



MARYLAND ZOO

in Baltimore



Master Plan 2022-2032



Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Master Plan Report
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Stefánsson Design & Consulting (SDC)

Jón Stefánsson, RLA, ASLA
John Collins

Relevant Strategies & Solutions (RS&S)

Rick Biddle

Robinson Anderson Summers (RAS)

Geoff Anderson, RLA, ASLA
Annalisa Vapaa
Karen Steenhoudt, RLA, ASLA

Planning Participants

ZOO STAFF

Jane Ballentine – Senior Director, Communications
Kevin Barrett – Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians
Ellen Bronson – Senior Director, Animal Health, Conservation & Research
Shannon Brown – Senior Director, Business Development
Phill Carr – Director, Security
Eve Devine – Vice President, Human Resources
Kirby Fowler – President & Chief Executive Officer
Erin Grimm – Curator of Mammals
Hailey Hays – Senior Director, Marketing & Creative Services
Diane Hutchins – Vice President, Government Relations
Dana Kirn – Senior Director, Sales & Revenue
Jennifer Kottyan – Curator of Birds
Kerrie Kovaleski – VP, Education, Interpretation & Volunteers Programs
Karl Kranz – Chief Operating Officer & Executive Vice President
Sandra McAllister – Director, Visitor Service
Michael McClure – General Curator / Elephant Manager
Doug Richter – General Manager SSA
Margaret Rose-Innes – Assistant General Curator

ZOO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael Aldrich	Anthony Jenkins
Christine Aspell	Jill Kamenetz
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Ed Brake	Jason Miller
Daniel Burg	Phil Nestico
Matthew Calhoun	Rodney Oddoye
Tess Casey Flanagan	Eric Orlinsky
Chadfield Clapsaddle	Scott Rifkin
Bill Cole	Brad Rodier
Rick Corcoran	Doug Sawyer
Greg Cross	Jason St. John
Ronald Curry	Elana Thornton
Anne Donahue	Bill Thrush
Herb Goldman	Ann Tyler
Matthew Gorra	Charlie Vieth
Sarah Griswold-Johnson	Hugh Warns
Ingrid Harbaugh	Jim Wilhelm
Marta Harting	Jim Witty
Christopher Holt	Rob Zinkham

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Board of Trustees
Zoo Staff
Zoo Volunteers

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Mission

To engage people in the wonders of the living world through personal encounters with animals, fostering empathy and lifelong support for conservation of wildlife and wild places.

Vision

Ten years from now, guests will be able to interact with animals immediately upon entry to the Zoo, from Schaefer Plaza through Main Valley, while enjoying new habitats with new species in an “Americas” zone and an enhanced Maryland Wilderness. Guests of all abilities will be empowered to enjoy educational programs, habitats, and amenities of the Zoo through equal access to opportunities. The Zoo’s attendance will increase significantly, with Zoo’s financial health being driven more by performance than government support.

Animal care - from training to husbandry, from veterinary care to enrichment - will be superior, with every effort being made to promote an animal’s choice and control over its environment. The Zoo’s international and local conservation efforts will grow into meaningful, holistic partnerships, while the Zoo achieves important sustainability milestones to reduce its adverse impacts on the planet. The greater public will be keenly aware of the Zoo’s conservation work.

Employees of all backgrounds will feel welcome at the Zoo, as part of an increasingly diverse workforce. They will receive constructive feedback on their performance and, when appropriate, opportunities for promotion or increased compensation for excellent performance. They will trust that management will act with fairness and equity as guiding principles.

Introduction

In 2020, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore (MZB) commissioned Stefansson Design & Consulting (SDC) and Relevant Strategies & Solutions (RS&S) to develop a ten-year Master Plan for the Zoo. This will be the first Master Plan that MZB has had in over twenty years and is an extremely important reference for the Zoo to guide the institution over the next decade. The Master Plan will:

- Help define and shape the vision of the Zoo;
- Sort and evaluate internal and external needs of the Zoo;
- Test a balanced project implementation strategy;
- Seek input from groups and individuals connected to the Zoo; and
- Comply with latest AZA accreditation standards.

The Master Plan is intended to be a “living” document. It is a flexible guide that should be adapted to changing external and internal conditions, but the core values of the Master Plan will remain. The Master Plan should be revisited in five to eight years and updated.

