



Little Rock Zoo

Master Plan Report

4/14/2014

Prepared by:





Little Rock Zoo

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i	Learning Initiatives	24	Business Initiatives	42
Table of Contents	ii	Mission and Vision	25	Project Overview & Vision	
Introduction	iii	Existing Education Programs	26	Project Overview	43
Project Background	1	Proposed Education Programs	27	Vision	43
Existing Site and Context	2	The Aquatorium	28	Strategic Goals	
Map of Existing Site and Context	3	The Education Plaza and Event Pavilion	29	Strategic Goals Overview	44
Neighborhood Connectivity	4	Wayfinding	30	Visitor Experience	44
Existing Facility and Available Acreage	5	Master Interpretive Organizational Plan	31	Sustainable Economic Model	44
Facility Recommendations	6	Interpretive Zones		Top Attraction	44
New Master Plan	7	Water Walk	32	Internal & External Developmental Influences	
Phase One		The River	33	Current Zoo Trends	45
Heart of the Zoo	8	The Flooded Savanna	34	Community Development Impact	45
Arkansas Water Otter/Fish Rendering	9	The Play Pump	35	Key Business Drivers	45
Aquatorium Floor Plan	10	The Estuaries/Waters of Indo Asia	36	Revenue Generation	46
Aquatorium Floor Plan	11	Water for Elephants	37	Revenue Generation: Attendance & Funding	
Public Parking Plan	12	Domestic Arkansas/The Garden Home	38	Attendance Growth	47
Phase Two		Wild Arkansas/Water Ways of Arkansas	39	Attendance Potential	47
South America	14	The Rainforest	40	Funding Opportunities	47
Domestic Arkansas Farm	15	The Oceans	41	Master Plan Overview	48
Circulation Enhancements	16			Opportunities	
Parking Recommendation	17			Business Impacts & Opportunities	49
Additional Plan Highlights				Potential Return	49
Elephants	18			Education Opportunities	49
Asia	19			Conservation Opportunities	50
Africa	20			Keys to Success	50
The Oceans	21			Potential Challenges & Implementation Steps	
Administration and Group Entry	21			Potential Challenges	51
Animal Health	22			Implementation Steps	51
Service Area	22			Conclusion	52

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Introduction

In January 2013, GLMV Architecture, along with Zoo Advisors and AFH Design, began a master planning process to identify and prioritize immediate improvements to the Little Rock Zoo and provide a longer-term vision for future growth. This plan was approved by the Little Rock Zoo Board of Governors on April 14, 2014 and the Little Rock City Board of Directors on April 22, 2014.

Project Background

In 2011, Little Rock voters passed two sales tax ballot initiatives. The first initiative approved five-eighths of a cent sales tax to support city operations, of which the Zoo will receive \$1.6 million each year for operations. The second initiative passed a three-eighths of a cent sales tax to support city-wide economic development. Of this, the Zoo will receive \$8 million over the next ten years for capital improvement. One of the major goals of this Master Plan is to wisely allocate these dollars to create the greatest positive impact on the exhibits and guest experience for those that visit the Little Rock Zoo.

These dollars, made available to the Zoo by the voters of Little Rock, will provide a major boost to realizing the strategic plan recommendations made in 2011 by Schultz and William, Inc., outlining the need for an additional \$1.95 million for annual operations and an additional \$15.0 million in capital improvements over the next five years.

In January 2013, GLMV Architecture, along with Zoo Advisors LLC, AFH Design and the Master Planning Steering Committee from the Little Rock Zoo, began a master planning process to identify and develop the next round of improvements for the Zoo.

Guided by the former Master Plan and the Schultz and Williams's strategic plan, this Master Plan highlights the following areas for the Little Rock Zoo to focus on over the next ten years:

- Capitalize on the Zoo as a trusted resource in terms of educational and animal content and serve as one of the voices/messengers for "conservation and education" of wildlife.
- Become a leader in family entertainment by providing an exciting, engaging and memorable guest experience for visitors of all ages.
- Support the Zoo's operating budget with additional operating revenue and a balanced financial plan through increased annual attendance and new expanded revenue sources.

Additional areas of evaluation and recommendation of the Master Plan include:

- Evaluation of current footprint, existing facilities, and improve guest circulation throughout the zoo.
- Assess the current state and mix of animal exhibits.
- Evaluation and recommendations on traffic flow, parking and entrance areas at the front of the Zoo.
- Accommodate visitor service facilities, administration and operational facilities.

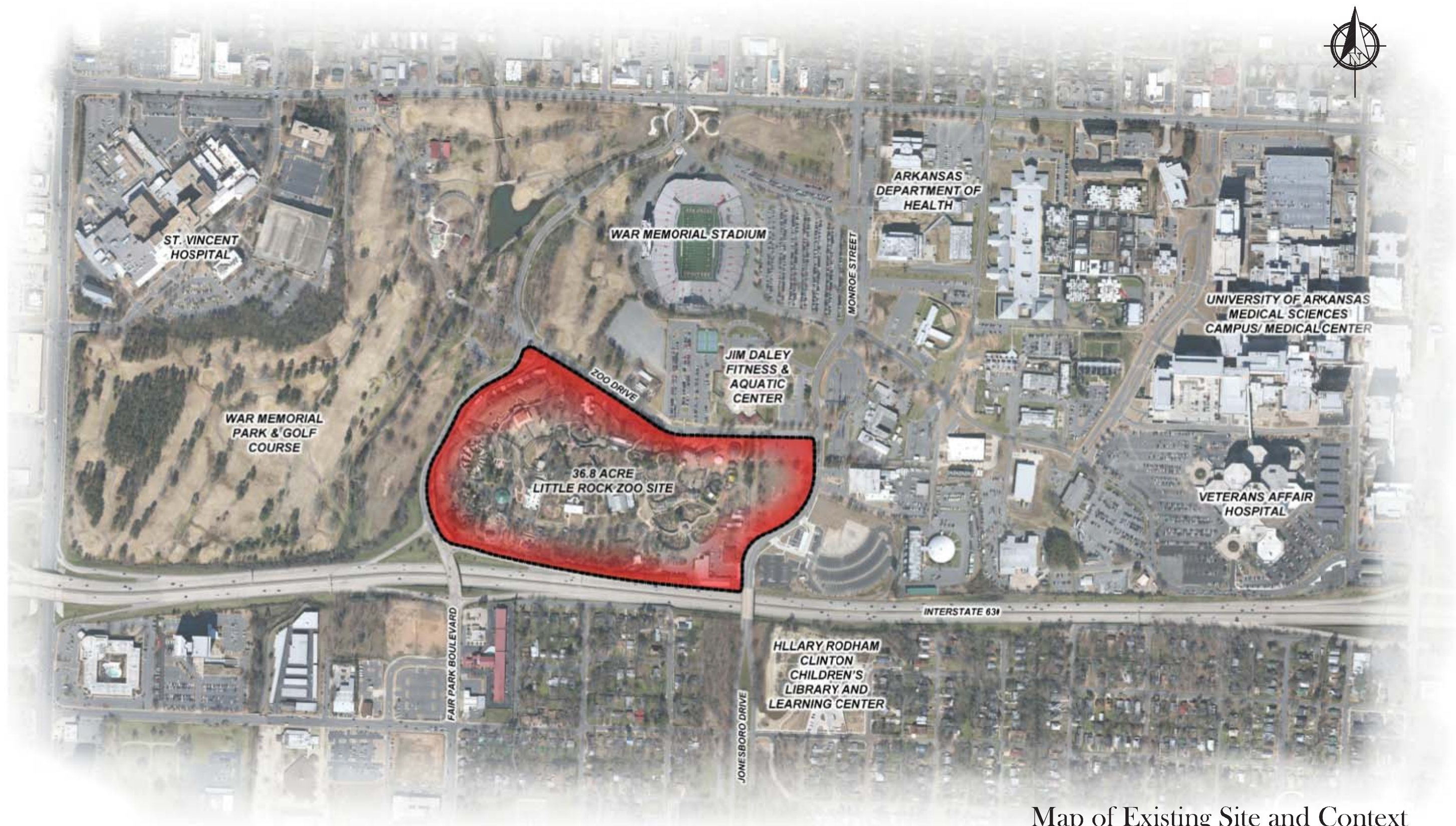


Existing Site and Context

Currently, the Little Rock Zoo occupies 36.8 acres of City-owned property in mid-town Little Rock immediately adjacent to Interstate 630. One of the most active areas of the city, the immediate environs include War Memorial Park, War Memorial Stadium, Jim Daley Fitness and Aquatic Center, the Arkansas Department of Health, and St. Vincent Hospital. Directly south of the interstate are the War Memorial and Oak Forest neighborhoods as well as the recently opened Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library and Learning Center.

Significantly, the Zoo is immediately adjacent to War Memorial Park and War Memorial Stadium. The 54,000-seat Stadium has a rich history of hosting college football, concerts and events, and is one of the major event venues in central Arkansas. Along with the zoo, the Stadium is part of War Memorial Park. The park is also home to a 90-acre, 18-hole urban executive golf course, children's play areas and numerous walking trails. Along with the neighboring medical centers and the fitness facilities, competition for the limited amount of parking available for the Zoo is high, and traffic along Fair Park Boulevard to the west and Monroe/Jonesboro Streets to the east is always busy. Zoo Drive, which runs east and west along the north side of the Zoo, provides for a short cut between the two busy streets. Parking for the Zoo is currently north of Zoo Drive and the existing lot has surface parking for 212 vehicles plus an additional 245 vehicles in the overflow lot.





Map of Existing Site and Context



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Neighborhood Connectivity

The new state of the art Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library and Learning Center immediately south of I-630 creates a significant opportunity for the Zoo to partner with the Central Arkansas Library System and opens an avenue for further outreach to the neighborhoods to the south of the Zoo. To drive increased attendance and diversity in the programs and offerings between both the Zoo and the Library, enhancing connectivity between the Library and the neighborhood along Jonesboro Drive should become a priority project for the City of Little Rock.



Existing Facilities and Available Acreage



At 36.8 acres within the Zoo perimeter, there is currently more than enough space within the existing boundary for the projected growth of the Zoo's attendance over the next 20 years. Areas that have been identified for rehabilitation and growth within the Zoo perimeter offer 7.2 acres of possible development and include:

- The open 3.8 acres adjacent to the east side of the Zoo.
- The Bird House and surrounding areas. This facility is in desperate need of complete renovation including replacement of the infrastructure, building envelope improvements and upgrade of all animal exhibits. Primates are currently in enclosures that have become sub-standard in their size and appearance. Reptiles are housed in hard-to-maintain exhibits, and the roof of the largest space, the tropical area, should be completely replaced with an energy-saving insulated system. Because of the size and location of this building, the appearance and use of this building in its current form set a negative tone for the entire Little Rock Zoo.
- The "Tunnel" Area: The tunnel area that serves as service for the Manned Wolf and Anteater exhibits is antiquated and potentially dangerous to workers within the tunnel, as there are no alternative means of escape other than through animal exhibits if the main exit becomes blocked. The walkway overhead has been closed, presenting guests with a dead end along their walk. Visitors also are able to look into service areas that are in need of repair. The complete walkway should be closed as soon as possible, as the benefit of looking down on a few animals is not outweighed by the guests having to backtrack and look into areas of the Zoo not intended for guests to see.
- Bear Area: Located at the west edge of the Zoo, the old bear grottos do not represent the current thinking in yard size or state of the art exhibitory. River Otters are housed in this area and are also in need of larger habitats. Keeper areas are small and potentially dangerous. The entire complex is suffering from years of wear and tear. Recent renovations have extended the life of the exhibit, but accreditation issues and size restraints will likely cause the exhibit to need to be completely replaced within the next 10 years.
- Small Carnivore: Outdated exhibits and cramped keeper quarters define the small carnivore exhibit in the southwesternmost corner of the Zoo. Complete replacement of this complex is recommended within the next 10 years.



Available Acreage Plan



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Facility Recommendations

New Master Plan

Growth in attendance and revenue as projected by the Schultz and Williams report will require momentum in both revenue-producing programs and continuing facility enhancements. Our report recommends significant changes to the Zoo's physical plant in two distinct phases over the next ten years.



New Master Plan
0' 100' 200' 400'

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Phase 1

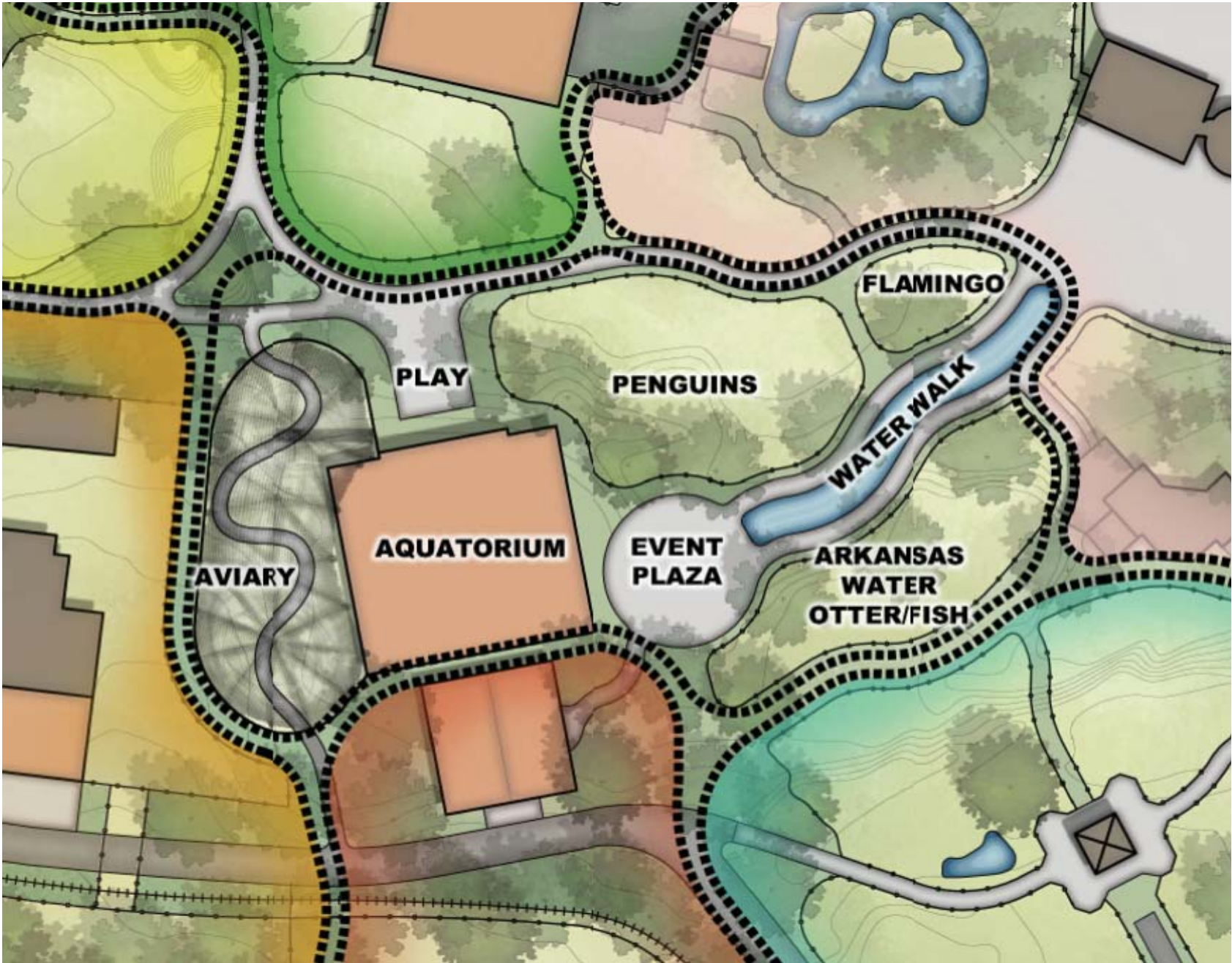


Phase 1, to be completed in 5 years, includes improvements to "the Heart of the Zoo," renovation of The Bird House, modifications to Zoo Drive and the expansion of public parking.

