

# POTAWATOMI ZOO MASTER PLAN

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENT



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# INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the Potawatomi Zoo embarked on the development of a strategic master plan to create a long-term vision for the future of the Zoo. The Zoo engaged Zoo Advisors and GLMV Architecture, Inc. to conduct a multi-phase project, which took place during the past year and included an assessment of the site and facilities, an exploration of opportunities, and a refinement of priorities. The planning team included representatives from Zoo leadership, the Board and staff members.

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

The team participated in a process that worked to enhance the overall guest experience, improve the site and facilities, address guest circulation and flow, add revenue generation opportunities, strengthen the Zoo's stature in its educational mission, and position the Zoo as a community asset and regional attraction. Throughout the process the team reached out to the staff and Board as well as leaders in the community and government to gather input and feedback into the direction for the Zoo. Master planning activities included a thorough review of site and facilities, as well as adjacent land, and numerous design workshops with key Board and staff; and concluded with creating concepts for exciting new exhibits and flow that make best use of the Zoo's site, its environs, and its place in the park.

The Zoo is at a critical point in its evolution. It has successfully transitioned to private non-profit management, and new leadership is in place in many positions throughout the Zoo. Over the last several years, the Zoo has enjoyed growing attendance, increased revenue, and additions to its animal collection.

In order to continue this positive momentum and harness the energy and excitement around the Zoo, a compelling vision for the future needs to be put forward. This strategic master plan does just that, laying out a series of facility and exhibit improvements which will transform the Zoo, establishing it as a premier regional player in the zoo industry and making it a must-see destination.

The goal now is to attract a broader and diverse audience from throughout the area, engaging and immersing guests in unique experiences, and guaranteeing them a top-notch visit. While strengthening its place as a destination, the Zoo must also stay true to its mission, creating opportunities to live its conservation and education purpose with on-site programming, facilities for species survival, and educational facilities that are accessible and available to those in the community.

A facilities master plan takes a long-term look at where the Zoo wants to go with respect to its site, facilities and physical environment. The plan should establish a bold vision but also offer realistic and achievable steps of how to get there. The plan, at its heart, should reflect the community it serves and provide opportunities to take its goals and make them come alive on the site.

The plan should also be grounded in the reality of what the Zoo can achieve based on the community size, market potential and resource availability. It is important to note that the master plan is a:

- 15-to 20-year vision for the Zoo that will change and grow;
- 50,000-foot view of the future with the knowledge that details and specifics may change;
- Phased approach for sustainable development of the site; and
- A roadmap for sustainable growth and development.

Sequencing of the plan is subject to a wide variety of factors to include: funding, donor interest, collection planning, community priorities or AZA requirements.

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 growth of attendance levels, guest interest and excitement. A number of other trends explored and factored into the Zoo's master planning efforts are included below:

- Immersive exhibits are becoming the standard in any new exhibit design.
- Highly themed exhibits generate more excitement and interest from guests.
- Interactive, touch and feeding experiences with all types of animals are growing exponentially in zoos; feeding 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 zoo experience.
- A greater focus on mission-driven education and conservation programs provides differentiation from other attractions.



