



April 21, 2017

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

Honorable Councilmembers:

"Creating dynamic experiences to connect people and animals"

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John R. Lewis
Zoo Director

The Zoo Department respectfully submits this correspondence for your information regarding the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2017-18 Proposed Budget. The Zoo's 2017-18 Proposed Budget represents the fourth year that there has been no General Fund contribution to the direct operating budget. 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 14 years. The Zoo has weathered through the 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 over 75 million visitors and the Los Angeles community for 50 years. As we continue to strive to be a leading institution in animal welfare, 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 meet evolving visitor expectations and that continually engage and excite new and repeat visitation.

The Zoo Department's proposed budget focuses on the need for additional critical resources to support animal care and animal health programs, coordinate our conservation efforts, address visitor and facility safety, customer service, visitor engagement, and facility cleanliness operations while continuing to look for opportunities to leverage technology in our operations. These operational areas of focus are keys to achieving visitor satisfaction and broadening our reach in order to achieve attendance and revenue projections that support the delivery of our mission. Finally, the Proposed Budget includes a \$1 admission fee increase which is projected to generate an additional \$750,000 in admissions revenue.

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 2017-18 and beyond.

Respectfully Submitted,

John R. Lewis, General Manager
Zoo Department

JRL:DMV:MK



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