"The Heart of the Zoo"

"The Heart of the Zoo" refers to the area between the Bird House and the Entry/Event Plaza. This project will include a new Arkansas Water Otter/Fish Exhibit which will highlight native fish species as well as offer parallel play opportunities with River Otters. The addition of this exhibit will require the relocation of the Spider Monkey Exhibit to an area within the future South America.

A new Flamingo exhibit will add a punch of color and interest near the Entry/Event Plaza.



The Heart of the Zoo





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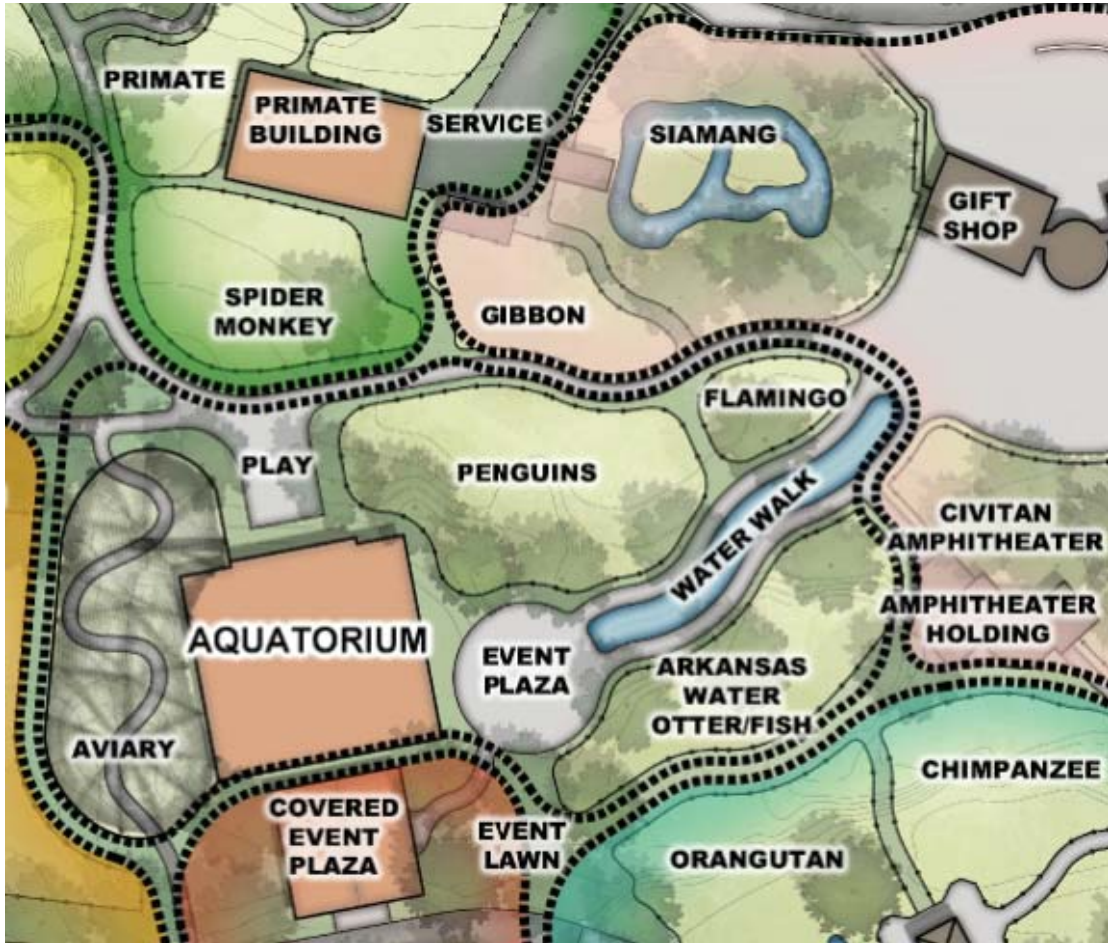
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Arkansas Water Otter/Fish Exhibit

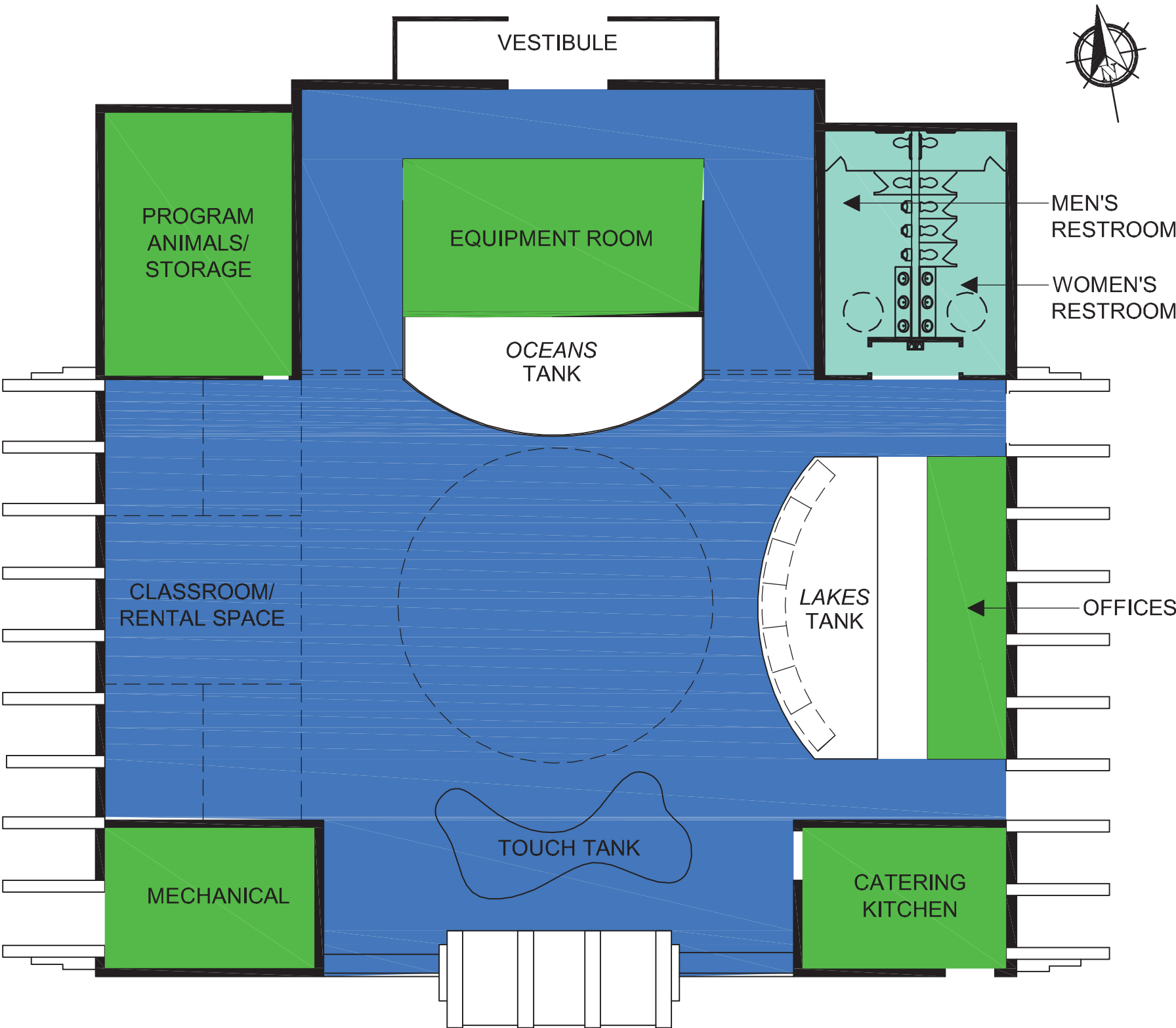
Phase 1

The Aquatorium

The second piece of the first phase is a complete renovation of the Bird House into a new state of the art “Aquatorium.” This multi-use building will serve as a rental venue, classroom spaces for education programs and dynamic aquatic animal based guest experience, including Fresh Water Fish, Coral Reef Fish and an Arkansas based touch tank. Outdoor plaza space to the east will serve a variety of functions, and a covered pavilion to the south will serve as a rain protected and shaded area for school groups and also serve as additional rental venue space. An attached aviary to the west will offer guests a walk through experience and unique viewing opportunities from the classroom/rental space.



Aquatorium
Site Orientation Plan



Aquatorium Floor Plan





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Aquatorium

Phase 1

Public Parking

Congestion and limited parking for the Zoo is one of the major impediments to future growth of the Zoo. A priority project for the City of Little Rock and the Little Rock Zoo should be the expansion of the parking lot, maximizing the available land. The proposed layout shown would increase the parking count to 717 spaces north of Zoo Drive. Along with parking adjustments, the closure of Zoo Drive to through traffic and bringing the associated parking and access near to the entry buildings would create a cohesive entry experience between the Zoo and the Parking, and dramatically improve the safety of guests as they move from their cars to the primary point of entry at the Zoo.



Public Parking Plan



Little Rock Zoo Vision Statement

*'Be a leader in family
entertainment.'*

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Phase 2



South America

Phase 2, to be completed after the Heart of the Zoo is upgraded, will include a complete renovation of the “Tunnel” area. This will include renovation of the Gibbon exhibit, new primate holding, new yards for South American species and a new indoor multi-species jungle exhibit. Reptiles exhibits that have been removed from the current jungle species and belonging to the South American zoogeographic area will be intermixed among the larger exhibits creating a complete South American experience.



South America Plan



Domestic Arkansas Farm



This phase will be a "Project of Opportunity" as dollars become available, and no specific timeline has been set. Enhanced barns, contact yards, play and significant enhancement of opportunities for physically challenged children and adults to see and interact with Heritage Breeds of domestic animals.



--- ADA ACCESSIBLE ROUTE
--- SITE BOUNDARY (47860 S.F.)

EXISTING TRAIN DEPOT

EXISTING PRAIRIE DOG EXHIBIT

RABBIT EXHIBIT

TREEHOUSE OVERLOOK

HERITAGE SHEEP AND GOATS

CONTACT YARD

CHICKEN COOP

FARM PLAY

RAILROAD WATER TOWER CROSSING

SILO SLIDE

BARN WITH EDUCATIONAL & INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS

DONKEY YARD

ADA ACCESSIBLE DONKEY CONTACT PATIO

DONKEY HOLD

Domestic Arkansas Farm Plan

0' 25' 50' 100'

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Circulation Enhancements



Guest Circulation

In addition to the above recommendations, improvements to guest circulation should be an immediate priority, creating a primary loop to carry a majority of the guests in a circular fashion though the Zoo. Each zoogeographic area (Africa, Asia, South America, Arkansas) will become immersive, stand-alone experiences. Especially important to members of the Zoo and “stroller moms,” this pattern of organization will allow those guests to make choices on the particular exhibits they are interested in seeing on a particular day, encouraging repeat visitation.

Service Circulation

Service vehicles should be routed around the outside perimeter of the zoo, keeping traffic off of public walkways when the Zoo is open.

Train

The topography of the Little Rock Zoo does not lend itself well to a large circumferential train ride that the Zoo had hoped to accomplish. Amusement trains have a maximum incline of 2 percent grade, and much of the Zoo is on land that is significantly steeper than that. A new expanded train layout in the south-central portion of the Zoo is recommended, with the train eventually passing between the two elephant yards. Ticketing would be from an enhanced station in the Cafe Africa section of the Zoo adjacent to the Domestic Farm area.

- PRIMARY LOOP
- IMMERSION TRAIL
- SERVICE ACCESS
- TRAIN ROUTE



Circulation Plan



Parking Recommendation

Public/Administration Parking

In addition to the public parking proposed in Phase 1, 19 public parking stalls will be provided at the future Administration Building.

School Bus Parking

Dedicated parking for 28 school buses has been proposed near a new group entry. This will allow students to safely enter the Zoo without additional congestion at the main gate.

Service/Employee Parking

Employee parking is conveniently located in the Service and Animal Health areas and has been increased to 77 stalls.

- PUBLIC/ADMINISTRATION PARKING
- SERVICE/EMPLOYEE PARKING
- BUS PARKING



Parking Plan

0' 100' 200' 400'

A Master Plan for the

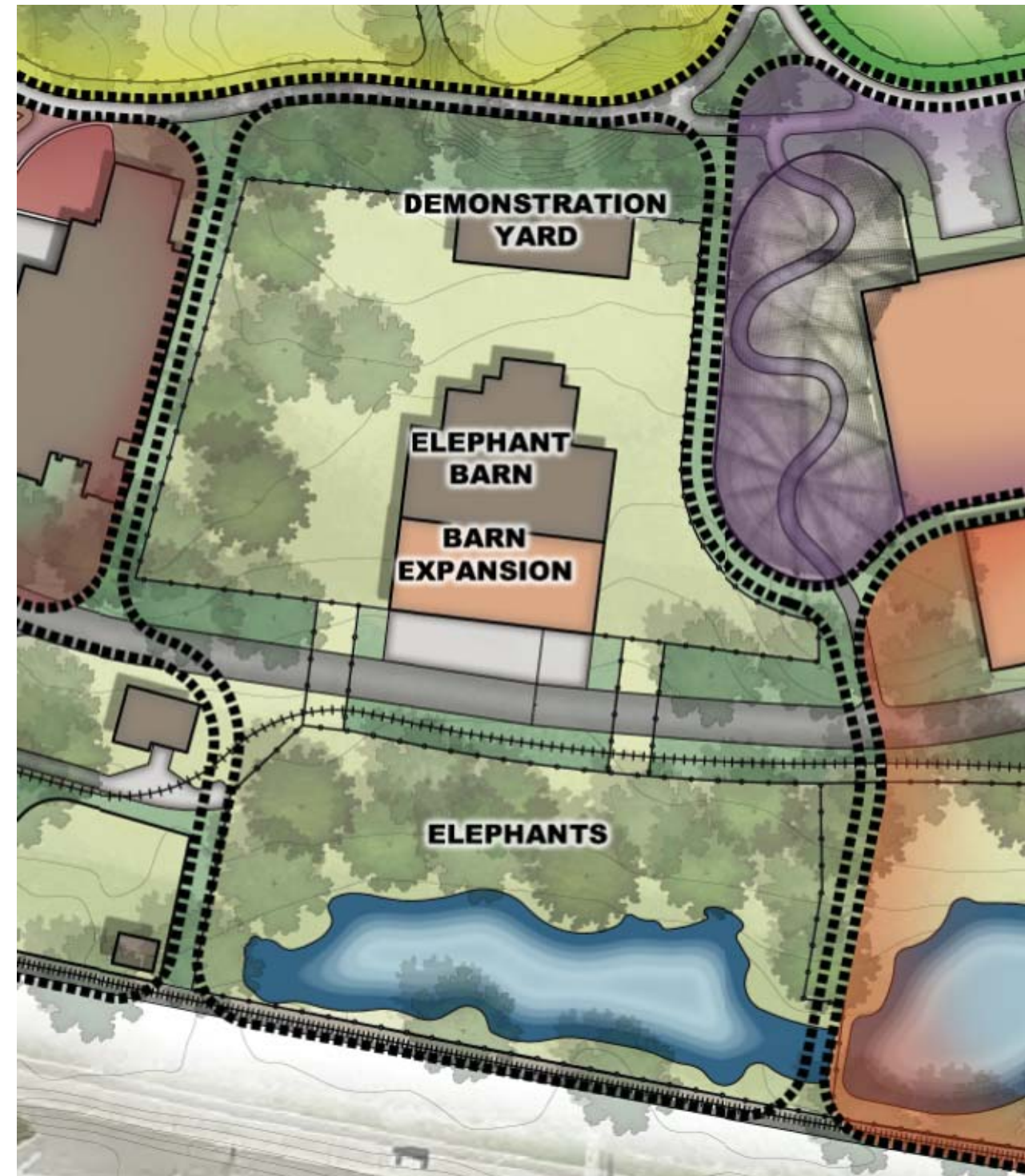
Little Rock Zoo

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Additional Plan Highlights

Elephants

The existing elephant yard will be expanded to within 20 feet of the east side of Cafe Africa. A new demonstration yard or amphitheater will be added to the north of the existing elephant barn. Additional interior elephant space is indicated. Significantly, the addition of a multi acre elephant yard to the south of the existing elephant yard can become a stand-alone exhibit with the elephants interacting with a renovated south lake. Animals would shift between the north and south exhibits on a choreographed schedule, creating excitement for both the guests and the animals.



