



April 18, 2016

Budget and Finance Committee  
c/o Richard Williams, Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Councilmembers:

*"Nurturing  
wildlife  
and enriching  
the human  
experience"*

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Richard Lichtenstein  
ex officio member

John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

The Zoo Department respectfully submits this correspondence for your information regarding the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2016-17 Proposed Budget. As the Zoo marks its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November 2016, we look forward to the next phase of the Zoo's future through the lens of our Strategic Plan which will inform a new Business and Marketing Plan and Zoo Master Plan.

The Zoo's 2016-17 Proposed Budget represents the third year that there has been no General Fund contribution to the operating budget and the first year since 2008 where there has been no admissions fee increase. The Zoo is proud of its fiscally sound financial practices that have been implemented over the years which have resulted in the Zoo not requiring a supplemental General Fund appropriation in over 13 years. The Zoo has weathered through these turbulent fiscal times by managing within budgeted resources, implementing new revenue generating programs, and leveraging our partnership with the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (GLAZA).

The Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens remains a safe, affordable family cultural and educational destination serving nearly 75 million visitors and the Los Angeles community for 50 years. As we continue to strive to be a leading institution in conservation, education, and recreation, we must provide exceptional care for the living collection of 1,100 animals and over 7,000 plants. We must also work towards delivering consistent, innovative, and improved services that continually engage and excite new and repeat visitation to meet evolving visitor expectations.

The Zoo Department's proposed budget focuses on the need for additional critical resources to support customer service, visitor engagement, and facility cleanliness operations in support of achieving industry benchmark ratings from semi-annual visitor surveys. These operational areas of focus are keys to achieving visitor satisfaction and direct drivers for achieving attendance and revenue projections.

We look forward to your support of the Zoo Department's Proposed Budget as we embark on the planning and development of the Zoo's growth for 2016-17 and beyond.

Respectfully Submitted,

John R. Lewis, General Manager  
Zoo Department



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