Since 2008, the Zoo has followed an unofficial project implementation schedule created by CLR design in November 2007. Based on the schedule, the Zoo has invested over \$75 million on infrastructure, strategic services, and guest attractions that include projects such as:

- Giraffe Feeding Station;
- Jones Falls Train Project;
- Penguin Coast;
- African Barn and Sitatunga Habitat;
- Africa – Elephants, Lions, and Giraffe;
- Bobcat; and
- Leopard.

As a result of these steady, ongoing improvements, the Zoo has experienced a steady attendance growth and recognition as a very family-friendly destination for the citizens of the state of Maryland and beyond. The growth, increased guest expectations, and the desire by the Zoo to improve the overall guest experience and to continue to grow attendance make the Master Plan a very valuable tool to guide any future major decisions.

Planning Process

Stefansson Design & Consulting (SDC) worked collaboratively with the Zoo’s Senior Staff, Board Members, SSA Group, and various members of the Zoo staff to gain a holistic understanding of the Zoo.

Between November 2020 and May 2021, the master planning team met several times in person and using Zoom for one-day meetings, usually followed up by a Zoom call a day or two later to summarize the key accomplishments and discuss next steps and the direction of the Master Plan.

SDC shared design concepts and analysis based on the stated key plan drivers, information gathered in several surveys conducted by the Zoo, and discussions with Zoo staff as part of the interactive process by which the Master Plan was developed and refined. The Master Plan is the culmination of the planning process and is intended to establish a clear vision for the Zoo and guide its future growth and development.



Old Elephant Building constructed in 1926. Proposed to be renovated.



Round Cage to be restored and used for historical purposes.

Keys to Successful Master Plan Implementation

This Master Plan is intended to be a Road Map for the next ten years for the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. Below are critical steps or recommendations that the Zoo and the Zoo Board must take in order to be successful in implementing the projects and other changes outlined in this Master Plan Report.

- Momentum**

Starting in 2008, the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore began to follow a project implementation schedule that identified projects throughout the Zoo and sequencing of the projects. In addition to new construction projects, leadership and staff took a more ambitious goal to completely change the image of the Zoo. This work has resulted in the Zoo being recognized among peers as a rising institution in the field of conservation and education. Guest attendance has grown, more programs and activities are being offered, and more improvements are being planned and implemented.

- Maryland Zoo in Baltimore Vision**

The Zoo needs to update the Vision of the Zoo to effectively tell the story to the Zoo guests and the greater population. The “story” needs to be embedded within the larger vision of the entire Druid Hill Park and adjacent communities. The Druid Hill Park is constantly changing, and the Zoo should be one of the key players driving those changes.

- Community Engagement**

The Master Plan Report will give the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore a tool to share the future vision of the Zoo both internally with staff and externally with community groups and Zoo supporters.

The Report will allow the Zoo staff to be able to see the ambitious and exciting plans that the Zoo leadership has for various small and large projects that will have a lasting impact on the overall operations of the Zoo. Overall timelines for specific areas have been established so projects can be coordinated among various departments, and exciting new openings are planned into the future for the Zoo visitors.

Externally, this Report provides the Zoo with a platform to effectively communicate to various groups the broad vision of the Zoo or to focus on specific priority projects. The Zoo can share its vision with the state, city, Baltimore County, community leaders, the public, and potential donors to test both their reaction to the plan and, subsequently, their willingness to support the plan in a philanthropic way. By doing this, the Zoo can reach a larger group of philanthropic individuals or groups to support future projects at the Zoo.

- Collaboration**

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is located in Druid Hill Park and is owned by the City of Baltimore and leased to the State of Maryland. The Zoo is operated by the Maryland Zoological Society under a lease agreement with the state. The assumption is that this will continue to be the

arrangement between these three key stakeholders, and they will be in agreement regarding future financial and operational needs of the Zoo.

- Project Funding & Marketing**

Over the past ten years, the Zoo has funded over seventy projects throughout the Zoo that vary in size, scope, duration, and complexity. Project costs range from \$500,000 to over \$16,000,000, usually state funding for the smaller projects and both state and private dollars for the larger projects. The goal is to continue with this model for the projects proposed in this Plan. A test implementation schedule has been created with a variety of project types for both fundraising and marketing purposes in mind.