Elephant Exhibit Plan

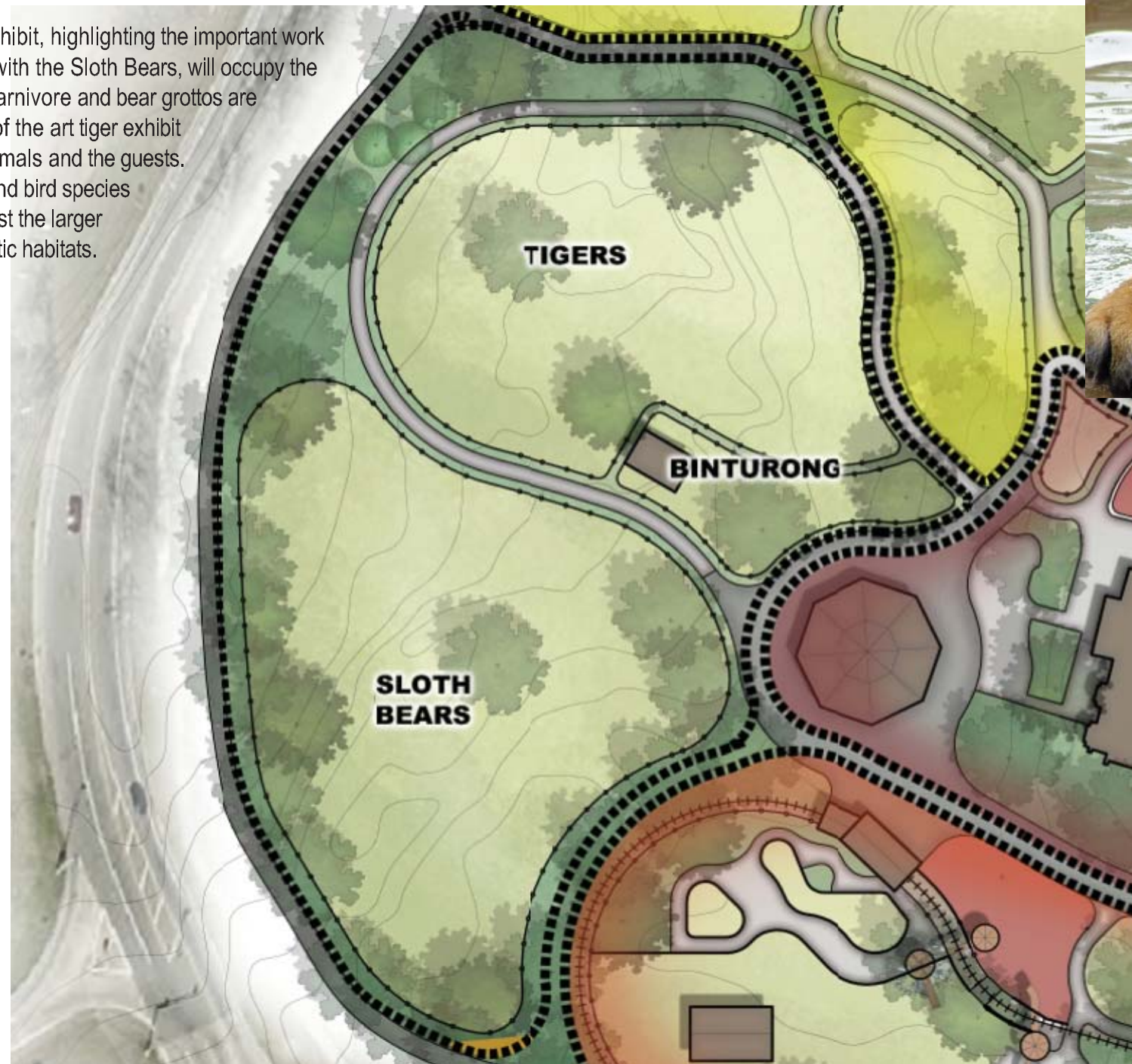
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Additional Plan Highlights



Asia

A new multi-species exhibit, highlighting the important work by the Little Rock Zoo with the Sloth Bears, will occupy the area where the small carnivore and bear grottos are currently. A new state of the art tiger exhibit will benefit both the animals and the guests. Reptiles, amphibians and bird species will be mixed in amongst the larger animals, all in naturalistic habitats.



Asia



Additional Plan Highlights

Africa

Overhead viewing of the current Jaguar, Tiger and Lion Exhibits should be closed or renovated, to prevent the possibility of guests accidentally falling into those exhibits from above. The existing Tiger exhibit will be renovated for a new Lion enclosure, and the Lion exhibit will be renovated to create new habitats for Caracal and Serval. The centerpiece of Africa will be the addition of a new Hippo exhibit with extensive filtrated underwater viewing. Continuing the theme, reptiles, amphibians and bird species will be mixed in amongst the larger animals, all in naturalistic habitats.

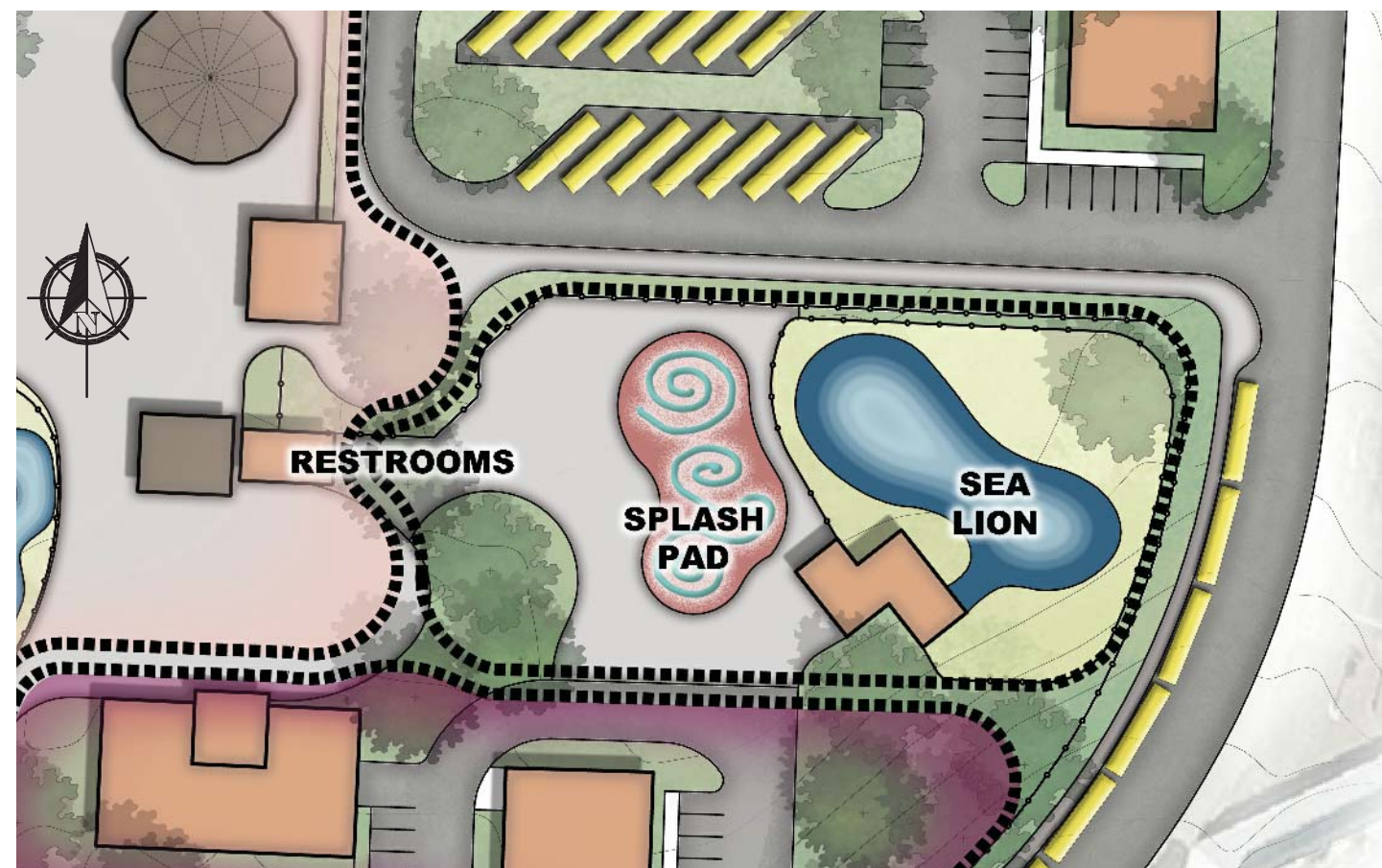


Africa
0' 75' 150'
1"=75.0'

Additional Plan Highlights

The Oceans

A new feature area proposed for the Little Rock Zoo will be an area called “The Oceans.” This area will exhibit and provide animal demonstrations for one of the most charismatic of species: The California Sea Lion. Although expensive to build and operate, the offset of these costs by dramatically increased attendance has been shown to more than pay for itself in both dollars and excitement generated by the very nature of Sea Lion demonstrations.

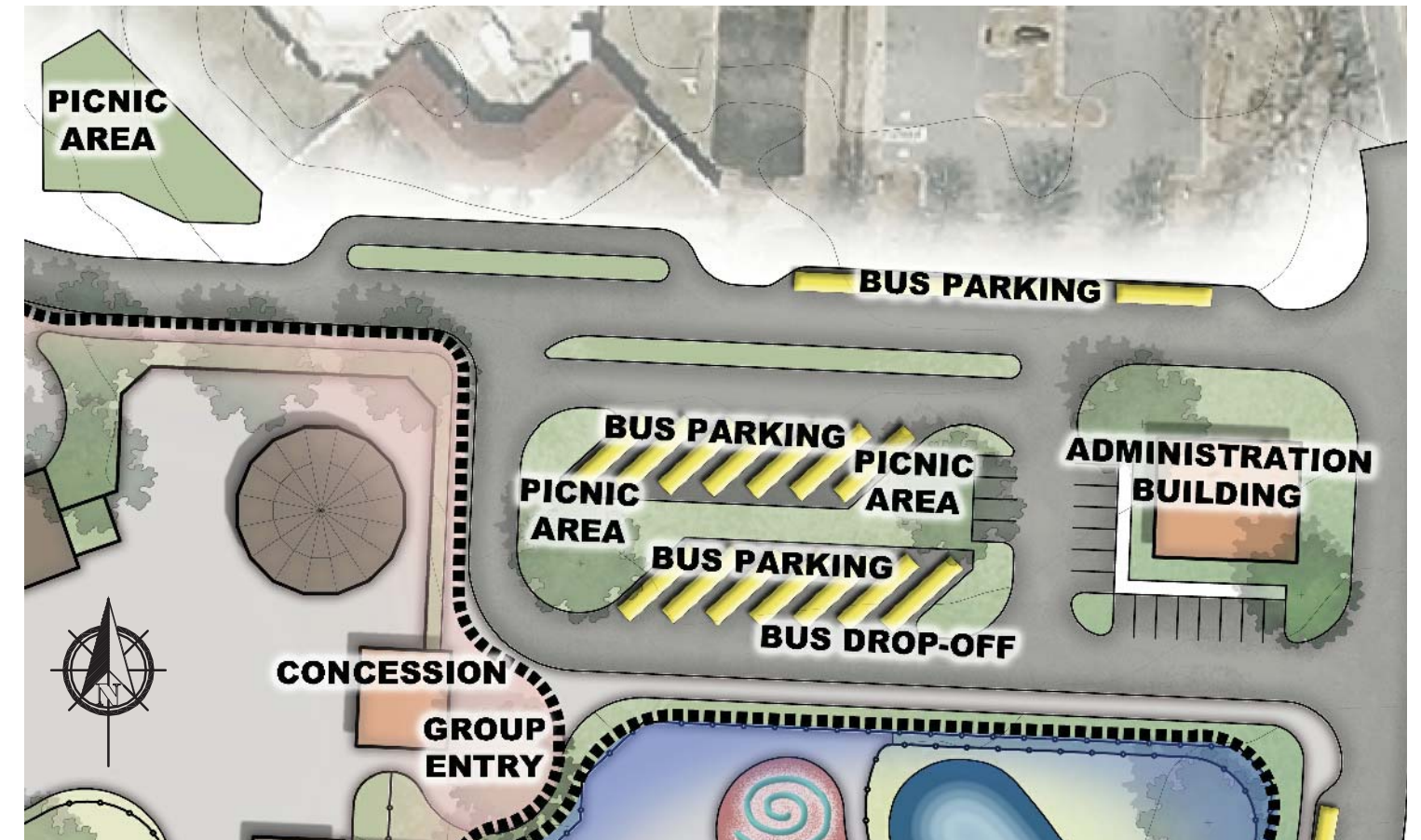


The Oceans

0' 75' 150'
1"=75.0'

Administration and Group Entry

0' 75' 150'
1"=75.0'



Administration and Group Entry

A new two-story administration building is proposed for the northeast corner of the site at the intersection of the current Zoo Drive and Monroe. This building, by nature of its location and height, will act as a sign welcoming guests to the Little Rock Zoo. The character of the building's exterior theming should represent to those who drive by the quality of the interior of the Zoo.

Adjacent to the Administration Area is a group drop-off, entry and bus parking. This area will serve to take pressure off of the existing front gate, in all but the very busiest of days, for visiting school groups.