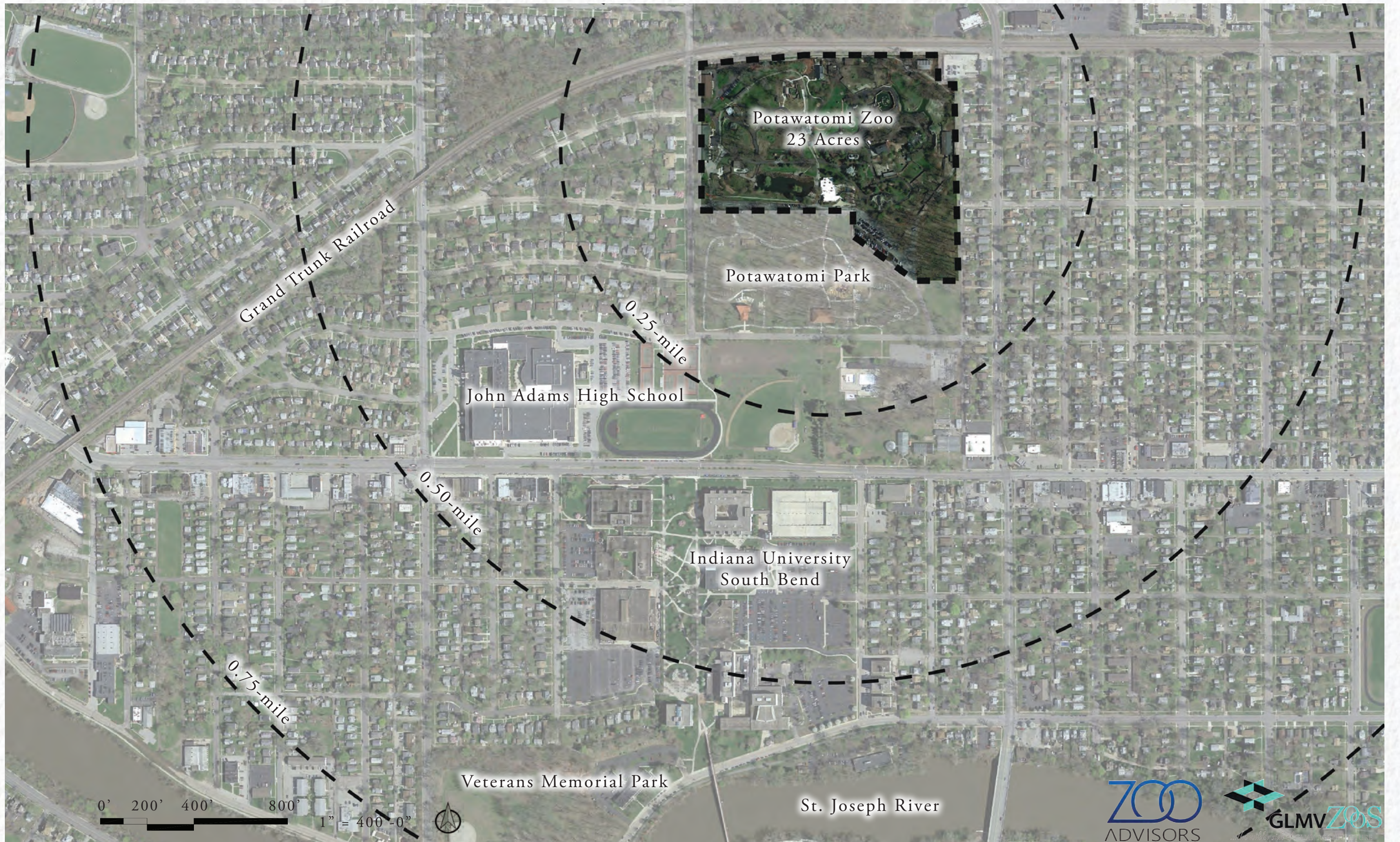
# EXISTING SITE AND CONTEXT

The Potawatomi Zoo currently occupies 23 acres of City-owned property in Potawatomi Park located in South Bend, Indiana.

The Zoo is nestled between the St. Joseph River and the Grand Trunk railroad in the east side neighborhood of River Park. Primary access to the site is from South Greenlawn Avenue and South Ironwood to East Wall Street. Southwood Avenue provides one-way circulation through the park to the Zoo.

The immediate environs include the Potawatomi Park to the south and John Adams High School to the southwest. Further south, across East Mishawaka Avenue, is Indiana University South Bend. Parking is located south of the Zoo and is shared with Potawatomi Park. The existing parking lot has 97 stalls plus an additional 74 stalls immediately off Southwood Avenue.





# EXISTING FACILITIES & AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

## ENTRY/EXIT AREA

- The size and layout of the existing entry complex are inadequate to properly support current zoo attendance and limit the Zoo's ability to accommodate new growth.
- The entry area lacks guest services. Additional restrooms, vending, gift/retail and improved stroller/wheelchair rental space are necessary.
- Additional administration office space is needed in the Learning Center.
- Strollers or wheelchairs cannot exit through the existing turnstile and are forced to exit through the entry gate.
- The path immediately inside the front gate does not meet ADA.
- There is a large undeveloped area inside the entry near the koi pond.

## ASIA

- The tiger exhibit is in disrepair and in need of complete renovation.
- The investment in existing takin and camel exhibits is minimal. These exhibits could be relocated.

## AFRICA

- The African southern ground hornbill and ankole cattle yards are oversized.
- The lion exhibit is undersized, in disrepair and in need of complete renovation.
- One exhibit yard is empty.

## AUSTRALIA

- The kangaroo/emu walk-through occupies a valuable piece of land in the heart of the zoo. This area could be redeveloped into a more dynamic exhibit for such a prominent area.

## LAWN/CORPORATE PICNIC AREA

- The west half of the Zoo is underdeveloped compared to the east half. This is due, in part, to the open lawn and corporate picnic area.
- This area lacks guest amenities. Additional restrooms, concessions, and play opportunities are needed.

## POND

- The existing stage and seating are in poor condition and should be renovated for future educational events.
- The pond is underused.
- There is a large empty yard south of the alligator exhibit.

## CHILDREN'S ZOO/CONCESSION BUILDING

- Although very popular, the Children's Zoo has yet to see its potential. Improved contact yards, additional feeding experiences and play opportunities are needed.
- The barn currently houses the gift shop, which is more appropriately placed in the Learning Center. The second floor of the barn is an ideal location for the education offices. Educational programs could be held on the main level.
- Additional restrooms and hand washing stations are necessary.
- The old pony ride area is underutilized.
- The existing concession building is in poor condition and is in need of renovation.





# FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

# NEW MASTER PLAN



# GUEST EXPERIENCE



The goal of this Master Plan is to provide guests with a unique and meaningful animal experience less available at the larger, regional zoos. Therefore, the focus or ‘theme’ of this plan is interaction through animal feeding opportunities.

## **Animal Feeding and Enrichment Demonstrations**

As animal contact restrictions increase, so has the guests’ need for meaningful interaction. Feeding is an ideal activity to create a memorable, up close and personal experience. This plan explores a variety of feeding opportunities as well as feeding and enrichment demonstrations by staff.

Immediately inside the entry, the penguin exhibit playfully welcomes guests to their first feeding and enrichment demonstration. A few steps down the path is the Children’s Zoo filled with farmyard animals anxiously awaiting a snack or friendly pat on the back. The Big Back Yard offers plenty of excitement with lorikeet feedings and a Kangaroo/Wallaby walk-through. Giraffe to the left... okapi to the right... everyone will enjoy comparing/contrasting and feeding these not so distant African relatives. Further down the path, in Asia, guests can relax while they feed the colorful koi. Then it’s on to North America for a fun and playful otter feeding and enrichment experience, not to mention a unique bison feeding opportunity. The final and most exciting demonstration is the alligator feeding in the American Marsh.

In addition to animal feeding opportunities, this Master Plan provides many other amenities to enhance the guest experience. Play opportunities, concessions, restrooms and gift shops all contribute to an enjoyable experience at the Zoo.

## **Play**

The bright colors and sounds of a playful carousel greet guests as they enter the Zoo, setting the stage for a fun-filled day. Play on the swings, climb in the tree house, or dig in the sand. There’s plenty to do in the Big Back Yard. Whether you’re practicing your best lion pounce or pretending to be a honeybee, both the African and North American plazas offer active, educational themed play. And finally, children of all ages will enjoy the Prairie Dog Pop Up. Climb through plexiglass tunnels that emerge in the exhibit giving an up-close view of life among the prairie dogs.

## **Rides**

Looking for a fun way to get around the Zoo? Guests can hop a train around North America, or for those looking for something more adventurous, ride the zip line over the American Alligator exhibit.

## **Concession/Restaurant**

A new restaurant with indoor seating will be located in the North American Plaza with exciting up-close views into animal exhibits. Several concession and vending opportunities are located throughout the Zoo, so a quick snack or cool drink is never too far away.

## **Restrooms**

Restrooms are conveniently distributed in several locations throughout the Zoo.

## **Gift Shop**

The main gift shop will be located at the entrance and will serve as the official exit to the Zoo.

## **Mobile Carts**

Cart staging areas throughout the Zoo allow for mobile vending of food and gifts. This allows seasonal rotation of items for sale and helps promote year-round interest within the Zoo.