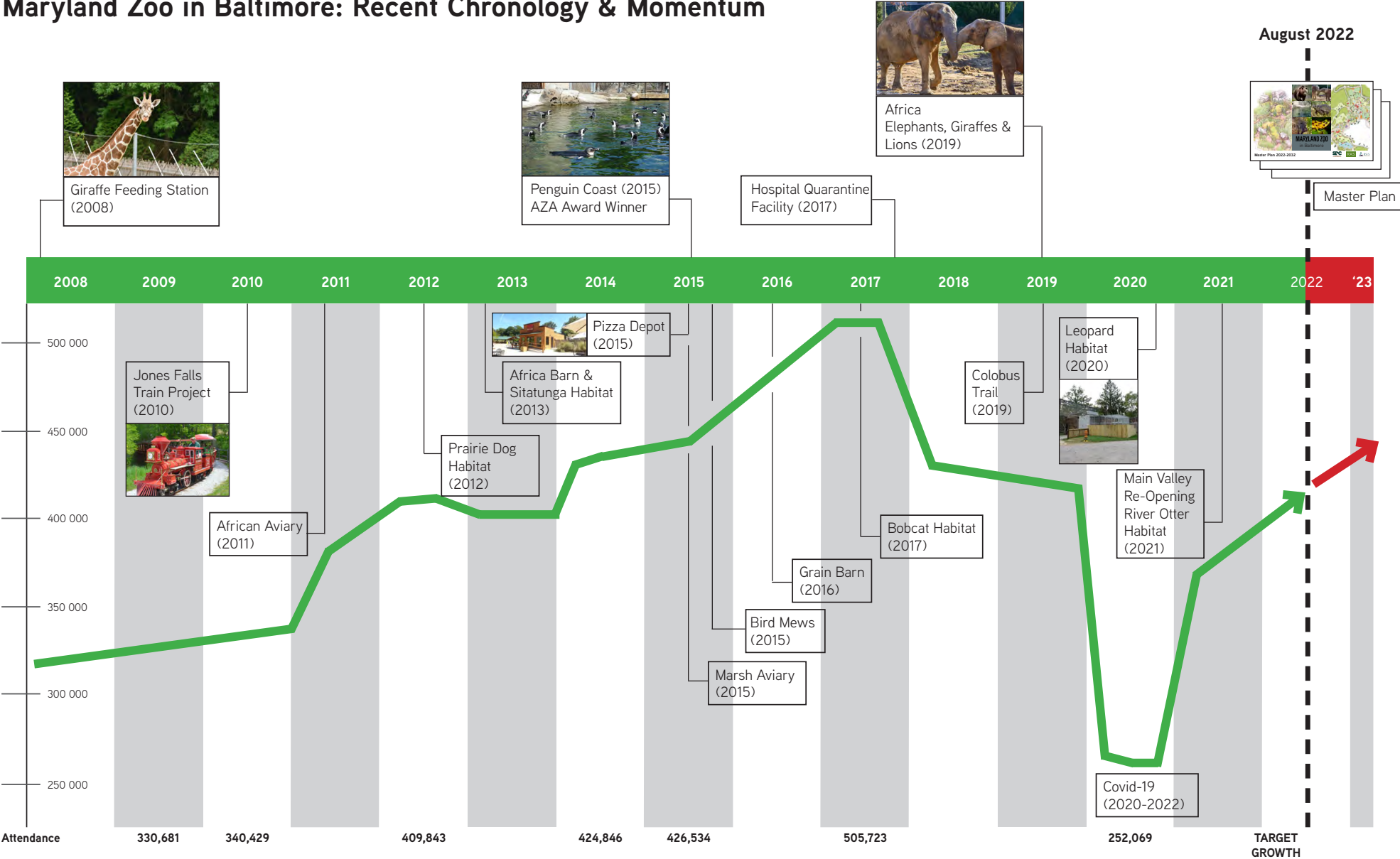
The goal is to create excitement every year with a new attraction to market. It can be a traveling exhibit, a renovation of an existing facility, or a brand-new large addition to the Zoo or some combination of these.

By following the steps outlined in this Master Plan, the Zoo will be positioned to successfully plan for and implement the projects outlined in this Report. This will continue the strong growth that the Zoo has had over the past ten years and will bring back areas of the Zoo that have been closed to the public for over twenty years. The overall visitor experience will be greatly enhanced, and age groups currently not drawn to the Zoo will find activities suitable for their interests.



Druid Hill Park and surrounding area

Maryland Zoo in Baltimore: Recent Chronology & Momentum



Drivers

The Master Plan focuses on three main categories of opportunities and overall short-term and long-term improvements: Animals, People, and Places. The Master Plan and Themes were then developed to support and strengthen the main categories. The key projects proposed in the Master Plan all relate back to the three categories and will have a major lasting impact on the direction and appearance of the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore.