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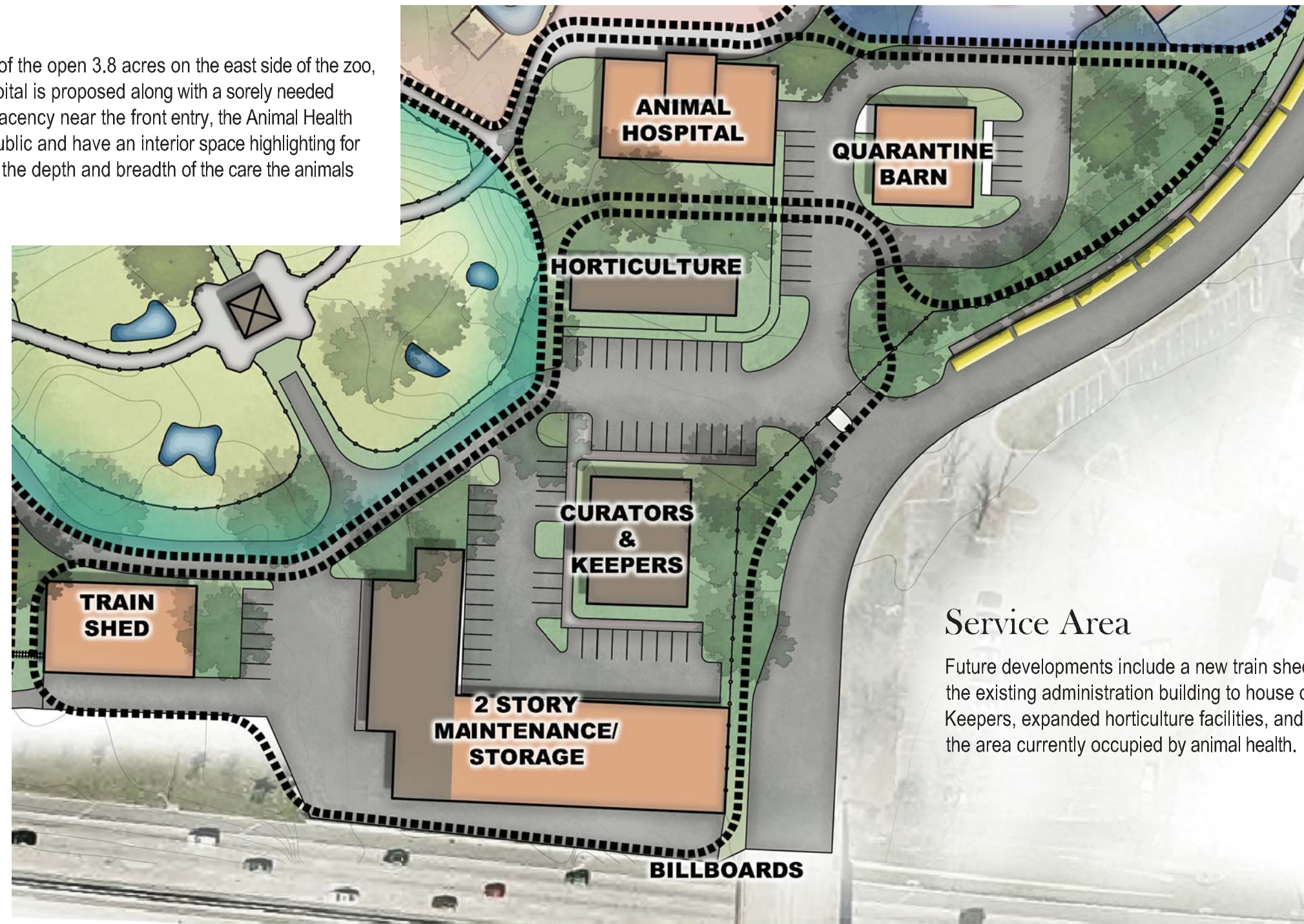
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Additional Plan Highlights



Animal Health

Occupying the southern half of the open 3.8 acres on the east side of the zoo, a new and larger animal hospital is proposed along with a sorely needed quarantine barn. With its adjacency near the front entry, the Animal Health building will be open to the public and have an interior space highlighting for guests of the Little Rock Zoo the depth and breadth of the care the animals receive.



Service Area

Future developments include a new train shed and service barn, renovation of the existing administration building to house offices for Curators and Senior Keepers, expanded horticulture facilities, and operations area expanding into the area currently occupied by animal health.

Animal Health and Service Area



Little Rock Zoo Mission Statement

*'To provide engaging
experiences that inspire people
to value and conserve our
natural world.'*

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Learning Initiatives

Mission and Vision

In support of the Zoo's mission, the Education Department's goal is to connect people to nature through unique learning experiences that engage their minds, touch their hearts and move them to embrace responsible stewardship of the earth.

The Little Rock Zoo plays a vital role in educating the public about wild animals, their habitats, their related conservation issues, and the ways in which they can contribute to their conservation. The Zoo is a trusted and valued educational resource for up-to-date, accurate information concerning the world's wildlife whether through a fee-based educational program, an amphitheater show or a one-on-one close encounter with an animal ambassador on Zoo grounds.

With the implementation of this Education and Interpretive Master Plan, the Little Rock Zoo will:

- Clarify the Zoo experience, starting with a pleasing arrival experience and clear, understandable wayfinding systems.
- Provide the visitor with a new storyline that ties the entire Zoo experience together around the powerful concept of the importance of water to all living things.
- Tell conservation stories from Arkansas and around the world to encourage and empower visitors to protect and conserve our planet's water.
- Continue existing success and improve the excellent family programs encouraging interest in nature as well as in Zoo habitats.
- Create new opportunities for visitors to get familiar with Arkansas, the Natural State of America.
- Create new and exciting experiences for visitors with new habitats and new programs to inspire conservation actions.
- Create programs for children and families that will become a source of new revenue for the Zoo.
- Create new outreach programs targeted at reaching underserved communities.



Little Rock Zoo Mission Statement

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Existing Education Programs

Currently, the Zoo offers the following programs. New facilities proposed within this Master Plan will dramatically enhance the attendance and gross operating revenue produced by the Zoo.

Fee-Based for the General Public

- Birthday Parties
- Small Group Tours
- Creature Features
- Meet and Greets

Community and School Programs

- Zoo to School - docents go to classrooms and deliver a creature feature
- School at the Zoo - schools come to the zoo and have a creature feature at the amphitheater
- Zoo to You - docents go to a site and deliver a creature feature. These are usually festivals, churches, daycares, nursing homes, etc.

Visitor Interpretive Services

Value-added interpretive experience for the Zoo's paying guests:

- Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater – twice-daily, 15-minute animal show in 400-seat theater – Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. Season: May – September
- Keeper Chats – Alligator Feeding, Scatter Feeding at Great Apes, Elephants
- Lorikeet Feeding Exhibit – Up-charge for this experience
- Walk-n-Talks– Zoo-wide animal encounters – delivered by docents – very sporadic and not scheduled at this time.

Volunteer Services

The Volunteer Services Section coordinates 53 adult docents that provide education and interpretation directly to visitors and program participants.



Proposed Education Programs

New on-site programs for guests of all ages will dramatically enhance the Zoo's financial position.

Kids, Families and Adults

These on-site, fee-based, revenue generating programs consist of development of Scouting Badge Program, Expanded Overnight Program, Year-round Family Camp Programs, Discovery Programs. Consider adding a daytime program for caregivers and their pre-school-age child located in the Aquatorium. A guided nature exploration for families that utilizes the Zoo grounds and the proposed Nature Play area. "Make your house a more organic place" will be a hands-on, outdoor activity for families that will take place in the new Domestic Arkansas area.

School and Teacher Programs

On and off-site, fee-based and non-fee-based programs specifically developed for the academic audience. Programs would all be aligned to Arkansas Department of Education State Standards. A full complement of lessons will be offered from pre-K through post-graduate studies. Offerings will include Life Sciences, Social Sciences, Reading, Career Explorations, Service Learning, and Internships. With the implementation of the new facilities within the Master Plan, new programs will be possible. For example, in the event plaza, an area is dedicated as a "canvas" for students to create conservation art.

Community Outreach Programs

On-and off-site, fee-based programs for organizations, groups, businesses, etc., that have the ability to pay for programs and services.

Funding Assistance Programs

Develop and offer funding assistance program for all fee-based programs both on-and off-site. This program will offer aid to individuals and organizations that cannot afford fee-based programs and services and thus are under-served by the Zoo.

Visitor Engagement

Value-added interpretive experiences for the Zoo's paying guests. All programs as above with additional offerings such as:

- Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater – twice-daily, 25-minute animal show offered throughout the week in two different formats.
- Interpretive Stations – Eight new interpretive stations themed as the region they represent provide a place for live interpretation and interactive elements and for classes at the site being visited.
- Conservation Awareness Days – year-round activities and events held for important conservation days throughout the calendar. Includes: Earth Day, Ocean Day, Leap Day (frog and amphibian awareness), Bear Day, Wolf Awareness, Rhino Day, Tiger Day, Orangutan Day, etc.
- Docent Stations – designated areas at scheduled times throughout the Zoo where docents lead interpretive activities, presentations and programs that increase the Zoo guests' enjoyment of the park and awareness, understanding and appreciation of the world's wildlife
- EarthAid Station – a specially outfitted station to provide guests with information about the Zoo's wildlife conservation efforts such as SSP participation, etc., and the Zoo's facility conservation efforts.

Volunteer Services

In addition to the Zoo's education adult docent volunteers a teen volunteer program will be added.

Conservation Campaigns

Conservation campaigns are responsible for the educational, interpretive programs, activities, events and graphic component of conservation initiatives supported and/or engaged in by Little Rock Zoo such as SANCOBB (a leading Marine non-profit organization to conserve seabirds and sea life), Palm Oil Initiative and Cheetah Conservation Fund. New campaigns, aligned with the new themed areas, will provide more impact in the presentation of the initiatives.

Education Building (Aquatorium)

Create a new education building that will become the new home for programs such as the Scout Badge Program, expanded overnight programs, year-round camps and Discovery programs. The building will include compelling new fresh and salt water aquariums that help reinforce the overriding theme – water.



The Aquatorium

With the revised path layout proposed in this plan, the existing bird and primate building is situated at a key location within the Zoo. For this reason, the plan proposes to transform the former animal exhibit building into a new interactive center for discovery, exploration and learning about the natural world. This new building will become the home base of the education department, and will house critical programs, special events, rentals and an exciting new animal attraction.

A dedicated, custom-designed office space for the education division employees will represent a significant improvement in working conditions and foster creativity and team-building. Adequate space for office functions, including storage, restrooms and a break room will be included.

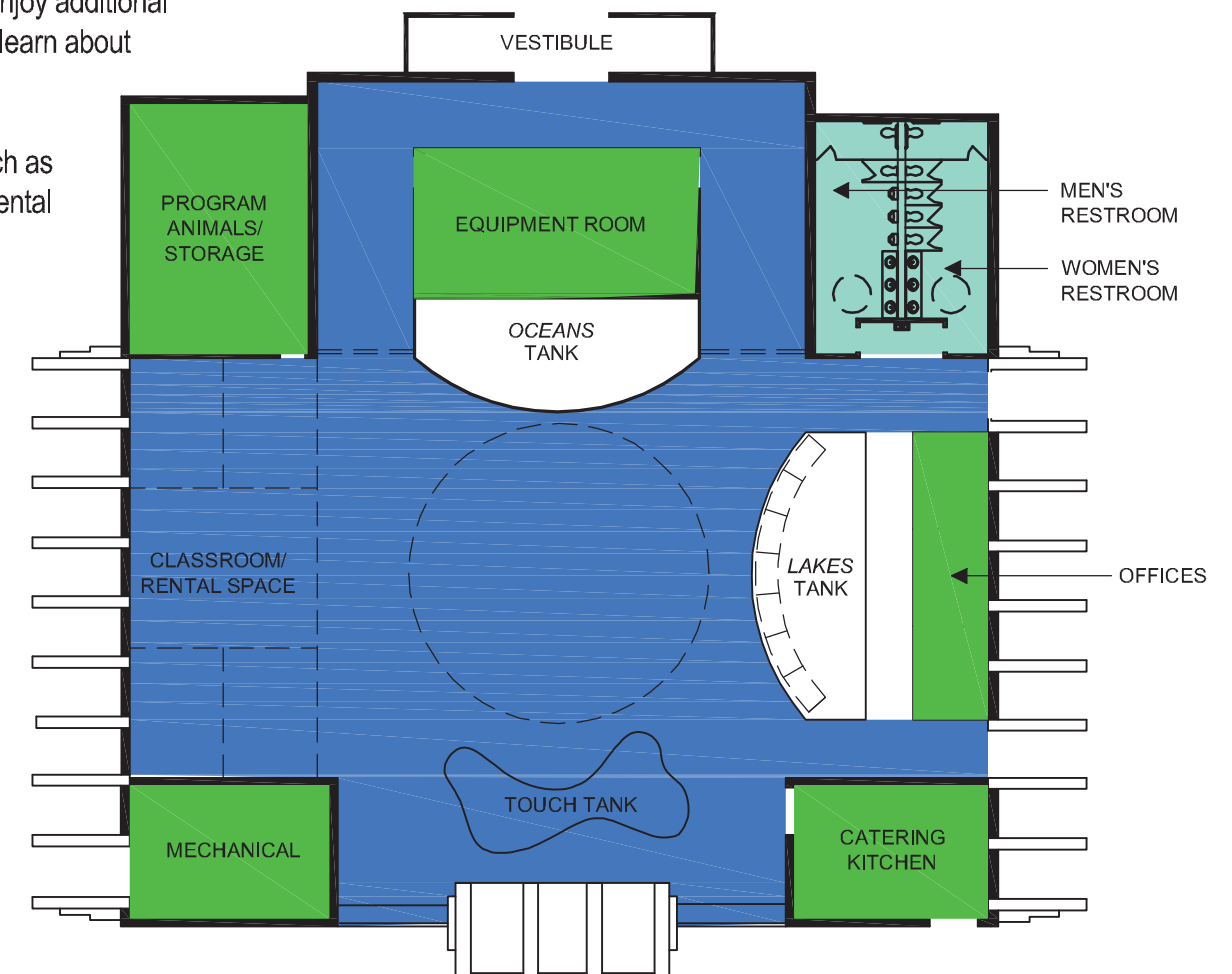
In addition to providing a home base for the education department and its programs, the building will also house a major new and compelling aquatic attraction, featuring both fresh water and salt water habitats, interpreting the world's oceans and closer to home, the lakes of Arkansas. The addition of these aquariums will help reinforce the Zoo's new overriding theme, water, and will inspire the name of this new building; the "Aquatorium."

A touch tank feature will represent an exciting and memorable experience for visitors. The tank allows close up, hands on learning with locally available species. Visitors will have the opportunity to interact with and ask questions of the personnel stationed at the touch tank.

A series of classrooms, separated with moveable partitions, will be included in the plan. The flexible arrangement will allow for multiple configurations from small classrooms to large group spaces. The plan also includes holding spaces for program animals that can be used in the classrooms.

Additionally, the space will provide an attraction where visitors can experience the aquariums and compare the similarities and differences of ocean and lake environments. Interpretive activities will be programmed inside this building such as Story Time, puppet shows and dressing up as a Nature Care Hero or Animal Care Hero. Guests can have a great experience with the touch tank and enjoy additional attractions such as an interactive floor where kids can learn about water while they play.

The building will also have additional service areas such as a catering kitchen and event storage that will support rental spaces or special events.