# GUEST AMENITIES



## Guest Feeding

- Children's Zoo
- Giraffe
- Koi
- Bison



## Children's Play

- Carousel
- Big Back Yard
- African Plaza
- North American Plaza



## Demonstration

- Penguin
- Otter
- Alligator



## Rides

- Train
- Zip Line



## Restrooms



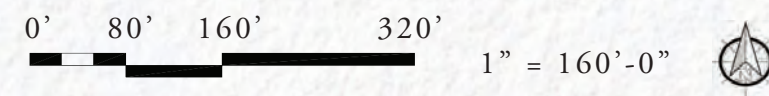
## Concessions/Restaurant



## Gift Shop



## Revenue Generating Area



# MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATION

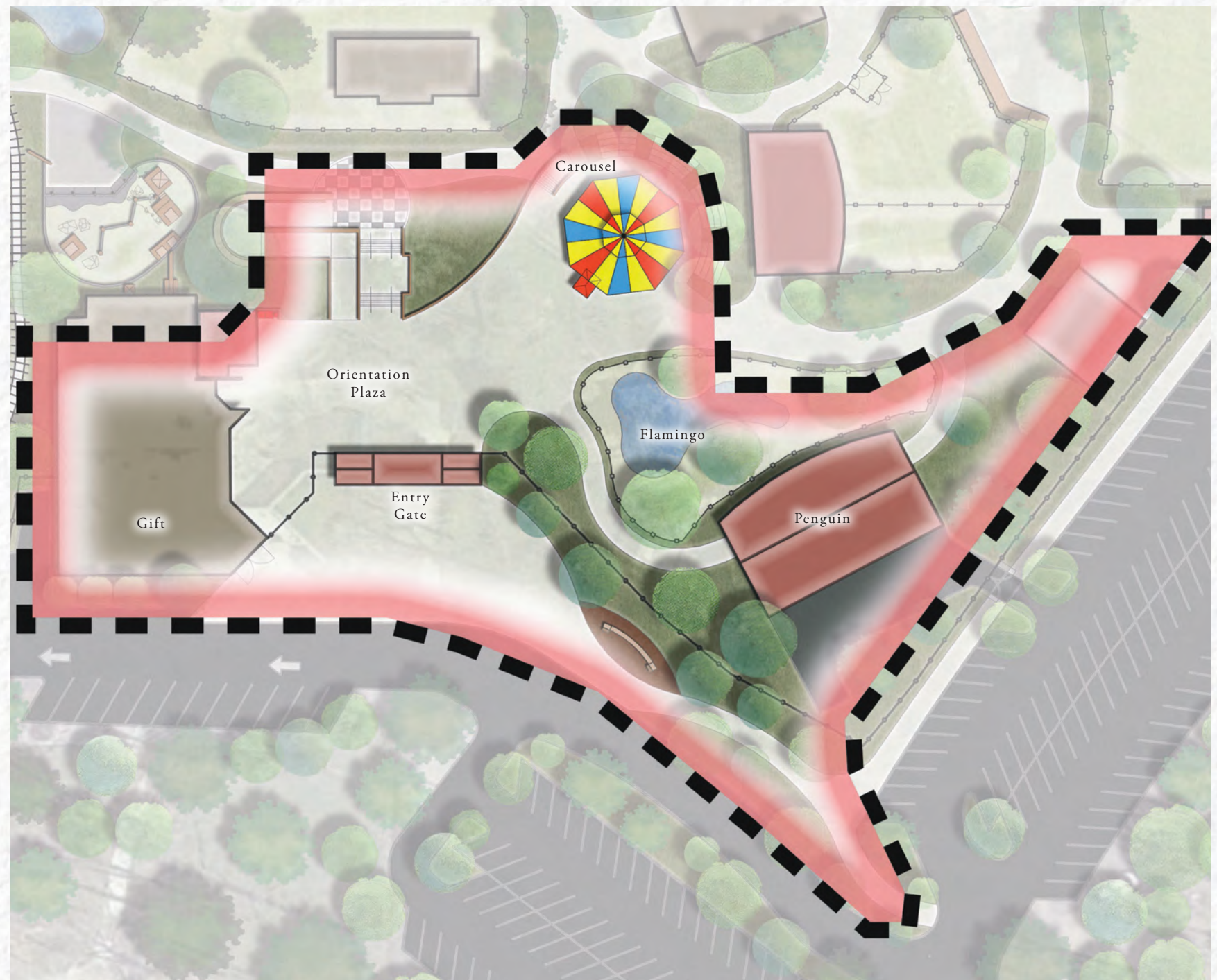
- Entry/Exit
- Children's Zoo
- Alligator Adventure
- Africa
- North America
- Asia
- Parking
- Service



# ENTRY/EXIT

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression...” It is critical that the experience of entering the Zoo be an organized, intuitive, accommodating and overall pleasant one. Then, after a fun day at the Zoo, we want to send guests home with a positive exiting experience... and a souvenir or two. With this in mind, the Master Plan proposes:

- The entry has an open, spacious feel with adequate room for safe and organized queuing.
- A playful sculptural element which acts not only as a landmark, but also a point of play and interest while waiting in line.
- An open, ADA-compliant orientation plaza immediately inside the gate.
- Convenient stroller/wheelchair rentals and retail opportunities for items such as sunscreen, memory cards, hats, etc.
- A carousel to enliven the entry and create a fun, playful atmosphere.
- The brightly colored flamingos engage guests at the entry and lead them towards a playful penguin exhibit. This intuitively establishes the direction of the circulation pattern.
- As guests follow the primary circulation loop, they exit down the ramp and through the relocated gift shop at the front of the Learning Center.



0' 30' 60' 120' 1" = 60'-0"



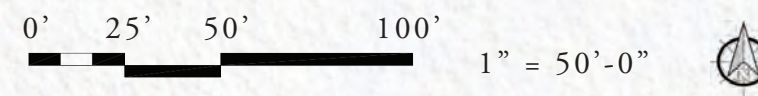
ZOO  
ADVISORS

GLMVZOS  
...the wilder side of GVM ARCHITECTURE

# CHILDREN'S ZOO

The focus of the Master Plan is animal interaction, particularly through feeding opportunities. This concept is most apparent at the Children's Zoo. This area offers a variety of up-close and personal experiences including furry feeding, feather feeding, keeper demonstrations and so much more. The Children's Zoo is also the new home of the Education Department. The Barn will be converted into offices/classrooms for education and rental space for parties. An addition to the Barn will house education animals. Outside the Barn will be a large Education Plaza for animal demonstrations, education activities and school groups.