Animals: Care & Conservation	People: Talent & Engagement	Places: Habitat & Facilities
Constantly improve animal welfare	Attract and retain extraordinary employees	Repurpose the original zones of the Zoo, to bring the animal experiences closer to guest arrival
Dramatically expand conservation programs and incorporate into every aspect of the Zoo	Support volunteers and leverage their skills	Add new habitats in Maryland Wilderness
Expand research capabilities and increase advocacy efforts for mission-central issues	Significantly expand audience and increase visitation	Add new amenities in African Journey
	Create a Zoo that is accessible to all	Create other “reasons to stay”
	Develop a diverse and involved Board of Trustees	Expand and improve food, beverage, and retail offerings
	Diversify funding stream	



Steps to Achieve - Animals

Care & Conservation	
Drivers	Steps to Achieve
Constantly improve animal welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 'The Americas Zone' to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide habitats that improve welfare for existing animals, such as expansion of Bear and Owl & Eagle Habitats - Incorporate more animals suited to North American climate, such as wolverines, red wolves, and Steller's Sea Eagle • Construct Gateway Building near Front Gate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide indoor/outdoor habitats for reptiles and amphibians - Highlight Panamanian Golden Frog work - Acquire new species such as Asian Water Monitor and Gila Monster • Expand operating hours, so animals have more time to be outdoors and to work with keepers • Build new refrigerated storage for Commissary as the Zoo increases numbers and types of species
Dramatically expand conservation programs and incorporate into every aspect of the Zoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding and/or create endowment for conservation programs • Assume more leadership roles in international conservation initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donate funds as well as expertise - Lead projects in Botswana and elsewhere to improve conditions of African elephants and reduce elephant-human conflict - Expand support for El Valle Center and work to reintroduce Panamanian Golden Frogs into the wild • Provide more assistance and lend expertise to local conservation projects and partners • Amplify conservation themes in all marketing, signage, and messaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Install "call to action" messaging throughout Zoo, especially near exit - Develop interactive mechanism for public to donate and to designate uses of their donations - Integrate conservation and other mission goals into public events and fundraisers • Generate more food for animals on campus and eliminate food waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build a greenhouse - Increase composting efforts, including potential construction of composting facility • Create and implement a sustainability plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace diesel shuttles with electric shuttles - Reduce waste in terms of power and water usage - Promote "reduce" and "reuse" over "recycle" until global recycling efforts improve - Work with SSA, the Zoo's food and retail provider, to achieve sustainability goals
Expand research capabilities and increase advocacy efforts for mission-central issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract more funding for research • Allocate time for employees to conduct research • Advocate for broadly-accepted efforts to combat climate change, to improve animal welfare, and to promote sustainable living



Steps to Achieve - People

Talent & Engagement	
Drivers	Steps to Achieve
Attract and retain extraordinary employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work proactively to diversify workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire director of DEAI initiatives - Establish trust at all levels - Build pipeline of diverse candidates by developing internships directed at minority and local students • Constantly assess compensation levels and, when warranted, increase compensation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement performance evaluations - Adopt cost-of-living increases, honoring longevity of service • Construct new offices to replace existing trailer park
Support volunteers and leverage their skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve integration of volunteers into work of Zoo, taking advantage of their skill sets and experience • Diversify volunteer base • Regularly acknowledge contributions of volunteers
Significantly expand audience & increase visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend operating hours • Expand reach of marketing campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographically, from Southern Pennsylvania to DC suburbs - Demographically, appealing to artists, single people, and those without children • Improve technology to enhance guest experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide videos or virtual reality experience at exhibits to show “behind the scenes” activity • Collect data to better understand the current audience and strategies for expanding audience
Create a Zoo that is accessible to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase connections with immediate communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create affordable options to attract lower-income residents of adjacent neighborhoods - Investigate feasibility of transit connection to Charm City Circulator • Operate electric fleet of shuttles on Buffalo Yard Road, assisting with mobility needs • Open second entrance for pedestrians, cyclists, and car-sharing on Mansion House Drive • Create habitats and messaging that all can understand and enjoy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand Spanish-speaking messaging - Increase use of sign language in programming • Eliminate the steep grade in the Main Valley • Construct an improved and inclusive playground
Develop a diverse and involved Board of Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify Board of Trustees to better reflect Baltimore and Maryland • Leverage the skills and resources of Trustees
Diversify funding streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to increase percentage of funding generated from performance of the Zoo and private funders • At the same time, maintain or increase current levels of government financial support