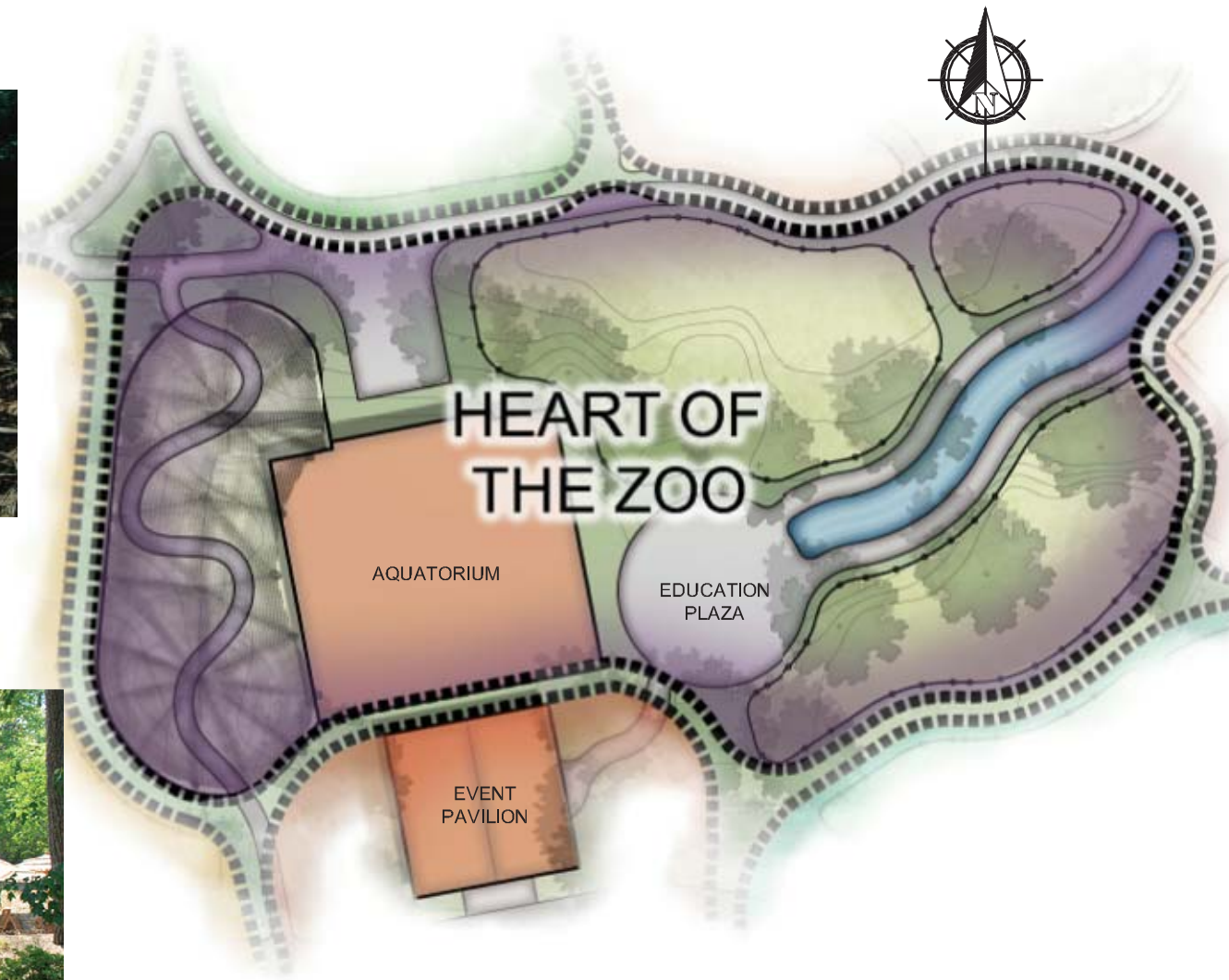


Aquatorium Floor Plan

The Education Plaza and Event Pavilion

Immediately outside the Aquatorium, there will be outdoor spaces for educational programs and special events.

The Education Plaza could be an empty canvas where the Zoo can present programs that involve conservation related art for groups or families. Programs can be directed by the Zoo or, at other times, the area can be open for visitors to express their imagination. Festivals, special events and rentals are all possible in this plaza.



The Event Pavilion is an ideal venue for large school group activities or special events such as weddings, reunions and fundraisers.



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Wayfinding

Currently, the Zoo does not have a clear thematic organization. Some areas provide a reference point for visitors, such as Café Africa, the Wild Wonders Amphitheater and the reptile and primate building. Clear circulation pathways do not exist and this leads to confusion and presents challenges for visitors to navigate the Zoo and find the new exhibits and new revenue opportunities.

Main Entry Sign



A new main entry identification, which brings the colors and the fun of the logo, could replace the existing entrance sign. This new treatment will create an iconic feature that makes you feel a sense of arrival to the Zoo.

Once the master plan is implemented, the new Administration Building will move to the intersection of Zoo Drive and Monroe Street. This presents another opportunity, through iconic architectural features, to provide reinforcement to the Zoo's identity and visibility.

Ticketing Booth

When visitors arrive at the main entrance many are confused and disoriented by the many "hand made" notices, messages and regulatory signage. This visual clutter works against the kind of experience that should be the goal-one where visitors are welcomed and provided with information to orient their visit. The Zoo team is conscious of the problem and is working to improve this experience for the visitors by creating a system that provides needed information in a way that does not promote sensory overload, and is easy to update.



General Wayfinding Sign at the Zoo

There are several signs that help visitors to navigate the Zoo. Some of these signs actually help visitors but there are other areas close to the African savannah where these type of signs are needed.

It can be helpful to coordinate color codes and names with the maps; that way they can be a great tool for visitor to find a place to go or find their location. The existing signs are difficult to update. It is recommended to create a system that allows easy maintenance, and the ability to update on a regular basis. Wayfinding signs can be designed to allow installation of temporary signs that can be use for special events.



Species ID Signs

Replacing all of the species ID signs will be a great improvement and a way to encourage visitor attention. It is important to consider the location, height and grade level to be able to be approachable for all the visitors. Additional elements like braille or tactile elements can bring the experience to a higher level.



The Zoo is currently working with a new design for species ID signs which will deliver more information in a graphically pleasing way.



Master Interpretive Organizational Plan



The new thematic organization proposed in the master plan will help visitors to experience the Zoo in a relaxed way, without having to continually back-track. It is proposed that each thematic area will have its own design using cultural elements, architectural queues and colors representing the geographic region.

Each thematic area will demonstrate the many ways animals and humans have adapted to diverse environments, and the role precious water plays on our planet.

This new interpretation plan will allow visitors to identify each place as a unique and enriching component of their day at the Zoo.



Master Organizational Plan

0' 100' 200' 400'

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Interpretive Zones

Water Walk

This space represents a tribute to water. It is a festive, welcoming and celebratory space for visitors entering the Zoo.



An exciting, recreational area with interactive water features.

For special events and at night, this space can be transformed into a festive urban setting.



It is clear that the animals in this area all have a direct dependence on water. There are spaces for events, meetings and outdoor classroom opportunities.

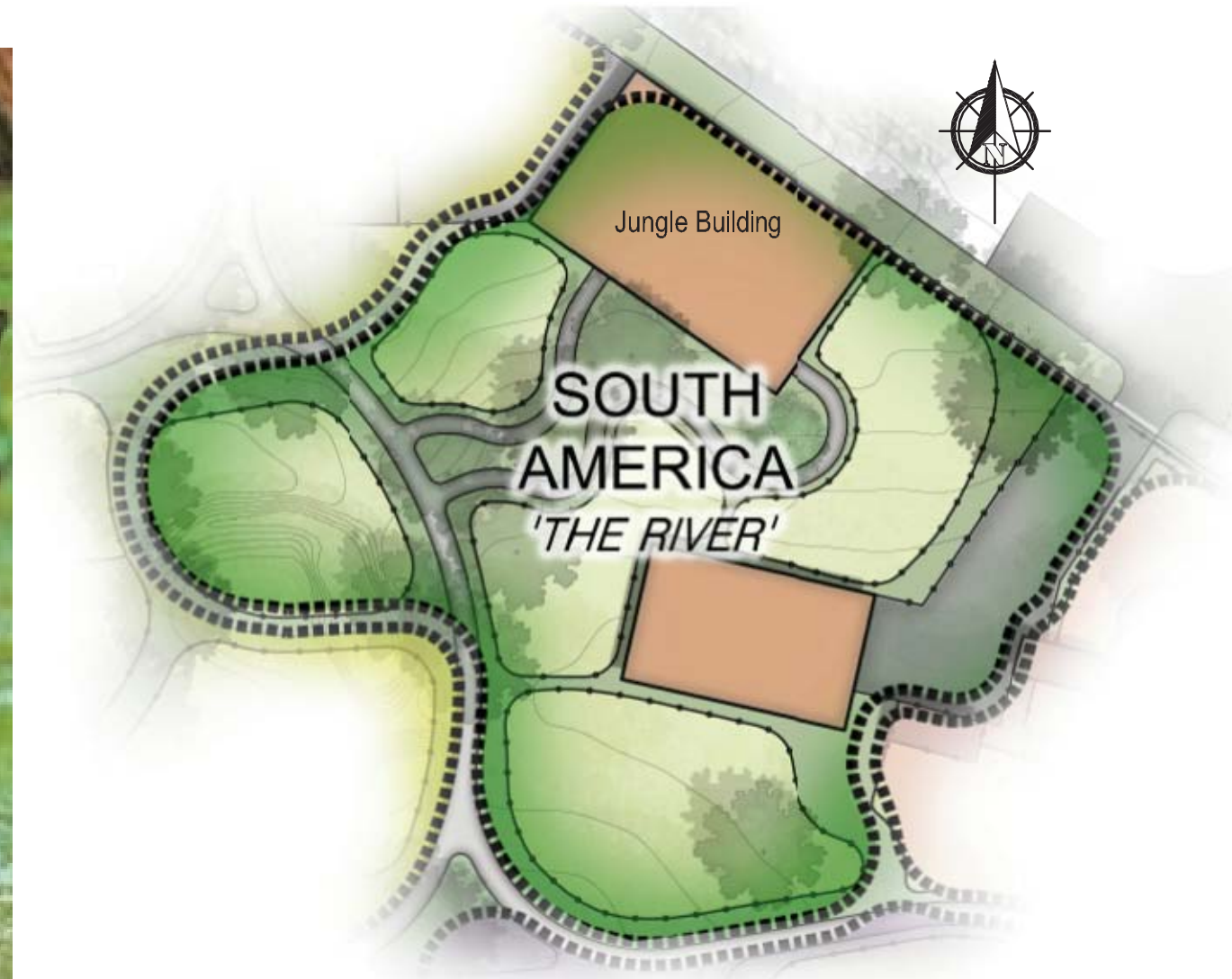
Interpretive Zones

The River

Message: *Animals and people adapt to the flood season of the Amazon. The Amazon River represents a major pathway for wildlife, people and water.*

The trees, plants and animals in the Amazon rainforest have learned to adapt to seasonal flooding.

The interpretive station for the River will be a typical Amazon dwelling. The house will stand on stilts surrounded by water; visitors will be able to experience the flood season.



The Jungle Building will provide great opportunities to have space for groups and also for education programs like Snooze at the Zoo and for classes for special groups and birthday parties.

This Building will be available for these programs year around.

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

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Interpretive Zones

The Flooded Savanna

Message: *The animals in savanna follow the water.*

Savannas occur where there isn't enough rain to support a tropical rain forest, but there is enough to keep it from becoming a desert.



The interpretive station will be themed as an Eco-Tourism Camp.



The theming of the habitats will support the main message. Each exhibit will feature “landmarks” of the savanna, like the watering hole.

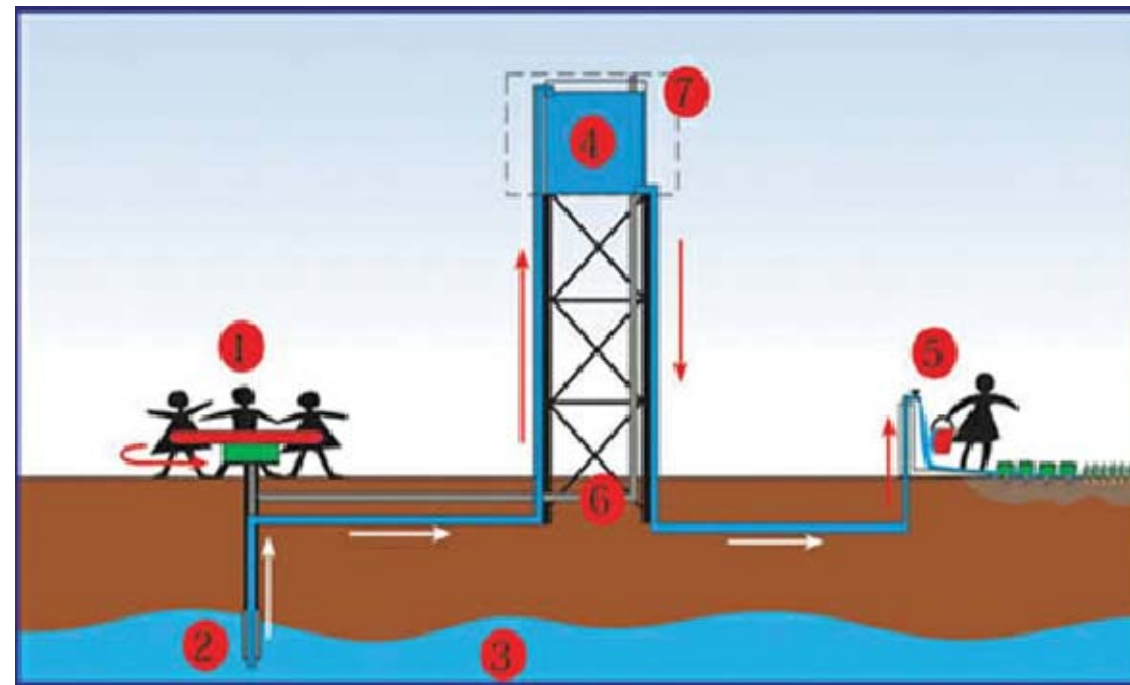


Interpretive Zones

The Play Pump

The "Play Pump" Water System has been used by the South African Department of Water Affairs to provide clean drinking water to rural communities, by means of a sustainable pumping system that is powered by the play of children.

This Play Pump could be used to not only teach the value of water but also illustrate creative ways developing countries are coping with the problems of inadequate and unsafe drinking water.



The Play Pump is a specifically designed and patented roundabout (1) that drives a conventional borehole pump (2) while entertaining children. The pump converts rotational movement to reciprocating linear movement by a driving mechanism consisting of only two working parts. As the children spin, water is pumped from underground (3) into a tank (4), standing seven meters above the ground. A simple tap provides easy access for the mothers and children drawing water (5). Excess water (overflow) is directed from the storage tank back down to the borehole (6). Billboards (7) screen the tank.



