



August 18, 2014

Arts, Parks, Health, Aging and River Committee  
c/o Adam Lid, Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

*"Nurturing  
wildlife  
and enriching  
the human  
experience"*

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Richard Lichtenstein  
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John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

Honorable Members:

On November 1, 2013, the Los Angeles Zoo transmitted for Mayor and Council approval a three-year Strategic Business and Marketing Plan (Fiscal Year 2014–2015 through FY 2016–2017) (C.F. 13-1469). The purpose of this Plan was to provide the structure by which to examine the current nature of the Zoo's business, coalesce around the existing mission and new vision for the future, and chart courses of action that will enable the Zoo to meet its goals. At the direction of the Budget and Finance Committee and Arts, Parks, Health, Aging and River Committee, the Zoo Department has updated this Plan to eliminate assumptions about the General Fund contribution in future years and assumptions regarding a blanket exemption from the managed hiring process, as well as provides additional detail to the marketing budgets included in the Plan. Further, the Zoo has updated Fiscal Year 2013-14 financial information with preliminary actual data and reflected adopted budget information for Fiscal Year 2014-15 which previously represented projections.

**SUMMARY**

The three-year Business and Marketing Plan essentially remains the same with the new vision statement and four key goals that were developed that focus on the Zoo campus, conservation, the community and human capital. This vision ties together actions and investments the Zoo must prioritize to stand out among American zoos in this century, as well as provide a zoo experience that evokes from visitors a sense of awe.

**Vision Statement (2028)**

*We will leverage the diverse resources of Los Angeles to be an innovator for the global zoo community, creating dynamic experiences to connect visitors and animals.*



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The following four goals were established, with the supporting strategies and tactics, within the context of the Zoo's mission and operations to realize this vision:

1. **Campus:** We will upgrade the campus with a focus on habitat, sustainability and the guest experience.
2. **Conservation:** We will create model conservation programs that encourage local action in Los Angeles for the global community as well as local action in global locations where we are active.
3. **Community:** We will create dynamic experiences to connect people with wildlife.
4. **Human Capital:** Create a work environment where the Los Angeles Zoo's vision is shared and employees, docents and volunteers understand their role in attaining the vision and achieving the strategic goals and objectives.

#### **Revenue, Budget Projections, Assumptions and Marketing Budget – Updated July 2014**

The Plan discusses the Zoo's operating budget by both reflecting on its history, and making projections for the future. Important to this discussion is the General Fund contribution to the Zoo which has varied greatly over the years, with the contribution decreasing by over 97 percent during the last eight years. In the 2013 Plan initially submitted, the budget projections assumed a 10 percent contribution from the General Fund for each of the next three years. In the July 2014 Plan, the Zoo has restated this assumption as follows: *“As a result, the budget projections represent the Zoo's goal of minimizing its reliance on the General Fund and makes no assumption regarding annual appropriations which are determined by the Mayor and Council annually as part of the City's budget process.”*

The 2013 Plan contained various assumptions and critical success factors including the statement that the Zoo must be exempt from the managed hiring process in order to maximize the ability to achieve the Plan's attendance and revenue projections. In the July 2014 Plan, the Zoo has restated this critical success factor as follows: *“the Zoo Department will seek support and approval of an annual hiring plan that facilitates filling positions within a fiscally responsible framework and through sound budget management.”*

The Marketing Plan includes a market analysis, utilizes market research, identifies primary and secondary target audiences and examines the “share of voice” and the Zoo's competitors which informed the development of the four key marketing goals below that are supported by strategies and tactics. The 2013 Plan included a lump sum marketing budget which represents the significant investment and commitment that GLAZA is making in support of the Zoo's marketing, public relations, site rentals and catered events programs. As requested, the July 2014 Plan provides details to the lump sum budget, as well as includes the cost of staffing to provide a complete financial understanding of these efforts.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor, approve the Los Angeles Zoo Strategic Business and Marketing Plan Fiscal Year 2014-15 through Fiscal Year 2016-17 updated July 2014.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Approval of this Plan provides a roadmap for strategically planning the Zoo's future which is expected to result in increased attendance and revenue which will minimize the Zoo's reliance on the General Fund.

Respectfully submitted,



John R. Lewis  
General Manager and Zoo Director  
Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens

Enclosure

cc: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer  
Gerry A. Miller, Chief Legislative Analyst  
Dov Lesel, Office of the City Attorney  
Board of Zoo Commissioners  
Ryan Carpio, Office of the Mayor