- Contact Yard: No Children's Zoo is complete without a petting/feeding yard. Guests enjoy interacting with sheep, goats and other farmyard animals.
- The Lorikeet Aviary: Guests experience the sights and sounds of dozens of colorful lorikeets as they sip nectar from handheld cups.
- The Kangaroo/Wallaby Walk-Through: A fun opportunity to "hop along" with kangaroos and wallabies inside their enclosure.
- The House and Big Backyard: Whether it's dressing up as a Zoo director or preparing a pretend meal, The House is the perfect setting for creative play. Then it's outside to the Big Backyard to burn off energy. The sand box, swings, and a tree house are fun ways to work out the wiggles.

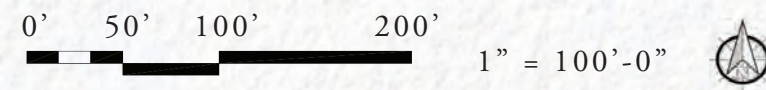




# AFRICA

The African experience is a crucial economic driver and provides a strong incentive for people to visit the Zoo. Every person who walks into the park eagerly anticipates seeing the lions and giraffes. Not only does Africa provide these two large animals, but the okapi, strategically positioned next to the giraffe, provides an added interest. The only relative of the giraffe, the okapi will be seen in unison with the giraffe. Also, a feeding plaza placed in between these two exhibits will provide an opportunity to feed both animals. Other parts of Africa include:

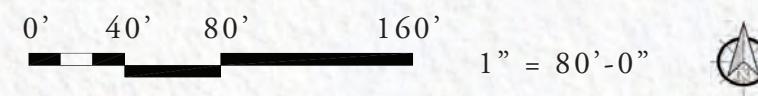
- The wild dog and African southern ground hornbill exhibits serve as the gateway into the African experience.
- The existing colobus and Diana monkey exhibits remain in place to help anchor the arrival sequence into Africa.
- The warthog and meerkat exhibits are incorporated by the feeding plaza where guests can get glimpses of these animals while they participate in giraffe and okapi feeding.
- With improved viewing, the chimpanzee exhibit concludes the African experience.
- The new concession, restroom and play area sits next to the updated chimpanzee exhibit. This particular concession, restroom and play node is surrounded by cats (lions, tigers, and snow leopards), which carries that theme into the play structure equipment.



# ASIA

Located in the heart of the Zoo, the Asian experience showcases a new and improved tiger habitat. With breeding in mind, the exhibit has two separate yards and a large holding facility. In addition to Tiger:

- A new snow leopard habitat adjacent to the “cat” themed plaza where guests can compare and contrast the snow leopard with other cats of Asia (tiger) and of Africa (lion).
- As guests proceed into Asia, the meandering pathway is encompassed on one side by snow leopard and tiger on the other, creating a highly immersive experience.
- A koi pond, which provides fish feeding opportunities, is the final stop. Before crossing the train tracks and entering North America, guests encounter a new Sichuan takin habitat across from a playful gibbon exhibit.
- Guests get one last taste of Asia as they make their way out of the Zoo. The red panda exhibit, along with the gibbon, are the final animals on display before guests exit the park through the gift shop.



# NORTH AMERICA

North America provides a multitude of activities and encounters. From animal feedings to keeper demonstrations and a unique restaurant environment, there is something to please nearly every interest including:

- A new eagle exhibit across from a re-imagined bison habitat that includes a bison feeding opportunity.
- The existing otter exhibit is already a highlight of the Zoo and will feature keeper feeding demonstrations.
- Prairie Dog Play. A series of pop-up viewing domes allow children to crawl underground and immerse themselves right into the exhibit.
- A large activity plaza with play opportunities, restrooms and a new restaurant. The indoor dining portion of the restaurant will feature an exciting, up-close view into the new bear exhibit. The plaza looks directly into new wolf and cougar habitats.
- The corporate picnic area is a great revenue-generating opportunity. This space is located on the southern edge of North America, allowing great access to the alligator adventure area, the most active and possibly most sought after space in the Zoo.



0' 50' 100' 200'  
1" = 100'-0"



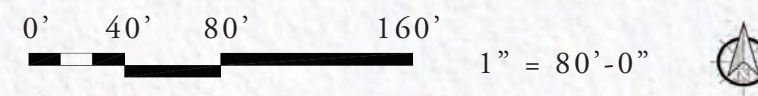
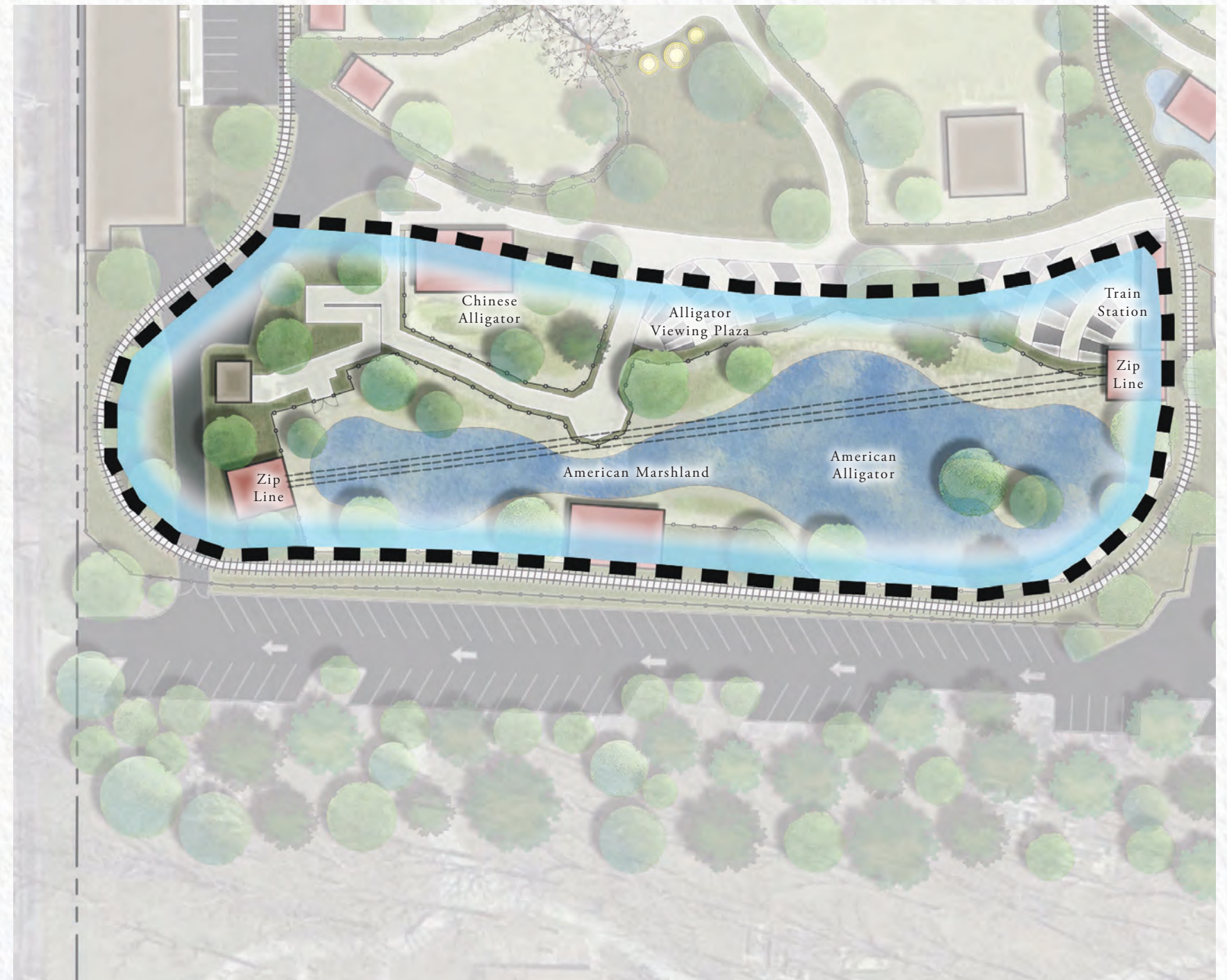
ZOO  
ADVISORS

GLMVZOS  
...the wilder side of GAMV ARCHITECTURE

# ALLIGATOR ADVENTURE

The once underutilized pond is now the most exciting part of the Zoo. The pond has been transformed into an American Marshland. This expanded aquatic habitat will be home to a dozen or more American alligators. A regularly scheduled alligator feeding show is sure to be popular with guests. But for those interested in a little adventure, the gator zip line offers a thrilling ride over the alligator habitat. This area also includes:

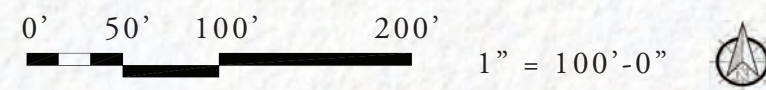
- An outdoor habitat for the Chinese alligator.
- A viewing plaza where guests can watch the alligator feeding show or zip line rider on their 450 foot trip over gator filled waters.
- A train station/zip line plaza. The pavement pattern on the plaza mimics the scales of an alligator.



# PARKING

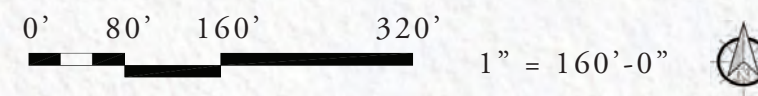
Limited parking for the Zoo is one of the major impediments to future growth. Expanding parking should be one of the first priorities for the Potawatomi Zoo. The proposed layout shown would increase the parking count to 233 with 107 new stalls to the north of the existing lot. Additionally, a bus drop-off area coinciding with a group entry gate makes the arrival of large groups of children possible. As space in this part of the Zoo is limited, buses will be able to drop off passengers and park in a designated area off site. Clearly designated sidewalks allow guests to safely move from their vehicle to the entry gates.