A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

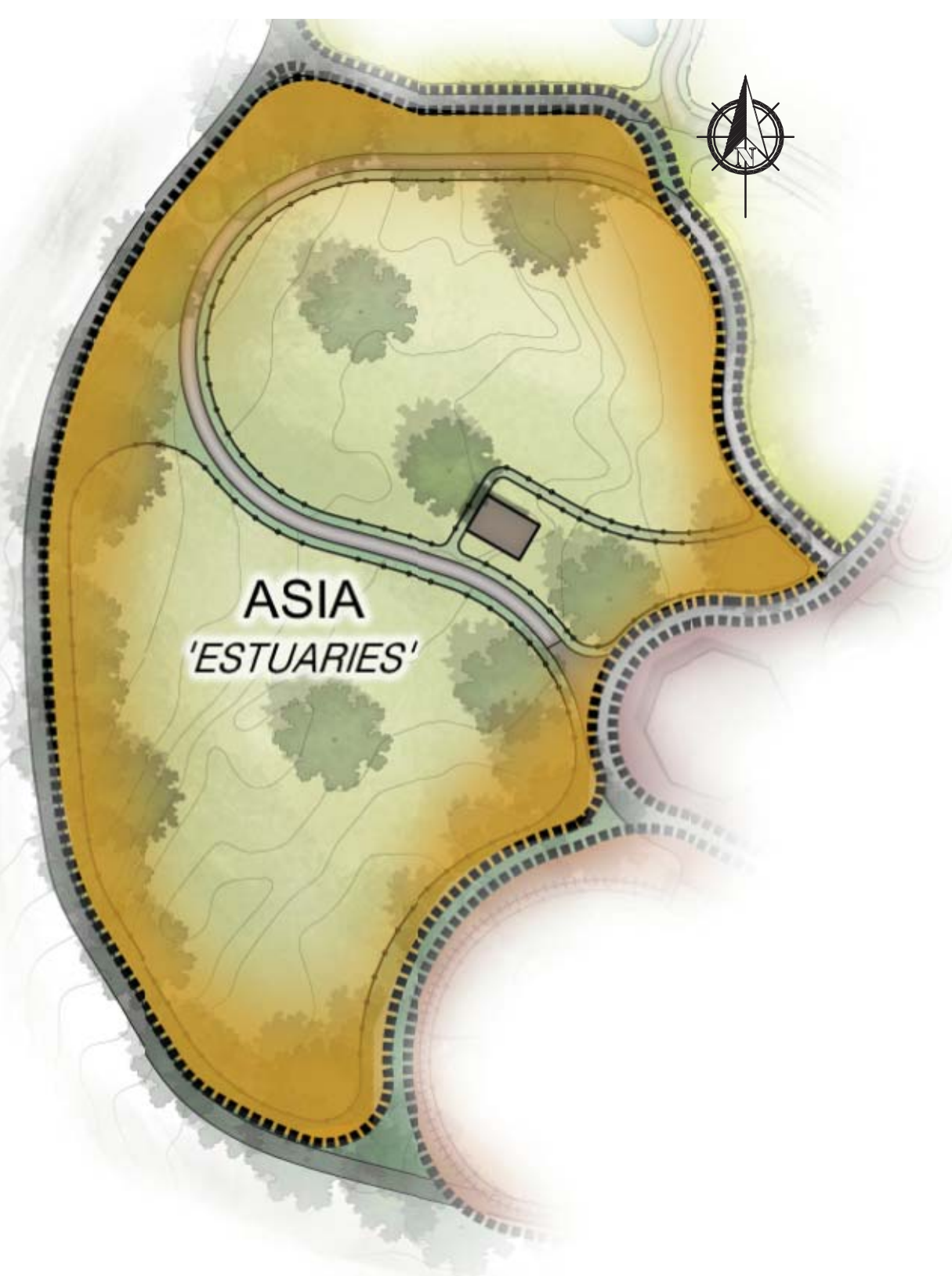
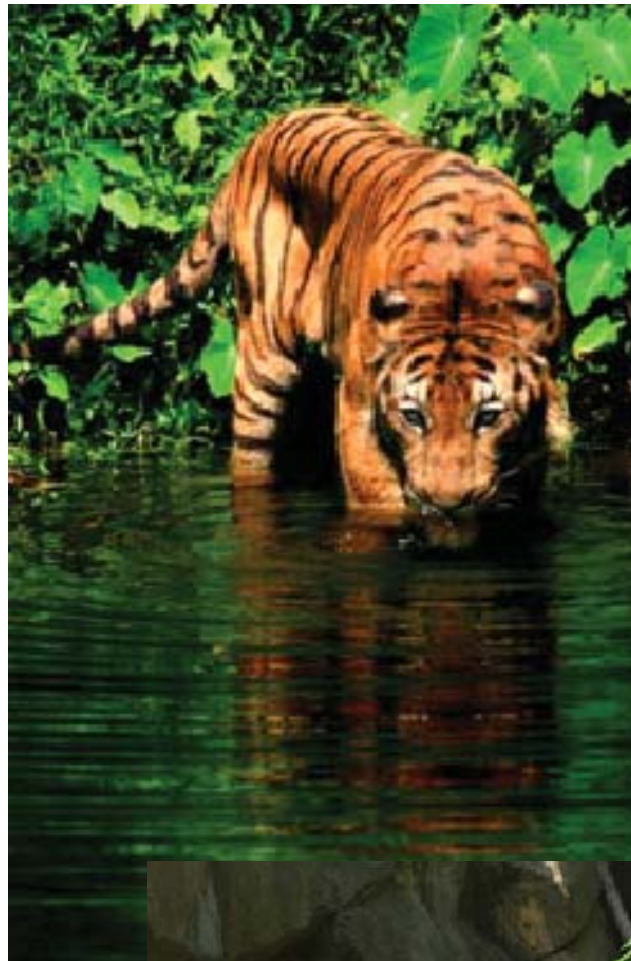
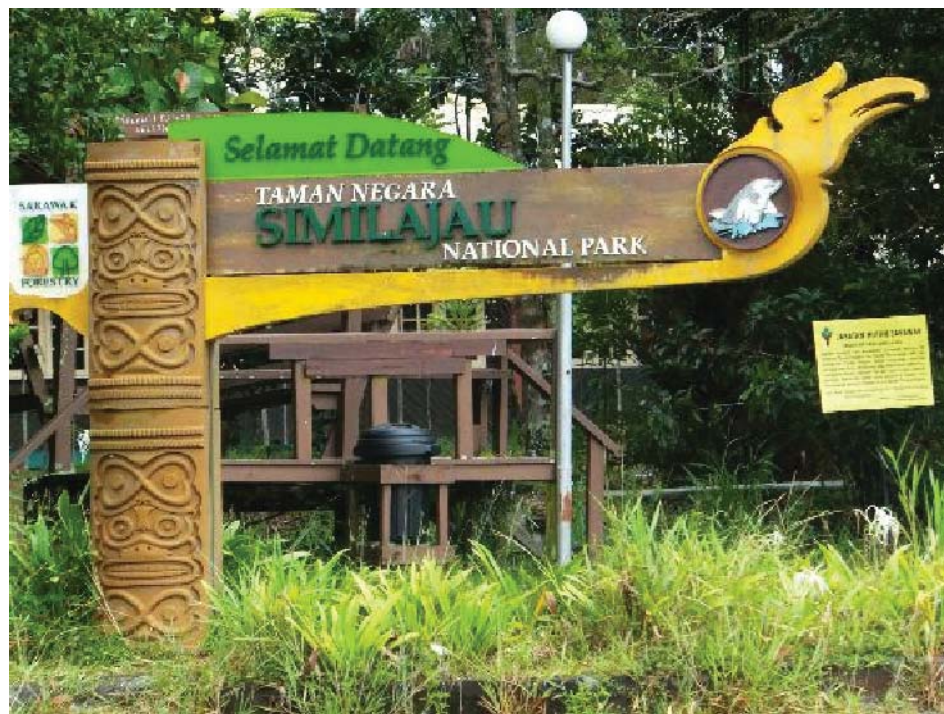
Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Interpretive Zones

The Estuaries/Waters of Indo Asia

Message: *The interconnected relationship of animals and the water at the Bay of Bengal.*

The interpretive station will be themed as an Asian coastal market where one can learn about the endangered species of the region.



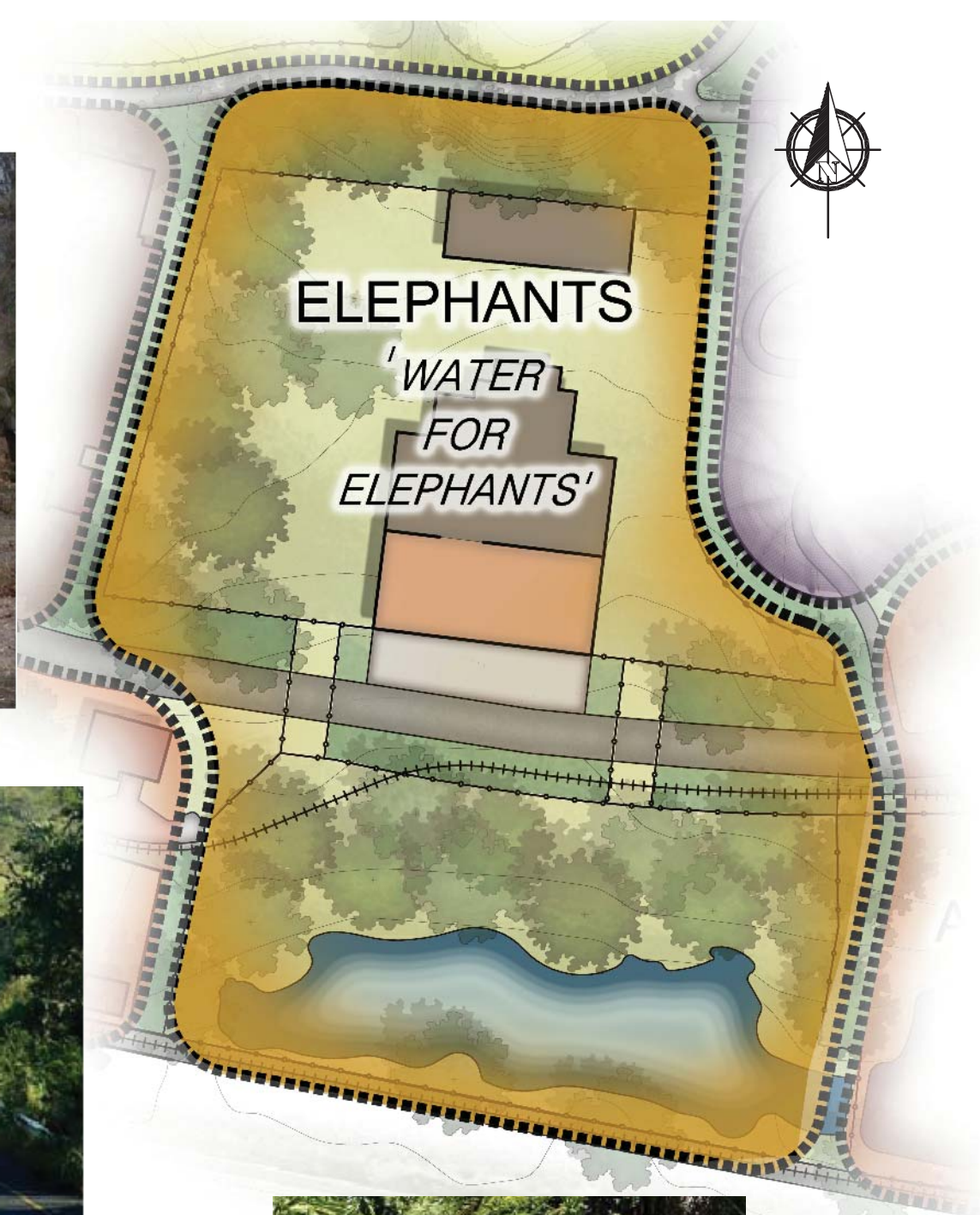
Interpretive Zones

Water for Elephants

Message: *Crossing Paths.*

In the face of rapidly growing human populations, the Asian elephants' habitat is shrinking fast and wild elephant populations are mostly small, isolated, and unable to mingle as ancient migratory routes are cut off by human settlements.

Large development projects (such as dams, roads, mines and industrial complexes), plantations and spreading human settlements have divided what was once contiguous elephant habitat into small fragments.



The visitor path will be themed as an urban road, where the visitor will experience that they are crossing the same road as the elephants. The spaces divided by the road will be themed differently. The side with the elephant barn will be themed as a Asian cultural building and a human setting and the other side will be wild open area.



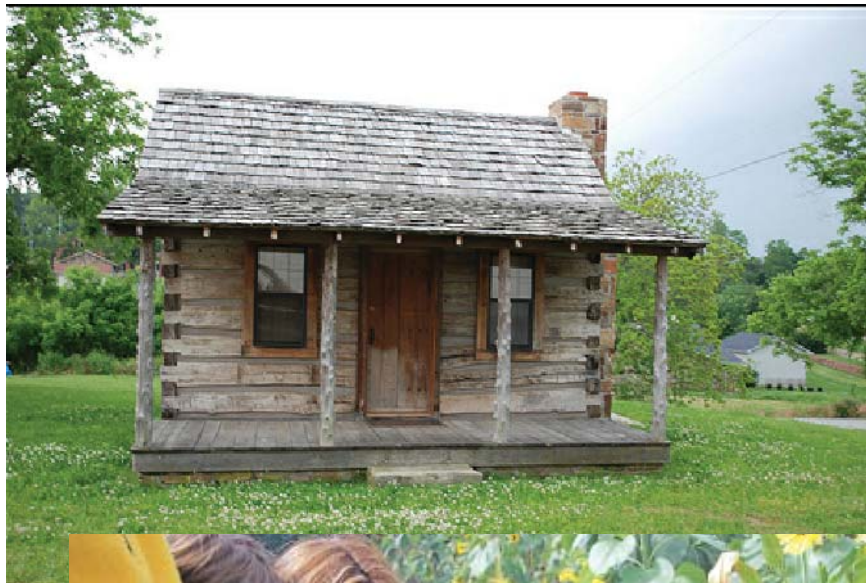
Interpretive Zones

Domestic Arkansas/The Garden Home

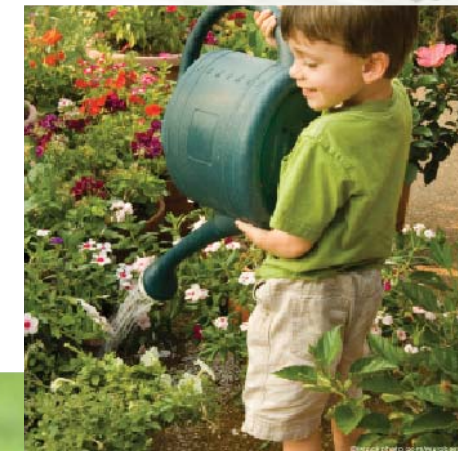
Message: *Make your house a more organic place.*

The interpretive station will recreate a house that the visitors can relate to. Some of the spaces in the house can be used for role playing by the visitors, such as the kitchen, living room, or a porch.

“A living garden home in the natural state.”



Children will be allowed to “get their hands dirty” here.



Interpretive Zones

Wild Arkansas/Water Ways of Arkansas

Message: *Explore and discover the natural state.*

The interpretive station for this area and all structures in this area will be built with sustainable timbers, and will include interpretation that describes even more sustainable features.



Activities like natural play areas, exploring in the creeks and camping are examples of how the visitor will enjoy this natural place.



