed and the whole area turned into an attractive large park only a few minutes drive from the heart of downtown Oklahoma City.

The writer feels, after careful study of the park system of Oklahoma City, that no one project can do more to improve the overall appearance of the city while at the same time providing a modern park close to the downtown section of the city.

New State Fairgrounds

In the Bartholomew Plan it was recommended that the old state fairgrounds located in an obscure out-of-the-way section of the city in an entirely inappropriate neighborhood should be abandoned. A new state fairgrounds, similar to that of Dallas, Texas, was recommended. This particular project has been carried out as recommended. Since only the fairgrounds, and not the buildings, come under the jurisdiction of the park department, this project will not be discussed in detail in this report.

Proposed Large Park System

The four large parks, Lincoln Park, Trosper Park, Woodson Park, and Will Rogers Park, in the four quadrants are well located and, on the whole, have suitable topography for large park purposes.

In addition to these, the city has the two large water reservoirs of Lake Overholser and Lake Hefner with the surrounding property which make them good large park properties. The following discussion of each of these parks, while it does not cover the details of proposed development, does include a few suggestions regarding possible use.

1. Lincoln Park--The most intensively developed large park in the system already contains numerous picnic areas, swimming facilities, a zoo, an eighteen hold golf course, etc. Eventually, however, added

recreational facilities for neighborhood use should be provided near Eastern Avenue to serve the area to the west.

2. Will Rogers Park--This 160 acre park serves the northwest section of the city. It contains a baseball diamond, a softball diamond, a clubhouse, a greenhouse, and a rose garden. More recreational facilities should be recommended to provide facilities for residents adjacent to the park. At the present time, this park is being improved from both a recreational and an ornamental standpoint.

3. Woodson Park--This 160 acre park in the southwest section of the city has very limited facilities consisting mainly of two baseball diamonds and a nine hole golf course. Provision should be made for complete recreation facilities in this park which would include lighted softball fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, and children's playground apparatus.

4. Trosper Park--This 640 acre park in the southeast section of the city was unimproved at the time of the Bartholomew Report. It has considerable natural timber and interesting topography. It could be made a very desirable recreational feature with a lake as the main attraction, the same as in Lincoln Park. It would appear that additional facilities for golf will eventually be needed in the Capitol Hill section and the topography in this park is better suited for this purpose than that of Woodson Park. It was suggested that a golf course might be laid out in this park as the first step in its development followed by the addition of swimming pools, tennis courts, picnic areas, etc.

5. Lake Overholser--This large park area is primarily a water supply facility, but it does have fine potential recreational use. At present it is extensively used for boating, hunting, and fishing.

These are logical uses and should be continued. The main need at the present time is for better roads to provide good access to the area. No other developments were recommended for the immediate future.

6. Lake Hefner--Plans call for the construction of roads, boating accommodations, picnic areas and other recreational facilities. The Bartholomew report suggested that the plans be amended to include the construction of a golf course south of the lake to serve the northwest part of the city.

Neighborhood Parks

In order to assure the proper park facilities for all neighborhoods in Oklahoma City, the Bartholomew Report mapped out an extensive series of neighborhood parks. In many cases it would be possible to use existing park or public property, but a considerable number of new sites would be necessary and some of the existing sites would have to be enlarged.

Under this plan there would be forty neighborhood parks for whites and three for negroes in Oklahoma City. If this plan is followed, no section of the city as it exists today or as it can be expected to be in the near future, will be without a neighborhood park.

The mentioned systems of neighborhood parks does not include all the areas now being used for recreational purposes. Brock, Will Clark, McMechan and other similar areas were not included in the neighborhood park planning because of their location, limited area, or the possible expense involved in expanding them. Most of these areas are so limited that they can be considered more as playlots and they should continue to be used to provide recreation for the lower age group.

Proposed Park Way System

Figure 2 shows the proposed system of parkways and boulevards. Although it does not include all the existing boulevard streets, it does include those that can be fitted into an integrated system designed to serve specific purposes or objectives.

The main features of the new parkway and boulevard system would be (Figure 2) (1) the connecting of Lakes Hefner and Overholser to the west and north of the city and Trosper Park at the southwest corner of the city with the existing system and (2) the widening of existing parkways and boulevards particularly in the area between Lincoln Park and Topping Park.

