AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 24-507 TO CHAPTER 24 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN; PROHIBITING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC PARKS; PROVIDING EXCEPTIONS; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; SEVERABILITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

§ 1. **WHEREAS**, the City of Norman leases and maintains the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness as a unique natural area dedicated to the preservation of native ecosystems, wildlife habitat, environmental education, scientific study, and passive recreation; and

§ 3. **WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that the protection of sensitive natural resources within the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness requires regulations that minimize human impacts and reduce disturbances to wildlife, vegetation, waterways, and other ecological features; and

§ 4. **WHEREAS**, the City Council further finds that the operation of watercraft, including boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices, may adversely affect natural resources, wildlife habitat, water quality, and public safety within park waters; and

§ 5. **WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that the introduction of motorized vehicles, unauthorized camping, fires, hunting, trapping, and the collection of biological or geological specimens can cause damage to park resources and interfere with the public's enjoyment of park facilities; and

§ 6. **WHEREAS,** the City Council recognizes that Community and Neighborhood Parks are intended primarily for recreational, educational, and community uses and that certain activities are incompatible with the safe and orderly operation of such parks; and

§ 7. **WHEREAS,** the City Council finds that clarifying prohibited activities, including the operation or launching of watercraft and the possession or discharge of devices capable of propelling projectiles, will promote public safety, protect park resources, and assist in the consistent enforcement of park regulations; and

§ 8. **WHEREAS,** the City Council further finds that permitting limited exceptions for scientific study, conservation activities, park maintenance, and other authorized purposes serves a legitimate public interest while preserving the natural character and intended use of public park properties; and

§ 9. **WHEREAS**, the City Council determines that these amendments are necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare and to preserve the City's parks and natural areas for the benefit of present and future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA:

§ 10. That the Norman City Code be and the same is hereby amending § 24-507 as follows:

BEFORE AMENDMENT

24-507 Activities Prohibited In Sutton Urban Wilderness; Exceptions By Written Permit

(a) No person shall engage in the following activities within the Sutton Urban Wilderness, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department:

(1) Littering;

(2) Operating any motorized vehicles or bicycles;

(3) Starting or maintaining a fire;

(4) Camping;

(5) Swimming;

(6) Hunting;

(7) Trapping;

(8) Collecting biological or geological specimens;

(9) Cutting or collecting wood;

(10) Operating a boat or canoe;

(11) Fishing by means of a trotline or jugline;

(12) Possessing a bow, slingshot, air gun, firearm, or any other such device to hurl projectiles;

(13) Defacing or damaging any natural object or park facilities or appurtenances;

(14) Introducing plant or animal species.

(b) Organized group events exceeding 35 people shall have written authorization by the Parks and Recreation Department.

(c) The Parks and Recreation Department may issue permits for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes appropriate to use of

wilderness area; and where questions arise concerning administration of the permit system, the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness Advisory Committee shall act in an advisory capacity.

AFTER AMENDMENT

24-507 Activities Prohibited ~~In Sutton Urban Wilderness~~ at Public Park Sites~~;~~ ~~Exceptions~~ By Written Permit

(a) Sutton Urban Wilderness

(1) No person shall engage in the following activities within the Sutton Urban Wilderness~~, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department~~:

(i) Littering;
(ii) Operating any motorized vehicles or bicycles;
(iii) Starting or maintaining a fire;
~~(iv) Camping;~~
(iv) Swimming;
(v) Hunting;
(vi) Trapping;
(vii) Collecting biological or geological specimens, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department;
(viii) Cutting or collecting wood;
(ix) ~~Operating a boat or canoe~~ Operating or launching any watercraft, including but not limited to boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices;
(x) Fishing by means of a trotline or jugline;
(xi) Discharging any firearm, bow, slingshot, air gun, or other device capable of propelling a projectile, except as authorized by law ~~Possessing a bow, slingshot, air gun, firearm, or any other such device to hurl projectiles~~;
(xii) Defacing or damaging any natural object or park facilities or appurtenances;
(xiii) Introducing plant or animal species~~.~~; and
(xiv) Violating posted park rules.

(2) Organized group events exceeding 35 people shall have written authorization by the Parks and Recreation Department.

(3) The Parks and Recreation Department may issue permits for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes appropriate to use of wilderness area; and where questions arise concerning administration of the permit system, the Board of Parks Commissioners

~~George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness Advisory Committee~~ shall act in an advisory capacity.

(b) Community and Neighborhood Parks

(1) No person shall engage in the following activities within Community and Neighborhood parks:

(i) Littering;
(ii) Operating any motor vehicle; provided, however, that bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles, wheelchairs, and other power-driven mobility devices used by individuals with mobility disabilities shall be permitted as required by applicable law;
(iii) Starting or maintaining a fire;
(iv) Swimming;
(v) Hunting;
(vi) Trapping;
(vii) Collecting biological or geological specimens, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department;
(viii) Cutting or collecting wood;
(ix) Operating or launching any watercraft, including but not limited to boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices;
(x) Fishing by means of a trotline or jugline;
(xi) Discharging any firearm, bow, slingshot, air gun, or other device capable of propelling a projectile, except as authorized by law~~;~~
(xiii) Defacing or damaging any natural object or park facilities or appurtenances;
(xiv) Introducing plant or animal species; and
(xv) Violating posted park rules.

(2) The Parks and Recreation Department may issue permits for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes appropriate to use of Community and Neighborhood Park sites; and where questions arise concerning administration of the permit system, the Board of Park Commissioners shall act in an advisory capacity.

§ 11. **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE**. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and such finding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

§ 12. **Emergency**: An emergency is hereby declared to exist for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and welfare by reason whereof this Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and publication.

ADOPTED this _____ day

of _____, 2026.

_____
Mayor

NOT ADOPTED this _____ day

of _____, 2026.

_____
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
City Clerk