A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

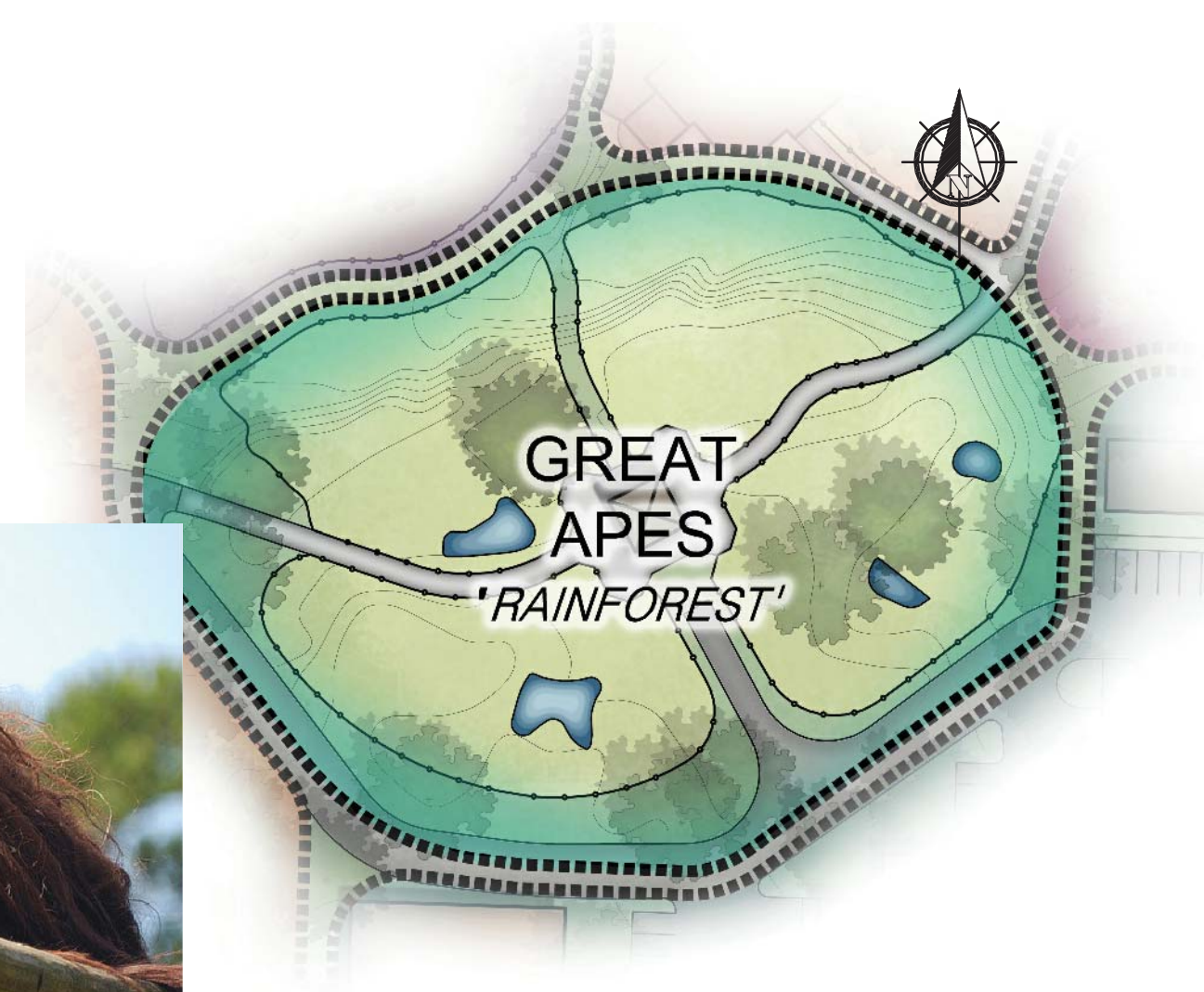
Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Interpretive Zones

The Rainforest

Message: *Rainforests actually create the rain that gives them their name!*

The existing viewing area will become the future interpretive station with interactives about the water cycle, where visitors can make rain by operating the activity in various parts of the visitor areas and exhibits.



Interpretive Zones

The Oceans

Message: *The world's oceans are all connected.*

Before accessing this zone, a pool depicting all continents will represent how all the oceans are connected. Visitors will be able to play in this area and learn while they play.



A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Business Initiatives

Project Overview & Vision

Project Overview

In January 2013, GLMV Architecture, along with Zoo Advisors and AFH Design, began a master planning process to start to identify and develop the next round of improvements for the Zoo. This master planning work built upon the 2011 strategic business planning conducted by Schultz & Williams. Since the business plan was presented, the City of Little Rock successfully passed a sales tax initiative which provided funding for capital projects with additional revenue for operations. This has provided a more solid basis for further growth at the Zoo.

One of the primary goals of this master planning initiative was to identify the next round of immediate improvements and to provide a longer-term vision for growth. Additional goals included:

- Assessing the current state and mix of animal exhibit
- Evaluating and improving guest circulation throughout the Zoo
- Identifying new opportunities for guest interaction and revenue generation

The Zoo's current footprint was assessed and opportunities were identified to better utilize existing areas within the Zoo, as well as assess the entry and parking experience.

Vision

The planning team utilized the previously approved Zoo vision as a guidepost in developing the new master plan.

***Little Rock Zoo Vision Statement:
'Be a leader in family entertainment.'***

This vision along with the Zoo's mission statement – ***'To provide engaging experiences that inspire people to value and conserve our natural world.'*** – provided a solid foundation on which to create a new facilities 'roadmap' for the future of the Zoo. It is important that the Zoo always stay grounded as a mission-based organization even as it realizes its long-term vision. In order to inspire people – including not only guests but also the Little Rock community – the Zoo must also be an educational leader in the area of education and conservation.

In addition, establishing the Little Rock Zoo as a leader in family entertainment establishes it as the leading tourist attraction in Little Rock and the central Arkansas area. This will allow the Zoo to be a driving force for economic development in the Midtown neighborhood and 12th Street Corridor as well as the city of Little Rock as a whole. Zip Code data collected from the Little Rock Zoo already shows that the Zoo is attracting 75% of its visitors from outside the Little Rock market, making it a true travel destination for the city. If the Zoo continues to grow and develop, it will attract more tourists as well as Little Rock citizens. The Zoo will have the ability to impact large audiences with its mission and the city of Little Rock will reap the added economic benefits that come with tourist visits.

This plan provides a phased and realistic approach on how the Little Rock Zoo can achieve its vision while staying true to its mission. This plan details both the long-term view of how the Zoo could look 20 years from now, but also identifies a number of shorter-term projects which can get underway within the next five to eight years to start to build momentum and generate excitement for the Zoo.

The Zoo's vision can be achieved by:

- Creating a high quality and highly interactive experience for guests
- Enhancing the entire visit from entry through exhibits and departure
- Refreshing old exhibits, improving visitor views throughout the Zoo, and building a cohesive experience
- Opening new innovative and immersive exhibits
- Adding and integrating water elements into the exhibits and throughout the site.
- Linking the Zoo with nearby development, i.e., the Library project

Realizing this vision will not happen overnight but the groundwork can begin immediately and improvements can be seen in relatively short order. With thoughtful planning, strong City and Zoo leadership, and an investment of both public and private resources, the Zoo will experience a transformation to a leading family entertainment attraction with a strong mission focus.

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goals Overview

The new plan supports three of the Zoo’s key strategic goals of having:

- A complete and comprehensive visitor experience
- A robust and sustainable economic model
- Recognition as a City and State landmark and attraction

Each of these goals is closely linked. By enhancing the visitor experience – with the projects outlined in the master plan – more people will recognize it as a leading attraction and visit the Zoo, further improving the Zoo’s economic model. Conversely, without a sustainable economic model, there would be a lack of resources to invest in the visitor experience and both attendance and being seen as an attraction would suffer.

In addition to supporting the Zoo’s strategic goals, the master plan will also further the Zoo’s commitment to remaining an AZA-accredited institution and maintaining the high standards that are required. Continuing to enhance the Zoo’s infrastructure and animal health areas are critical to this effort.

Goal: Visitor Experience

Staff have identified components of the plan which support each of the identified goals. The Zoo’s visitor experience is enhanced through:

- Building exciting and compelling animal exhibits (Otter)
- Improving the Zoo’s circulation (bring more exhibits closer to the entry, e.g., Flamingo and Otter)
- Creating additional interactive animal experiences (Aviary, Touch Tank) enhancing the Zoo’s animal collection
- Providing educational opportunities throughout the Zoo (Bird House renovation and education stations as part of many other exhibit areas)

Goal: Sustainable Economic Model

This plan will enhance the Zoo’s economic model by:

- New exhibits will drive attendance and grow visitor service revenue
- Adding improvements that include new venues for revenue generating rentals and events
- Offering new experiences, e.g., splash pad, that will appeal to members as well as grow membership levels
- Lengthening visitor stay-time, thereby increasing spending on food and gifts.
- Engaging a new group of donors interested in supporting the Zoo’s mission-based programs; donors who will give to the Zoo’s operating and capital programs
- Connecting the Zoo with other community partners and new possible funding sources

Top Tourist Attraction

By implementing the Zoo’s master plan, the Zoo will begin to be a leading destination and attraction in the region and the state. This is accomplished through:

- Building innovative and exciting new exhibits
- Highlighting the Zoo’s mission-based programs and attracting new audiences
- Offering attractions that highlight the unique features and attributes of the Little Rock region
- Opening new attractions that will generate increased awareness and interest from the media
- Offering facilities that will bring a new audience (those interested in education programs, event and conference attendees) in the Zoo’s typical off-season
- Connecting the Zoo to the broader community through new partnerships with the Library and potentially the hospital and University

Internal & External Developmental Influences

Current Zoo Trends

To maintain and grow attendance in today's competitive attractions world, zoos must continually add new exhibits and attractions. Ideally a mix of minor and major improvements should be phased in over time to continue to grow and maintain attendance levels and guest interest and excitement. The Little Rock Zoo has had some major (Penguin) and minor improvements (Playground) openings over the last several years, setting the stage for the next round of improvements. A number of other trends explored and factored into the Zoo's master planning efforts include:

- Immersive exhibits are becoming the standard in any new exhibit design
- Highly themed exhibits generating more excitement and interest from guests
- Interactive, touch and feeding experiences with all types of animals are growing exponentially in zoos; feedings opportunities have included giraffe, rhino, rays and birds
- Zoos are continually looking for additional sources of revenue through 'pay-to-play' attractions
- Catering and event rental facilities are being taken to a new level to offer attendees a truly unique and exclusively zoo experience, e.g., eating with the giraffe
- A greater focus on mission-driven education and conservation programs, providing differentiation from other attractions

Community Development Impact

As the planning team explored options for master plan improvements, it knew it would be essential to identify projects that could not only have a positive impact on Zoo operations but also support the City's and region's efforts to further grow tourism. Additionally, the Zoo needs to continually develop itself as a significant quality of life component, making the area more attractive for businesses and families to relocate to the Little Rock region.

Economic development aspects of the master plan improvements include:

- Growing attendance, including increased out-of-town visitors
- Lengthening stay-time and thus the opportunity for visitors to spend longer in Little Rock and extend their stay
- Providing unique attractions to the area that could not be found within the region and that clearly define the Zoo experience
- Creating spaces that could be used for innovative events and rentals
- Further driving the economic engine of Little Rock through increased spending and new construction
- Continuing to support and build upon the Zoo's sustainability and conservation efforts, and enhancing educational opportunities for area students and families

Key Business Drivers

The following drivers were looked at when developing the Master Plan. Each was addressed and integrated into the plan.

- Will the improvements drive attendance?
- Will the upgrades and additions bring in new and diverse audiences?
- Do the experiences offer opportunities for added visitor value?
- Will the improvements appeal to or entice new members?
- Do the new attractions offer opportunities for 'pay-to-play' interactions?
- Are venues being added for food and gift locations?
- Are there new rental and event facilities?
- Will the plan help maximize resource management?

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

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Revenue Generation

Revenue Generation Overview

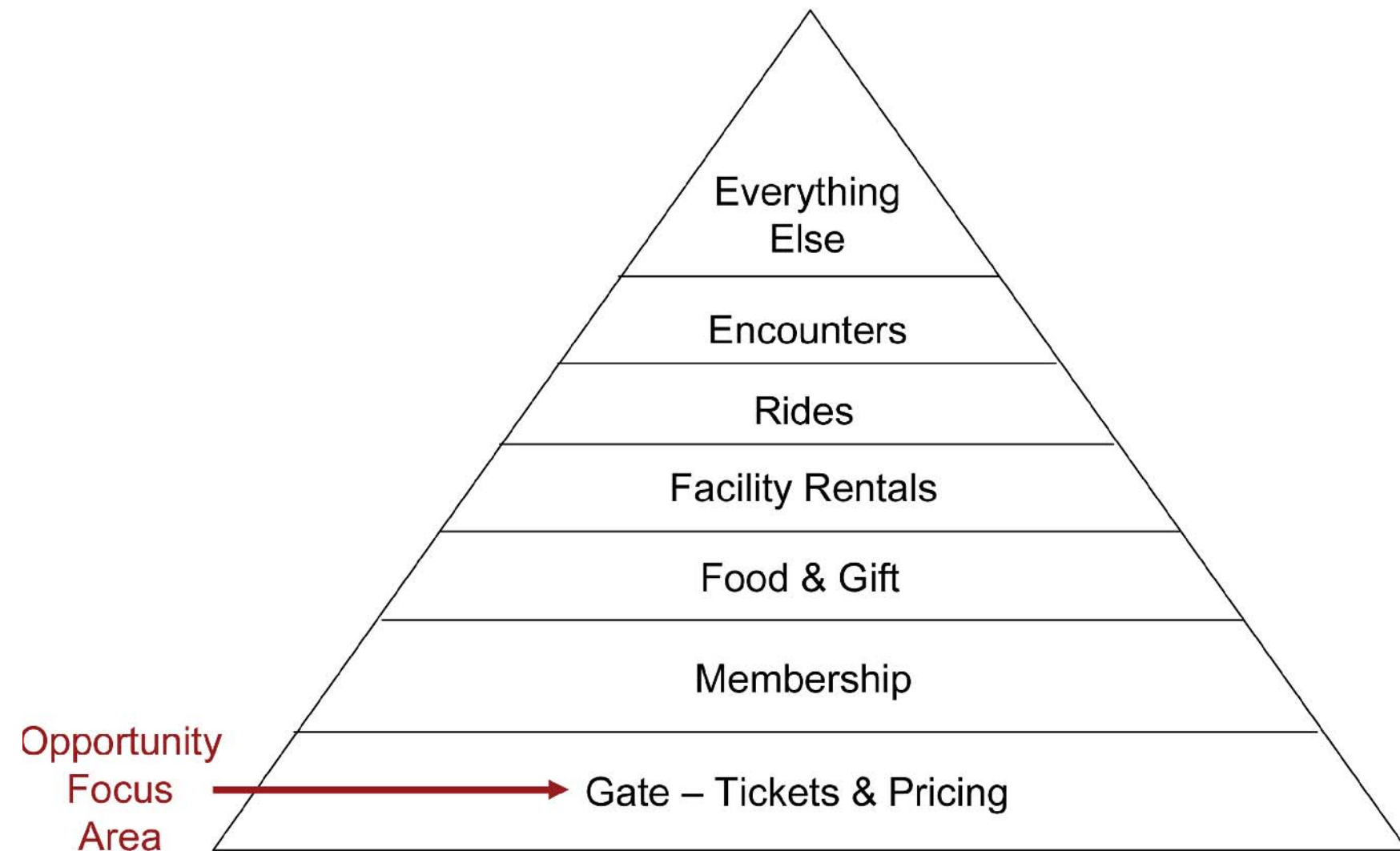
These are the typical areas for generating additional visitor service revenue, many of which have been integrated into this plan to help create a financially sustainable institution.