Property Acquisition Plan

It was recommended in the Bartholomew Plan that the city and the park board should establish a definite policy regarding acquisition of future park areas. Most of the area set out in the plan for proposed development was vacant and it was recommended the city take necessary measures to acquire it before loss to private interests. Eighteen neighborhood parks were recommended in areas largely vacant at the time of the report. At an estimated land cost of \$30,000 per park, the total outlay of \$540,000 would have purchased all the property recommended for neighborhood parks.¹

The neighborhood park plan as proposed by the Bartholomew Plan met with the approval of the Oklahoma City Park Board and it is being put into effect as rapidly as funds are made available for purchasing new land and landscaping present land. Seven parks, containing 139 acres, have been added since 1950.

¹Harland Bartholomew, A Preliminary Report Upon Schools and Parks, (St. Louis, 1946), pp. 48-50.

By incorporating the more important recommendations made by the Bartholomew Report, the Park Department can greatly improve the overall appearance of the city. It can at the same time make certain that those areas not now served by the proper park facilities can by 1970 have these needs fulfilled.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the Oklahoma City Park Department's standpoint, Oklahoma City is quite fortunate in being located where it is. The mild winters the city normally enjoys enables the park system to have a number of sub-tropical trees and plants a city only a few hundred miles to the north could not grow. The relatively long frost free periods enables the people to enjoy flowers and other plants for a longer period throughout the year. Too, the number of months per year that people can visit the parks is quite high. For example, only through the months of December, January, and February is the weather usually too cold for a casual walk through the zoo. No elaborate means are usually necessary, for that matter, to keep the animals comfortable.

Oklahoma City is favorably located in that it has a large surrounding metropolitan and rural area to draw people to the zoo and other park facilities. The closest city large enough to offer competition of this type is more than one hundred miles away, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Nearly ten years after the Bartholomew Plan was submitted to the Oklahoma City Park Department it is still the guide by which the park system is expanding. According to Mr. R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent,¹ the plan has so far proven to be quite practical to Oklahoma City's situation.

¹R. R. Murphy, Park Superintendent, personal interview, April, 1955.

Already several important suggestions made by the plan have been put into reality. The State Fair fairgrounds have been moved from the out-of-the-way eastern section of the city to a new location in the western part of the city where it is much more accessible and in a much more wholesome atmosphere.

At the present time the large Trooper Park is being developed and an eighteen-hole golf course is being added. Seven new neighborhood parks containing 139 acres have been established in accordance with the needs of the growing city. Numerous neighborhood parks have been improved according to the plan with the addition of picnic facilities and playground apparatus.

The large downtown park recommended by the Bartholomew Report, and so badly needed by the city, both for its park facilities and its overall effect on the city's appearance, has not been realized as yet nor is there any definite plan for its construction. During the next few years it is, however, hoped by the Park Department officials that the large city bond issue that would be necessary in a project of this type can be raised and the park constructed before the end of present park plan in 1970.

The city is considering obtaining the Bartholomew firm's services for a follow-up plan that would bring certain phases of park planning up to date.

In attempting to determine whether or not the city of Oklahoma City is served by an adequate park system, there are several elements that must be taken into consideration.

First of all, it might be well to reconsider how the park system fares financially. While this alone by no means assures an adequate park system, Oklahoma City's \$3.29 per capita annual expenditure when

compared with expenditures of barely \$2.00 by other cities in this part of the country at least assures that the parks of Oklahoma City are not overly handicapped by a lack of finances. In park area per capita we find Oklahoma City ranked in the upper half of all cities compared even without considering the outlying lake properties.

Secondly, qualifications of a good typical park system were pointed out. It might at this time be well to see how Oklahoma City stands up against such criteria. The municipality was quite fortunate in having far-sighted men in city government in the early 1900's who bought large areas of land for the park system when it was very inexpensive and when it was possible to get some of it in large tracts. Oklahoma City's high rating in total park area, when compared with other cities, points out this fact rather well. Some of the smaller park properties have been made less desirable by their proximity to business establishments that were located after the parks were established.

Excluding the area in small ornamental parks, parkways, Lake Overholser, Lake Hefner, and those areas incorporated into the park system since 1950, the park system of Oklahoma City covers 2,479 acres. Of this area 1,536 acres, or 61.9 per cent, is classified as being developed park acres. The five largest parks in Oklahoma City cover 1,721 acres, or 69.4 per cent, of the total area of 2,479 acres. This leaves the remaining 60 odd parks an area of 758 acres, or 30.6 per cent. These figures according to the ideal breakdown of the park areas listed in Bartholomew's Report would indicate that perhaps the percentage of total acreage in large park properties was a little higher than it should be to best serve the city.²

²Harland Bartholomew, A Preliminary Report Upon Schools and Parks, (St. Louis, 1946), p. 49.

Thanks to early day planning, the city's parks are for the most part well scattered, with one of the four large parks located in each corner of the city and the smaller neighborhood parks, playgrounds, etc. reasonably well distributed over all sections of the city. However, it has been difficult to keep the new additions to the city equipped with the proper amount of park areas as soon as they are incorporated into the city and these areas are probably the weak spots from a standpoint of equal distribution of parks.

As stated in Chapter III, a park system, no matter how large, without diversity can serve only limited interests. With the exception of playfields, which Oklahoma City is without, the Oklahoma City Park System is quite diversified. Considering all park properties, the park system has seven Ornamental Parks, one Playlot, thirty Playgrounds, twenty-seven Neighborhood Parks, twenty-eight Outlying Parks, and twenty-five Parks. In this calculation it is understood that some parks have the facilities of more than one type of park, which accounts for the larger number given than the number of parks. The lack of playfields is a weak point in the park system of the city with the only areas of this type that are available belonging to the city school system. No park playfields are scheduled for construction in the immediate future.

The last major requirement listed in Chapter III was supervised recreation. Oklahoma City is fortunate in having a well supervised recreation program, with over 175 supervisors and other employees during its peak during the summer months. All members of the Park Department staff are keenly aware of the importance of the supervised recreation program in the overall park department picture. The

recreational facilities listed in Table IX compare Oklahoma City favorably with the other cities considered.

Finally, Oklahoma City's fine zoo, as in nearly any city the most popular single park attraction, gives Oklahomans a chance to see one of the best animal displays in the Southwest. (Figure 11)

From all the various comparison criteria and means exerted to find the Oklahoma City Park System's true value to the people of Oklahoma City, it was found that Oklahoma City ranked average or better than average in all phases when compared with other cities and quite satisfactory compared with various "yardsticks" of a good park system.

There are obvious shortcomings in the Oklahoma City Park System and certain facilities, as previously mentioned, are lacking. It is, however, felt that the Oklahoma City Park Department, through the natural benefits of favorable geographic location and desirable climate, plus the foresightedness of early city leaders, present officials, and public interest, has an adequate park system--a system with most of the facilities and attractions that could be expected of a city of a quarter of a million people and one that compares quite favorably with other similar cities of the Southwest.

APPENDIX A
STUDENT'S LETTER

711 1/2 Duck Street
Stillwater, Oklahoma
April 4, 1955

Park Superintendent
Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Sir:

I am writing you for information concerning your park system. This information is needed for the thesis which I am writing for my Master's degree in geography here at Oklahoma A. & M. College.

While the thesis will cover primarily the Oklahoma City Park System, I am of the opinion that the best way to evaluate the true merits of its system would be through the comparison of its park system with those of similar cities within a 500 mile radius.

Will you please answer the enclosed questionnaire which I am sending you and several other park superintendents in this section of the country. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning this questionnaire to me.

If you have any additional information concerning your park system that you feel would be of help to me in this matter, it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Leslie R. Davis

QUESTIONNAIRE
CITY PARK SYSTEMS

1. Size of park system (total acreage)? _____
_____.
2. Number of individual parks? _____.
3. Size annual park budget? _____.
4. Is park system operated on special funds or on city general fund?
_____.
5. Number of full-time park employees? _____.
6. Number of parks with zoo? _____.
7. Number of animals in zoo?
 - (a) Monkeys _____
 - (b) Elephants _____
 - (c) Lions _____
 - (d) Tigers _____
 - (e) Camels _____
 - (f) Bears _____
 - (g) Leopards _____
 - (h) Kangaroos _____
 - (i) Others _____
8. Does the seasonal change in weather affect the attendance in the parks appreciably from one season to the next? _____
_____.
9. Are parks segregated as to race? _____.
10. Do the cemeteries and city airports fall under park department's control? _____.

11. Number Swimming Pools? _____°
12. Number Golf Courses? _____°
13. Number Tennis Courts? _____°
14. Number Picnic Tables? _____°
15. Remarks _____°

_____°

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- Murphy, R. R. Park Superintendent, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
- Walters, Henry. City Horticulturist, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

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STRATHMORE PARCHMENT

THESIS TITLE: THE OKLAHOMA CITY PARK SYSTEM

AUTHOR: Leslie R. Davis

THESIS ADVISER: Dr. David C. Winslow

The content and form have been checked and approved by the author and thesis adviser. The Graduate School Office assumes no responsibility for errors either in form or content. The copies are sent to the bindery just as they are approved by the author and faculty adviser.

TYPIST: Gordon F. Culver

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