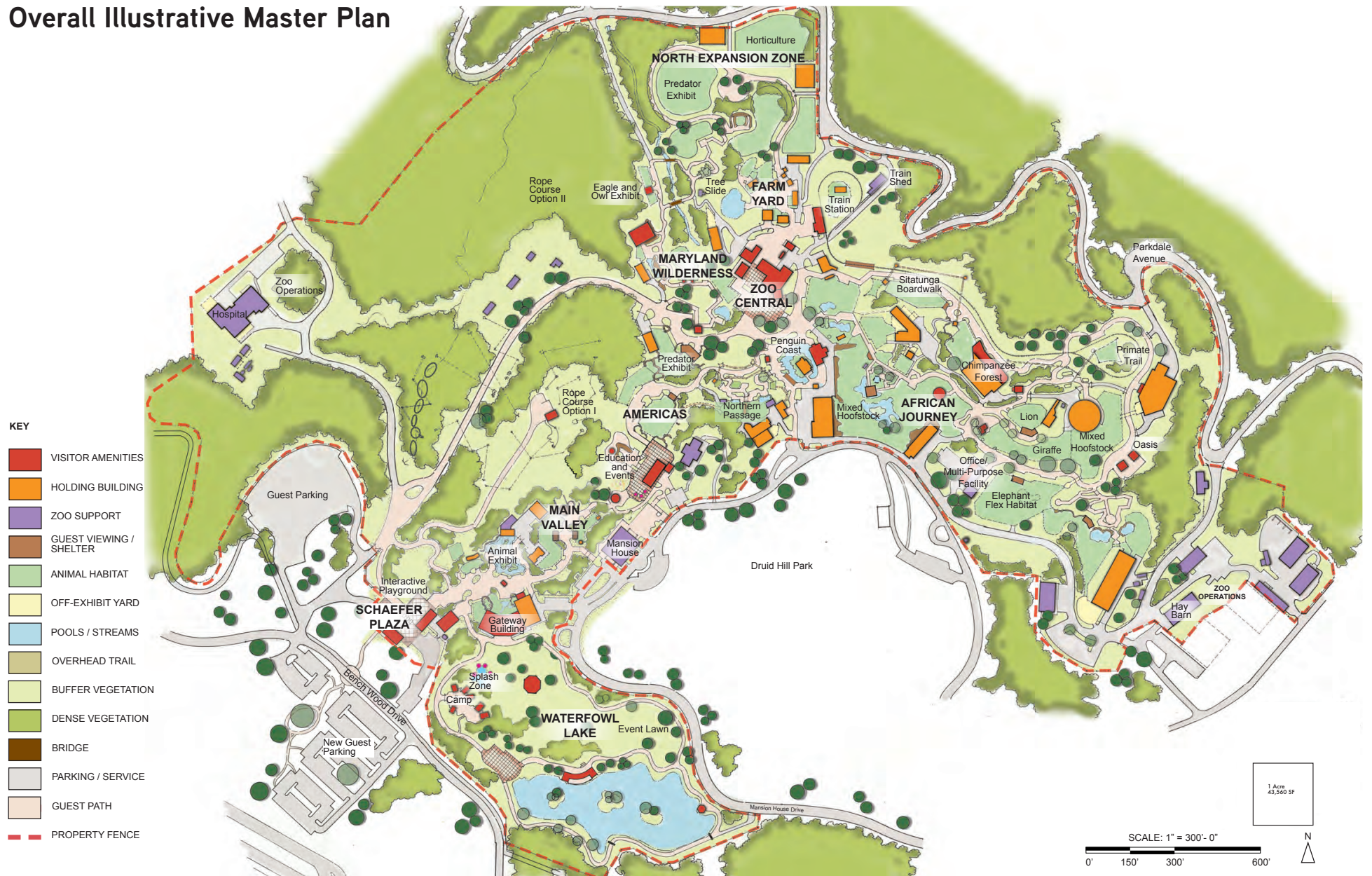


Steps to Achieve - Places

Habitats & Facilities	
Drivers	Steps to Achieve
Repurpose the original zones of the Zoo, to bring the animal experiences closer to guest arrival a. Create animal experiences to connect Front Gate to Zoo Central b. Improve circulation linkages and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-activate Main Valley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolish certain old cages while retaining some for historical purposes, such as Round Cage Construct an island habitat for gibbons at the top of Main Valley Construct a new Raptor Habitat north of Round Stand, highlighting Steller's Sea Eagle Convert historic Elephant House to multi-purpose venue with focus on educational activities Renovate historic Roundhouse and convert to Zoo history center and café Construct Gateway Building near Front Gate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide indoor/outdoor habitats for reptiles and amphibians Construct kitchen to support events in Waterfowl Lake Open up Boat Lake walkway to public and develop plan for future use of the water for boating activities
Add new habitats in Maryland Wilderness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct habitats for snowy owl and bald eagle, north of bat cave Create Red Wolf Habitat, north of Tree Slide
Add new amenities in African Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct elevated deck for events as part of new office building, with views of Elephant, Lion, and Giraffe Habitats Redesign and relocate pathways around Lemur Lane/Chimp Trail and Sitatunga yard, to allow for better guest experience Design new habitat between Chimp Forest and Sitatunga yard, potentially for relocation of okapi
Create other "reasons to stay"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create zip line/rope course experience Construct accessible playground and interactive water feature Develop "Safari Camp" for overnight educational activities Provide seasonal, rotating attractions (e.g., animatronic dinosaurs, video projections, 4D experiences, Lego animals, Chinese lanterns)
Expand and improve food, beverage, and retail offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversify food offerings and promote local restaurants Support conservation-themed retail products Construct indoor dining area Expand menu and offerings at Oasis venue; renovate for year-round operations



Overall Illustrative Master Plan



Proposed Land Use - Zoo

Animal Habitats Zones

North Expansion

- The largest area still undeveloped and relatively flat with easy access and some adjacent infrastructure. This area is currently known as Siberia.
- For short-term use, the Zoo can use this area for a browse garden, nursery, or adventure zone for zoo camps.
- Some smaller projects and infrastructure upgrades should be scheduled to keep this zone up to date.

African Journey

- The most complete zone at the Zoo that has seen numerous upgrades over the past ten years.
- Future needs include a staff/rental building.
- Future expansion can include a new guest loop around the train turnaround circle and repositioned Sitatunga Boardwalk
- Other infill projects can include new Cheetah Habitat and primate overhead trails and feeder habitats.

Americas

- The intent is to create a new zone that will include the existing Northern Passage and the Maryland Wilderness. The zone will include the northern section of The Main Valley.
- The concept is to add more cold-weather, hardy animals that can be viewed by the guests year-round outdoors.

Entry Zone and Promenade

- The goal is to create an open and exciting entry that introduces the guests to the Zoo immediately with a combination of activities and animal habitats.
- The south end of the promenade is anchored by the new Zoo Gateway Building and the old Elephant Holding Building at the north.

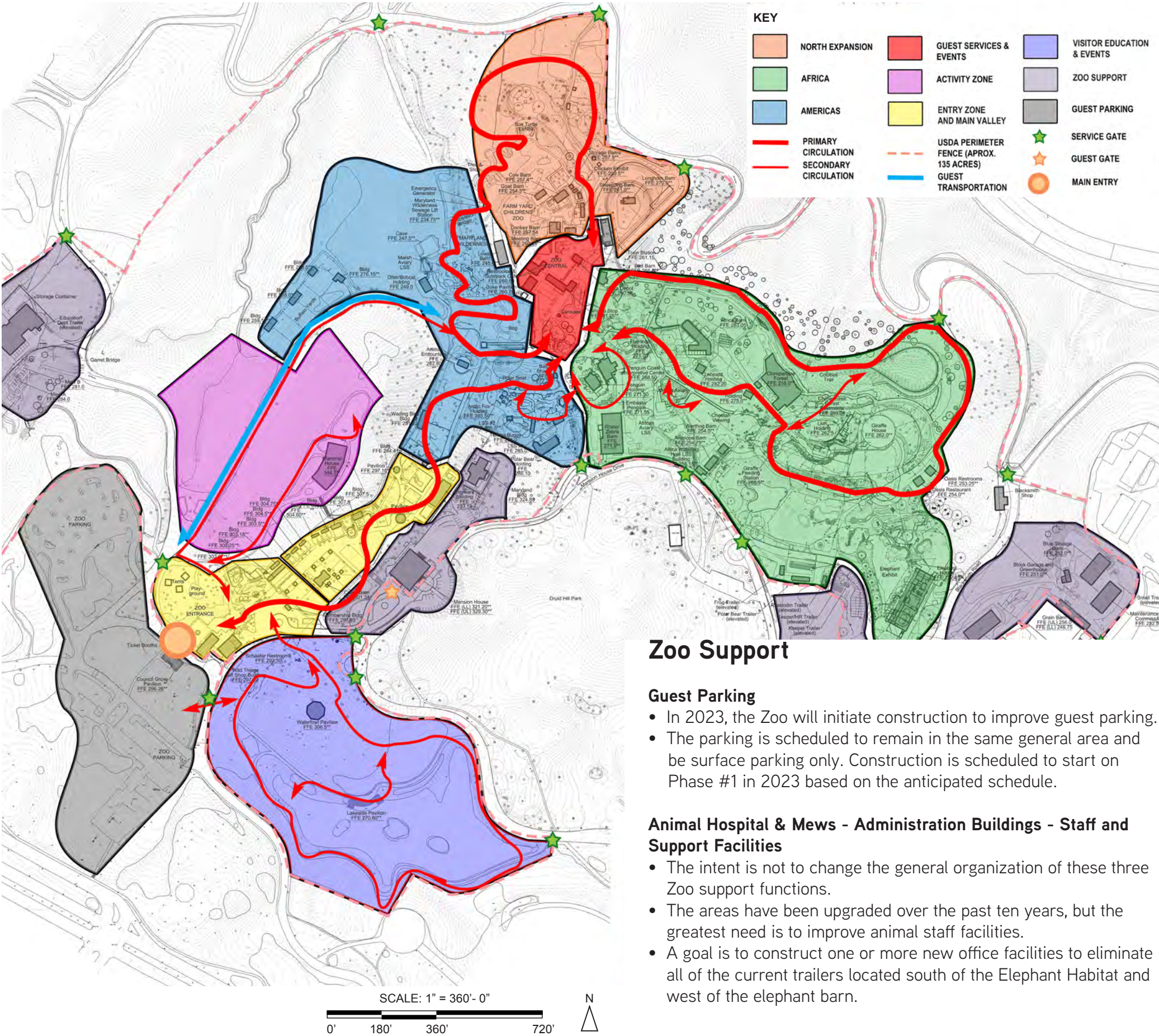
Guest Support & Activity Zones

Activity Area

- The Zoo is exploring ways to diversify to reach the teenager and young adult demographic. The area west of the Main Valley is being looked at for a Rope Course or a Tree-to-Tree course. The intent is to work with an operator on a revenue-sharing basis.
- An inclusive playground could be constructed in place of the non-accessible playground.

Zoo Central

- This area represents the geographic center of the Zoo and the intent is to strengthen this area as the heart of the Zoo.
- The main Zoo loops should continue to begin and end here, and food and other guest amenities should be expanded such as indoor dining and a guest plaza with animal viewing.



Zoo Support

Guest Parking

- In 2023, the Zoo will initiate construction to improve guest parking.
- The parking is scheduled to remain in the same general area and be surface parking only. Construction is scheduled to start on Phase #1 in 2023 based on the anticipated schedule.

Animal Hospital & Mews - Administration Buildings - Staff and Support Facilities

- The intent is not to change the general organization of these three Zoo support functions.
- The areas have been upgraded over the past ten years, but the greatest need is to improve animal staff facilities.
- A goal is to construct one or more new office facilities to eliminate all of the current trailers located south of the Elephant Habitat and west of the elephant barn.

New Habitats and Animal Species

- Years one to two
- Years two to six
- Years six to ten



Eagle - Years one to two



Red Wolf - Years two to six



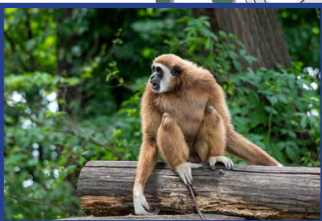
Okapi - Years six to ten



Snowy Owl - Years one to two



Wolverine - Years two to six



Gibbon - Years two to six



Porcupine - Years one to two



Steller's Sea Eagle - Years two to six



Panamanian Golden Frog



Gila Monster



Asian Water Monitor - Years six to ten



Giant Elephant Shrew - Years two to six



Naked Mole-rat - Years two to six