- Maximizing pricing – both gate and membership
- Increasing food and gift sales by extending stay-times
- Enhanced parking
- Adding and enhancing education facilities to offer a broader array of revenue-producing and mission-focused programs
- Expanding rental and event venues
- Exploring the addition of new fee-based attractions

When evaluating various revenue opportunities, it is important to look at a number of factors, including total return, cost of implementation, mission fit, impact on visitor experience, and community response. Typically these opportunities are examined in a hierarchy, first identifying the areas of greatest return, i.e., ‘the low-hanging fruit.’ In the case of the Little Rock Zoo, given the market potential, the initial focus should be to maximize opportunities tied with admissions, attendance, and membership pricing. Based on a review of available information, there are a fair number of these opportunities, including:

- Paid Attendance Growth
- Membership Growth – both in number of households and member visits
- Maximize admission per capita

Once revenue potential in these areas has been maximized, the Zoo can then look toward the other areas – moving up the ladder – for further incremental growth.



Revenue Generation: Attendance & Funding

Attendance Growth

The Zoo's Master Plan has identified many new exhibits, amenities, and attractions which will significantly enhance the Zoo experience. These enhancements will also drive increased attendance at the gate. The mix of improvements and exhibits is timed to maximize attendance growth.

It is typical to see a spike in attendance with each opening and then a decrease in subsequent years until the next new exhibit. Ideally, the goal is for each major exhibit opening to establish a new plateau and then open another project every two to three years to leverage the growth and create a 'stair step' in attendance, reaching new levels with each opening.

This plan has been created so that the Zoo can begin building momentum by opening up smaller, more manageable projects, setting the stage for larger exhibits and attractions that will truly transform the Zoo.

Many factors can impact attendance, some of which are controllable, while others are not. Weather has by far the greatest influence on attendance and can make or break zoo visitation. However, there are many other controllable factors including creating excitement and providing a compelling reason to come to the Zoo, marketing to increase awareness, minimizing construction impact on the experience, and parking. It will be critical for the Zoo to invest in advertising, promotions, and communication to generate 'buzz' for the new exhibits and actively and aggressively drive visitation.

With attendance growth also come significant increases in associated revenue. The additional earned income generated at the gate and from food and retail will help cover the increased operating costs of the Zoo developments. It is recommended that the Zoo also continually evaluate its pricing strategy so that admission – and membership – prices match the increased value that the Zoo is delivering with all of the new exhibits. It's suggested that any price increases be done gradually over the course of the master plan build-out and tied to the increased value associated with the new projects.

The following major projects have been identified to be significant attendance drivers. With each, a potential attendance increase has been indicated:

- Farm improvements (5 percent to 8 percent attendance growth)
- Otter exhibit and associated 'water walk' improvements (10 percent to 12 percent)
- Bird House transformation to education and rental venue (5 percent to 7 percent); additional education and rental patrons will also be seen

The Zoo will be able to see attendance easily exceed 300,000 and potentially reach the 350,000 guest level by implementing the first phase of improvements.

Attendance Potential

Given the market size, the Zoo's prime location, and lack of primary competition, the Zoo's attendance could exceed 500,000 visitors annually. When this happens will be dependent on how long it takes to build out the master plan and open new exhibits.

The Zoo would need to roll-out a continuous series of improvements (new exhibits and attractions – both small and large) that are well-timed over the next ten years. As noted previously, this would require a stair-step approach to building attendance and opening something new every two to three years so attendance does not drop significantly or stagnate.

The key to reaching these new attendance levels will be to build momentum and excitement with the 'Heart of the Zoo' projects, projects that are realistic and achievable given the current mix of resources and funding. These first projects – the farm, otter, and Bird House – will provide the Zoo a solid base from which to build attract new visitors and help become the leading destination in Little Rock and the region.

Funding Opportunities

In addition to creating opportunities to increase attendance and revenue growth, this plan can help the Zoo attract new funding for capital and contributed operating support.

- Education facilities and added programs will bring in a new class of donors—individuals, corporations and foundations—who may have only been willing to support direct educational related efforts previously; donors have shown great interest in education related projects
- By attracting currently untapped audiences with the Zoo's education programs, new funders may be interested in partnering with the Zoo to target those groups
- Additional sponsorship and naming opportunities will exist as new exhibits are built and opened
- The new rental venues will have added appeal to the conference and tourism market as it will bring new groups out into this section of the City
- By creating additional linkages between the Zoo and its neighbors—the Library and Hospitals—new donors and funds may emerge

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

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Master Plan Overview

Attendance Growth

After looking at the Zoo's entire campus, the team identified several key elements which should be part of the Zoo's improvements over the next several years.

- Improving the visitor circulation
- Cleaning up sub-standard visitor viewing perspectives
- Renovating the current Bird House
- Enhancing areas for the Zoo's mission programs

A number of additional short- and long-term projects have also been identified as part of the master plan process. These initiatives include immediate action steps –'Quick Success Projects' which can get underway as soon as funding is made available. There are also many projects which we have termed 'Projects of Opportunity' that can be developed at any time based upon resources or donor interest. These projects can be 'sold' as part of the overall vision for the Zoo. There are some improvements or additions which could be more appealing to donors.

Quick Success Projects

- Farm improvements
- Flamingo
- Otter

Projects of Opportunity

- Bird House Renovation



Opportunities

Business Impacts & Opportunity

Every new improvement should take into account how it can positively impact the Zoo's future revenue and attendance growth; this factor will be even more critical with this initial phase of development. As noted previously, these projects provide the Zoo with opportunities to ensure its sustainability and grow its business. These initial projects have the potential to take the Zoo to the next level, setting the stage for significant growth at the Zoo.

- Improvements like these have the potential to increase attendance by upwards of 20 percent over time with associated increases in spending and the ability to match prices with increased value
- Improvements will appeal to members looking for return visits with the potential for additional revenue generation
- Guest interaction and resulting guest satisfaction will increase with visitors wanting to return again and again, further growing Zoo membership
- The addition of unique and unmatched event venues will increase Zoo rentals and food and gift sales and bring new audiences out to the Zoo

This type of attraction will prove to be a real draw for tourists, creating an incentive to extend their stay and come out of the downtown core .

Potential Return

The following financial returns could be seen with the first phase of improvements, e.g., 'the Heart of the Zoo'*

- Attendance growth of 20 percent: an estimated 50,000 – 60,000 additional guests at an estimated admission per capita of \$9.60 generates an additional \$576,000 in total visitor spending revenue annually (based on 2013 AZA zoo reported data).
- An increase in visitor concession spending due to increased stay-time, estimated at \$0.075 to \$0.15 increases in casual visitor per capita food and gift spending
- Added rentals and events: \$50,000+
- Membership increases: 20 percent - 25 percent growth of member households
- Sponsorship opportunities: \$5,000 - \$50,000
- Additional educational opportunities, attracting new school, scout, and other groups and increased program revenue with new facilities
- New and expanded program offerings – overnights, adult program, partner programs (library) could generate new revenue of \$25,000

** New revenues will not come without an accompanying investment in staffing, marketing, and other resources. More detailed business planning is required to develop exact projections of revenue and expense potential.*

Educational Opportunities

With education at the core of the Zoo's mission, it is critical that the master plan provide opportunities to 'live' its mission, engage visitors in learning, and showcase the Zoo's and the industry's conservation efforts. This can be accomplished through the latest in exhibit design; strong interpretives, and enhanced visitor/staff interaction. The master plan allows the Zoo to leverage and further build upon its successful education programs by offering new spaces and new opportunities to connect with guests and students, with the all-important "up-close" experience.

- Developing exhibits to maximize animal/guest encounters and up-close viewing, providing an opportunity to surprise guests and increase teaching moments
- Creating places for parallel play where kids can be part of the physical activity of the animals
- Using signage, graphics, and other interactive tools as part of the exhibits to communicate key messages in a fun, colorful, and meaningful way
- Building training areas for animals and keepers where visitors can view and learn from these interactions, developing an increased understanding of the importance of great animal care
- Linking new exhibits with the Zoo's education programs and initiatives where kids can be part of a 'living classroom'

Opportunities

Conservation Opportunities

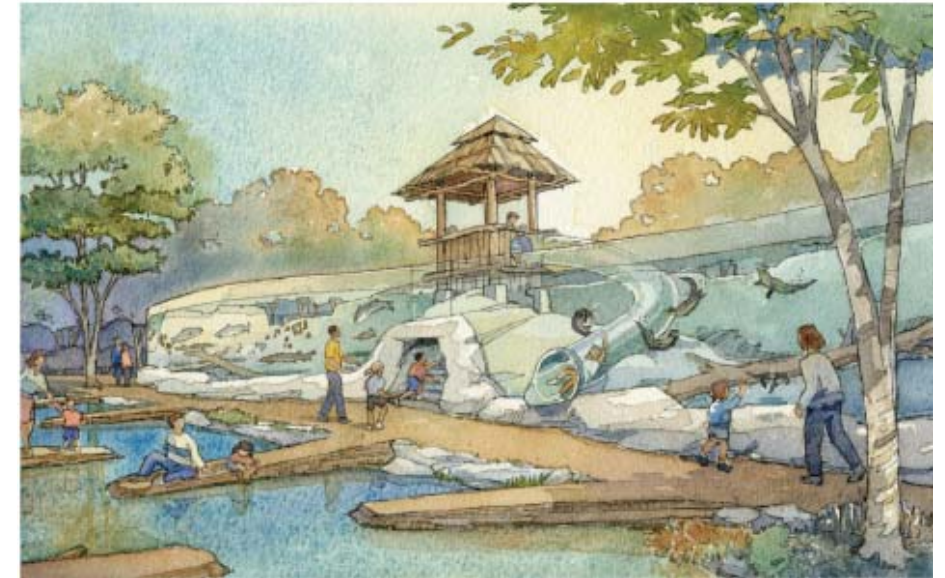
Along with the Zoo's education mission, implementation of the master plan can demonstrate the Zoo's commitment to conservation. This includes not only animal conservation initiatives but also environmental sustainability. Exhibit development should consistently strive to achieve the Zoo's conservation goals.

- Building exhibits to the latest sustainability standards as budgets allow
- Incorporating unique and innovative conservation elements, e.g., solar panels, water conservation
- Interpreting resource conservation and sustainability features for guests
- Committing to meaningful conservation initiatives linked to the new exhibit
- Fostering empathy through up-close encounters and feeding opportunities—a key to developing a conservation mindset in young children

Keys to Success

In order for this plan to be a true success, the following elements will be critical:

- Building to the highest standards that incorporate the latest trends in zoo exhibit design
- Integrating education and conservation components into the design and operations
- Creating intimate and interactive guest experiences
- Continuing to provide up-close opportunities to view the animals
- Building in places for feedings and interpretation
- Incorporating attractive event and people gathering spaces
- Investing in the staff who can help showcase the exhibits and add to the interactive experience of guests
- Tying together exhibits for a complete Zoo experience, e.g. water theme
- Enhancing way-finding and circulation throughout the Zoo



Potential Challenges & Implementation Steps

Potential Challenges

Building out the initial phases of the plan offers significant positives for the Zoo and the entire community and region. However, as with any development of this magnitude, it would come with its share of challenges--none of which can't be overcome but all of which must be addressed. The planning team has begun to identify some potential obstacles:

- Funding – can the City provide the necessary levels--combined with private dollars--to fund the capital improvements?
- Fundraising – can private dollars be raised--both capital and operating--to support master plan implementation?
- Governance – does the current structure provide the best operating model and funding mechanisms to support growth of the Zoo?
- Resources – is the City committed to provide the optimum level of investment to grow the Zoo, further the Zoo's mission, and realize the vision?
- Staffing – will the Zoo be able to have the appropriate staffing levels to make the new exhibits and facilities, especially the Bird House, come alive to visitors?

One other factor which was carefully considered in the development of the plan was the usage of the renovated Bird House. Enhancing the facility as an educational and rental facility will help further the Zoo's goals; however, it will be important that the space be programmed effectively for the casual visitor during off-use times. This will require:

- Staff or volunteers to host interactive education zones
- Mobile displays or kiosks

- Innovative exhibit design that takes full use of the space including vertical areas
- Signage and interpretatives to guide the visitors through the experience
- Flexible spaces and walls to accommodate the various uses of the building

Implementation Steps

The implementation of this plan will take a true public and private partnership with investments made from public funding sources supported by dollars raised from the private sector. The planning team has begun to identify a number of early implementation steps to keep the plan moving ahead and pave the road for a smooth implementation. These would include:

- Actively promote the new vision and plan to City, State and Community stakeholder
- Begin to lay the foundation for a larger fundraising campaign, steps to include:
 - Development Assessment of current capacity and resources
 - Cultivation of donors
 - Honing the Zoo's case-for-support including highlighting its mission-based programs
 - Creation of collateral materials to share vision with prospective donors

- Development of more detailed design concepts for first round of projects
- More comprehensive business planning on revenue and expense impacts
- Begin identifying funding sources for capacity building, design, and planning

The implementation team highly recommends exploring opportunities for master plan funding through government bonds, local mileages, a dedicated sales tax, or other means. The City of Little Rock, Central Arkansas Library System, and the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau have been successful in funding projects through these means, and opportunities exist to provide funding for new Zoo projects. There is justification to invest public funds in the Zoo because of the educational and recreational value and economic impact realized from added tourism that a renewed Zoo brings.

In 2013, voters in Little Rock gave approval for a bond issue of up to \$73 million for the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau to renovate the landmark Robinson Auditorium. According to a reliable national industry source, the Robinson Auditorium hosts 200,000 annual patrons and provides an economic impact to the area of \$17.5 million annually. The newly renovated space will only increase these numbers and drive more tourism to the downtown area, according to sources. In midtown, the Little Rock Zoo already hosts 330,000 patrons annually and investing in the Zoo would produce an even larger economic impact on the midtown and the city at large. This plan estimates that upon implementation of a new Zoo master plan, Zoo attendance will reach 500,000 to 600,000 annually. The Zoo is well on its way to becoming the leading tourist destination.

Like Robinson, many Zoo structures are in need of renovation. The Zoo celebrates its 88th birthday this year and holds many old WPA buildings in need of updates. An investment in the Zoo is not only an investment in economic development and conservation education but also an investment in historic preservation.

Conclusion

The time is right to take the Little Rock Zoo to the next level by starting with manageable and high-impact projects. A compelling vision has been laid out to chart the next round of Zoo improvements.

This is a time of great excitement for the Zoo, yet one that will require the leadership and support of many—City and Zoo leadership, the Board, the Foundation, and other community stakeholders. It is with everyone working together that this vision can be realized.



Little Rock Zoo Mission Statement

'To provide engaging experiences that inspire people to value and conserve our natural world.'

Little Rock Zoo Vision Statement

'Be a leader in family entertainment.'

A Master Plan for the

Little Rock Zoo

Prepared by GLMV Zoos, Zoo Advisors LLC & AFH Design

Prepared by:

