

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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“Ta-Ha-Zouka Park Entrance Sign Updated”

Two fifteen feet arrows stuck into the ground at an angle have welcomed visitors to Ta-Ha-Zouka Park south of Norfolk for over 50 years. Those arrows will soon be getting a facelift as part of an update of the park’s entrance.



Pat Mrsny, City of Norfolk Park Superintendent, said the new entrance will look very much like the current one with some added improvements- like feathers back on the arrows.

“We researched what the arrows looked like way back when and the tops were at one time painted like turkey feathers since that it was what the native Indians in this area used. The arrows will be sandblasted and repainted and then we’re going to put a vinyl wrap on the top of the arrows to resemble turkey feathers again,” Mrsny said.

Since the wooden sign set in the center of the arrows is rotting, a new metal circular sign will be placed there instead. It will retain a wood-like appearance and say in large letters “Ta-Ha-Zouka Park.” Added will be a picture of an elk head as the meaning of Ta-Ha-Zouka is “horn of the elk.” The brick flowerbed is going to stay as are floodlights that will continue to illuminate the sign.

“We wanted to maintain the look and history of the sign while bringing it up to date. The arrows now will be more true to the original design by accenting the feathers,” Mrsny said.



A close look at the current sign shows wood that is rotting and coming apart. Chicken wire put in the center of the wood sign hasn’t kept pigeons from nesting inside. The metal arrows are also showing a few spots of metal through the paint.

Mrsny said the current lettered sign will be taken down later this month so that the tall metal arrows can be sandblasted and prepared for painting. Once they are painted installation of the new round metal sign is expected- potentially the first week of October.

Ta-Ha-Zouka Park was built in 1935 and named in 1936. (There is also a Ta-Ha-Zouka Park in Elkhorn, Nebraska.) At the time it consisted of 52

acres with much of the lagoon work and up to 1200 trees planted with partial funding from the Work Progress Administration (WPA). In 1938 a zoo was added that included an eagle, opossum, coyote, a wild cat, ducks and geese. A small sign minus the arrows directed people into the park at that time.

Later on deer, bears, buffalo and peacocks lived at the zoo and the Prairie Central Miniature Railroad ran through the park. More recently the lagoon in the park was emptied, dug out and refilled. Concrete trailer pads and new restrooms and showers have been added to the park campgrounds. A disc golf course is on the south end of the park as is the new mile long concrete Elkhorn River Trail. A softball/baseball complex is on the east end of the park on McKinley Avenue. A dog park is used frequently by pet owners visiting the park. Just last year a home in the park was renovated by City staff and made into the Elkhorn Lodge. It's estimated that over 30,000 visit the park each year.