- Existing Stalls: 97
- Proposed Stalls: 233
- Stalls Gained: 136



# SERVICE

The service corridor is positioned along the northern edge of the property. Various access points into the Zoo itself are strategically placed so every exhibit can be reached by service vehicles. The main service drive has gated access points. These areas can be reached from the west via the vet hospital entrance and also from the east where the group drop off is located.

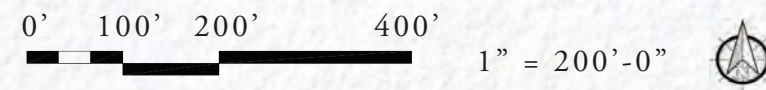


# SITE CIRCULATION

Main Circulation

Service Access

Train



# PROJECT PHASING



# OVERALL SITE PHASING PLAN

High Priority Projects

Quick Success Projects

Phase I

Phase II

Phase III

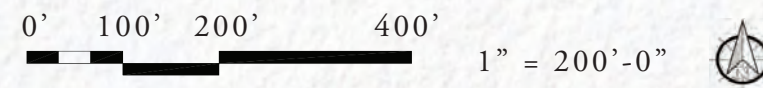
Phase IV

Projects of Opportunity

## PROJECT BUDGETS

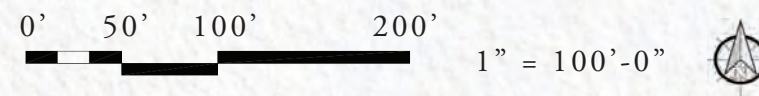
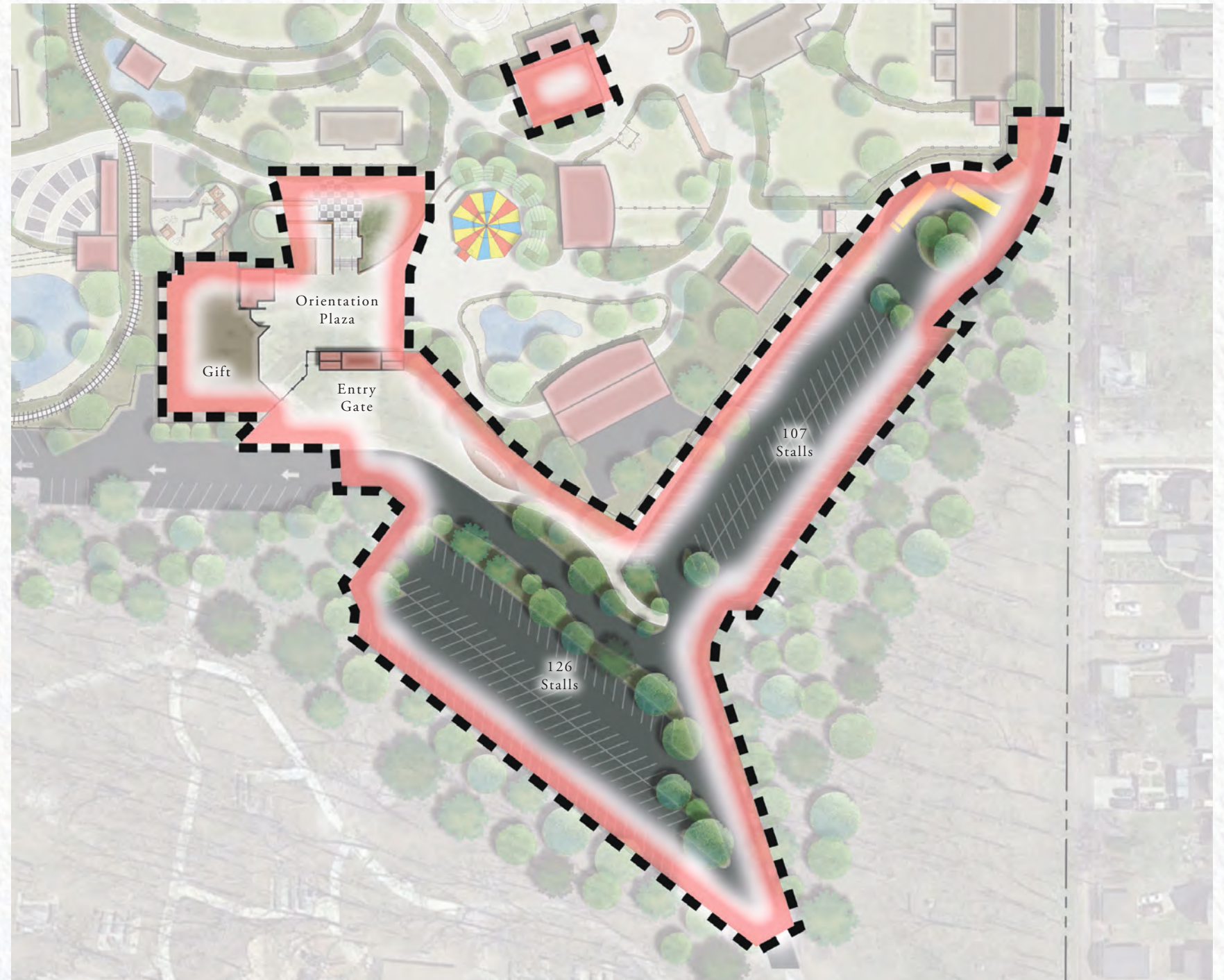
Project Budgets, as listed in the following phasing, are representative of similar projects that have been recently completed in similar sized institutions. Many variables are at play when assigning project budgets including the size of the animal collection, quality of the proposed construction, capacity of public areas, the availability of existing utility and the current climate for construction. Each project budget will need to be verified at the onset of each specific project. No account for inflation over time has been factored.

Soft costs include Architecture/Engineering fees, permits, inspections, as well as, furniture, fixtures and equipment.



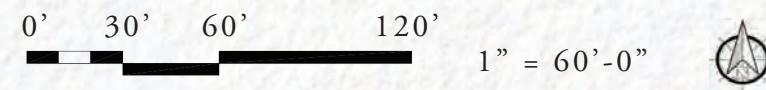
# HIGH PRIORITY PROJECTS

- Entry (light renovation) \$100,000-\$250,000
  - Parking \$267,500
  - Relocate Education Offices and Animals to the Barn \$560,000
  - Relocate Gift Shop to the Learning Center \$475,000
- Total \$1,402,500-\$1,552,500  
 Soft Costs at 25% \$350,625-\$388,125
- Total Project \$1,700,000-\$1,900,000**



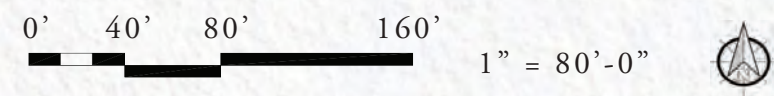
# QUICK SUCCESS PROJECTS

• New Prairie Dog Exhibit (in house)	\$100,000
• Bison/Eagle & Bison Feeding	\$600,000
• Temporary Giraffe Feeding	\$250,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$950,000</b>
Soft Costs at 25%	\$237,500
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>\$1,187,500</b>



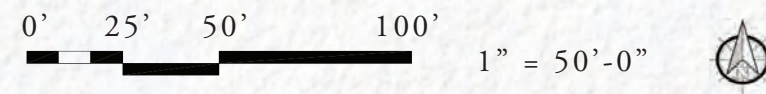
# PHASE I

• Alligator Exhibit/ Holding	\$400,000
• Zip Line	\$100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
Soft Costs at 25%	\$125,000
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>\$625,000</b>



# PHASE II

• Children's Zoo (Including Education Plaza)	\$2,500,000
Total	\$2,500,000
Soft Costs at 25%	\$625,000
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>\$3,125,000</b>

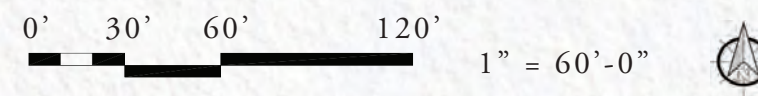


# PHASE III

- North America (Bear, Wolf, & Cougar Exhibits) \$2,500,000
- Restaurant, Restroom, Play Corporate Picnic Area \$1,200,000

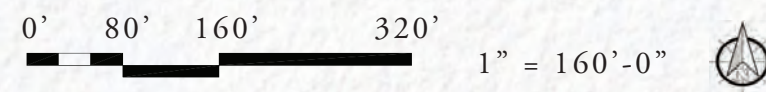
Total \$3,700,000  
Soft Costs at 25% \$925,000

**Total Project \$4,625,000**



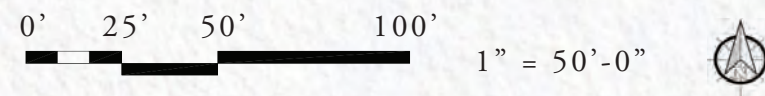
# FUTURE PHASES

- New Administration Building \$400,000
  - Asia \$6,000,000
  - Flamingo/Penguin \$4,000,000
  - Africa \$10,500,000
- Total \$20,900,000  
 Soft Costs at 25% \$5,225,000  
**Total Project \$26,125,000**



# PROJECTS OF OPPORTUNITY

• Carousel (late 2015-2016)	\$1,000,000
Total	\$1,000,000
Soft Costs at 25%	\$250,000
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>







PREPARED BY:

