



# Oregon Zoo Strategic Master Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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The development of the Strategic Master Plan and identification of the zoo's strategic priorities would not have been possible without the support of the Oregon Zoo and The Oregon Zoo Foundation staffs — their passion for and dedication to the zoo is the primary reason for its success and for its role as a leader within the zoological community.

# Strategic Master Plan

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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# I. Inspiring Our Community to Create a Better Future for Wildlife

**T**ODAY, THE OREGON ZOO is a successful public/nonprofit partnership between Metro and The Oregon Zoo Foundation (OZF), serving the Portland region as the state's top paid attraction with more than 1.5 million visitors during the past fiscal year.

Metro engaged Schultz & Williams to develop a Strategic Master Plan to guide the future growth and development of the Oregon Zoo. The plan provides a comparative analysis and recommendations for operating in an entrepreneurial and innovative manner to better carry out its education, conservation and research mission.

There are opportunities, as identified within the recommendations and action steps, to further "strengthen the partnership" between Metro and the OZF, leveraging the resources of the respective partners while further solidifying the zoo's core mission.

The zoo's Strategic Master Plan was developed under the guidance of the Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee, which met monthly with the Schultz & Williams planning team to review and refine the findings and recommendations.

## Strategic Priority Areas

To ensure a bright future for the Oregon Zoo, the committee identified four key strategic priorities that lay the groundwork for the zoo's future growth and development:

### **A. Education, Conservation and Research Programs**

Strengthen the zoo's leadership role in wildlife conservation.

### **B. Facilities and Exhibits**

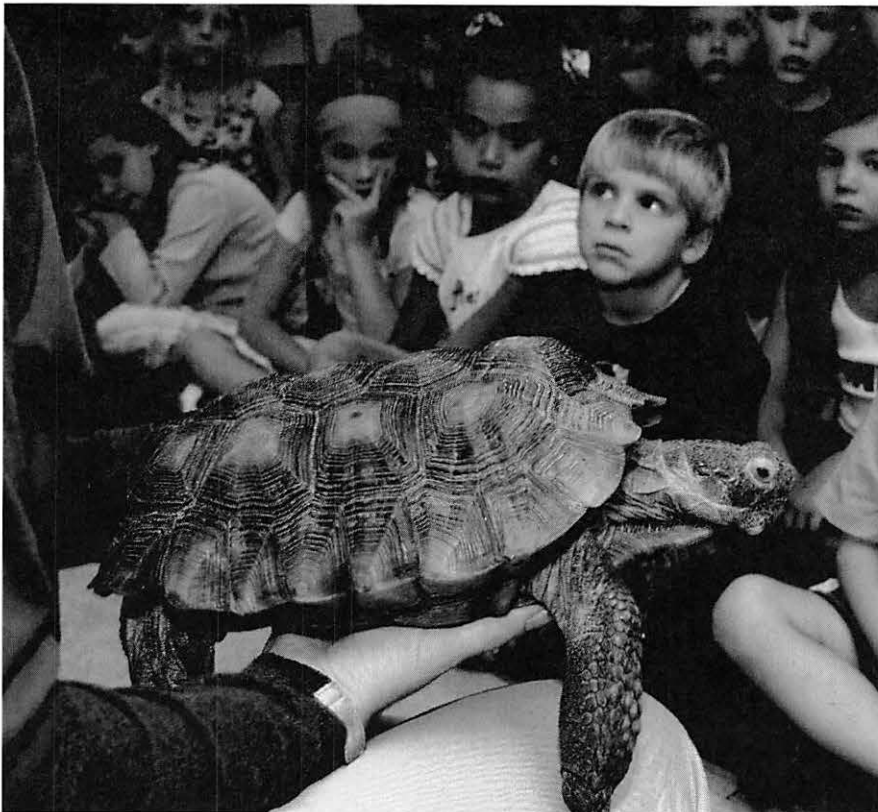
Priority projects include securing access to the zoo, improving vet/quarantine facilities, expanding the elephant exhibit, and establishing a new conservation and education campus.

### **C. Strategic Business Practices**

Develop business strategies that provide for the direct reinvestment of the zoo's operating surplus, support deferred maintenance projects and provide opportunities for expansion of operating revenues.

### **D. Management Structure and Financial Performance**

Create greater financial autonomy to ensure the zoo's long-term financial success, and continue to assess an expanded role for the OZF in the management of the zoo.



*THE OREGON ZOO PROVIDES FUN AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES for all ages. It is one of the leading conservation education organizations in the Pacific Northwest.*

## Core Directives

As the Oregon Zoo looks toward the future, it continues to be guided by the vision *Inspiring our community to create a better future for wildlife*. To that end, the Future Vision Committee has identified the following core directives:

- Provide fun, family-oriented educational experiences for people of all ages.
- In partnership with The Oregon Zoo Foundation, serve as one of the leading conservation education institutions in the Pacific Northwest.
- Serve as a resource that connects zoo guests to nature.
- Continue to be one of the best cultural attractions in the Pacific Northwest.
- Provide the highest standards of care and exhibitry for the zoo's animal collection.

## II. The State of the Oregon Zoo

### KEY FINDINGS

The planning team identified a number of key findings that have an impact on the zoo's Strategic Master Plan recommendations:

#### Access & Utilization

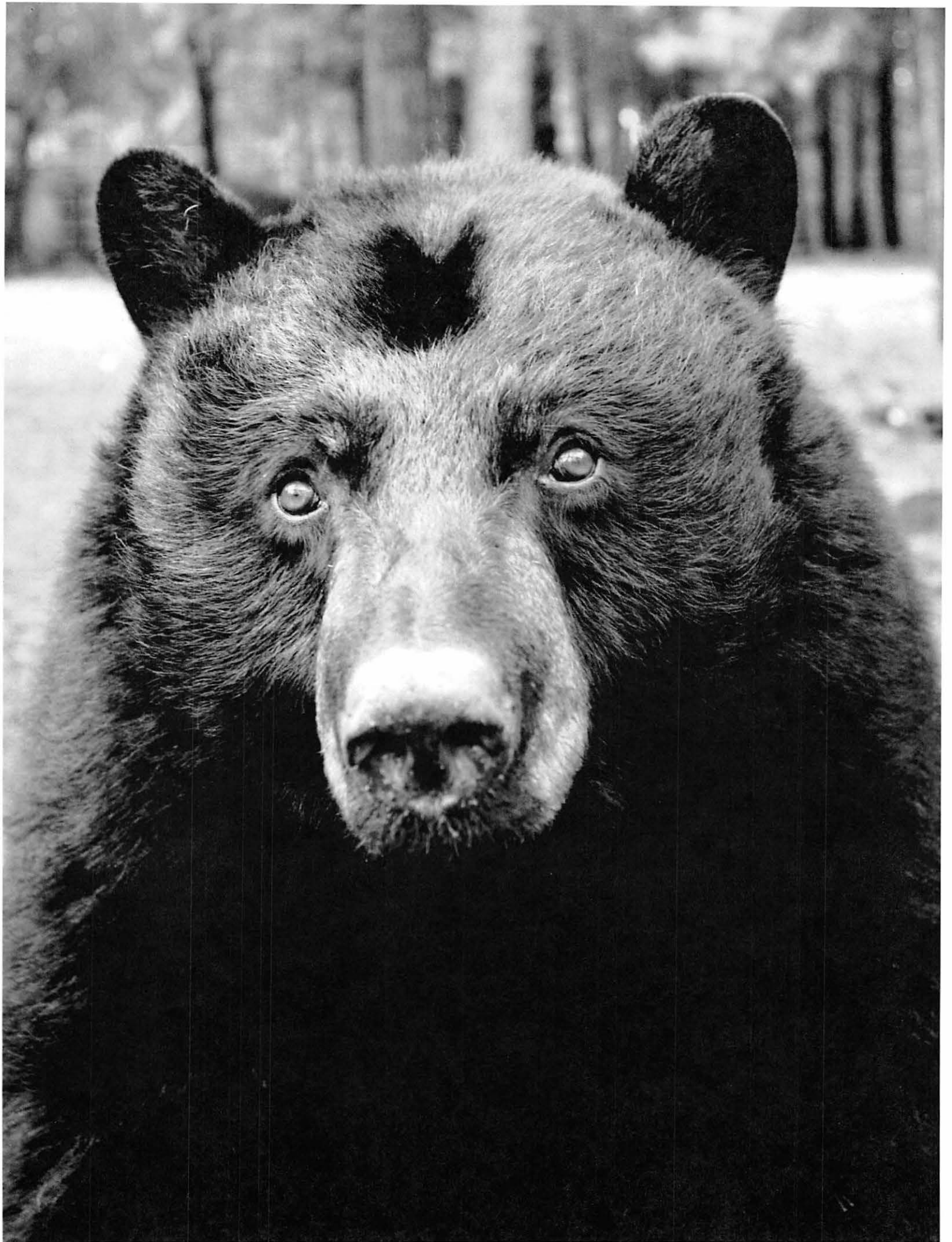
- VISITOR STAY-TIME has increased from two hours in 1997 to more than three hours.
- PARKING is not sufficient, with only 925 on-site parking spaces; the zoo used its remote parking facilities on 133 days in 2006.
- MAX LIGHT RAIL is underutilized as a primary transportation system to the zoo.
- MEMBER VISITS are increasing; support for the zoo is very high, with more than 41 percent of the zoo's total attendance coming from members.

#### Education Programs

- PROGRAM SUPPORT: Annually, more than 30,000 people participate in the zoo's education programs, generating more than \$900,000 in operating support.
- SUMMER CAMP: one of the largest summer camp programs among U.S. zoos, with more than 4,000 participants in 2007.

#### Financial

- ANNUAL ATTENDANCE at the Oregon Zoo continues gradual growth — exceeding 1.5 million visitors in fiscal year 2007.
- Over the past three years, OPERATING REVENUES have increased by 15 percent due to a combination of increased attendance, increased per capita spending, increased contributions from the OZF and increases in the property tax receipts.
- EXCISE TAX in the amount of \$1.08 million was collected in 2006 from revenues earned at the zoo.
- THE NET OPERATING MARGIN increased from \$350,000 in 2004 to \$2.1 million in 2006 — a 500 percent increase in total available net revenues, which represented a net 7.7 percent of total operating revenues.



## II. The State of the Oregon Zoo

### KEY BENCHMARKS

The planning team identified a number of trend benchmarks that helped assess the zoo's performance and position the zoo's future growth and development.

#### Zoo Attendance Penetration

*Determined by dividing the number of annual visitors into the population of the metropolitan statistical area*

- Oregon Zoo: 100% plus
- Woodland Park Zoo: 70% (Nonprofit)
- Point Defiance Zoo: 69% (Publicly owned)
- Louisville Zoo: 52% (Publicly owned)
- Cleveland Zoo: 45% (Publicly owned)

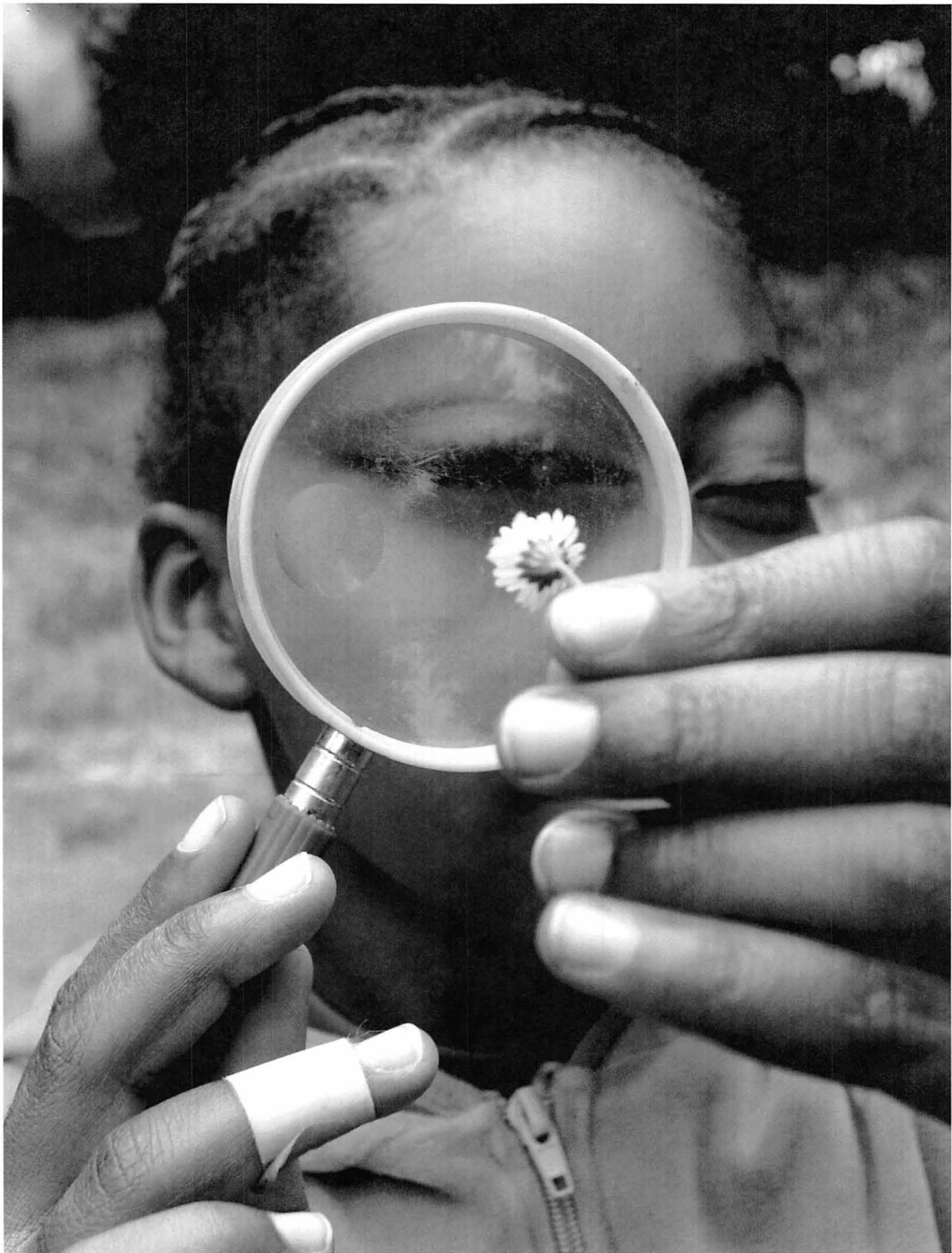
Last year, the Oregon Zoo attracted 1.5 million visitors in a market of 1.3 million. Fewer than 10 percent of AZA institutions exceed 100 percent penetration. Of these, St. Louis (free) and Indianapolis are the only facilities with similar attendance. The Oregon Zoo is the only Northwest zoo to achieve a 100 percent level.

The growth in the number of zoo/foundation members; the quality of visitor experiences and events (concerts, education programs and ZooLights, among others); and the high repeat visitation (more than two visits a year) by both members and nonmembers help position the zoo to maintain this benchmark through the years. For the past five years, the zoo has been able to sustain this benchmark with an annual attendance of at least 1.3 million visitors.

*IN FISCAL YEAR 2007, THE OREGON ZOO HAD 1.5 MILLION VISITORS in a market of 1.3 million people. Fewer than 10 percent of U.S. zoos can claim market penetration of 100 percent or more.*







## II. The State of the Oregon Zoo

### Cost per Visitor (2005 or 2006 data)

*Determined by dividing total operating costs by total annual visitors*

	<b>Cost per visitor</b>	<b>Admission fee</b>
• Oregon Zoo:	\$19.25	\$9.75
• Point Defiance Zoo:	\$15.61	\$10
• Louisville Zoo:	\$13.68	\$10.95
• Cleveland Zoo:	\$11.57	\$10
• Woodland Park Zoo:	\$23.60	\$14

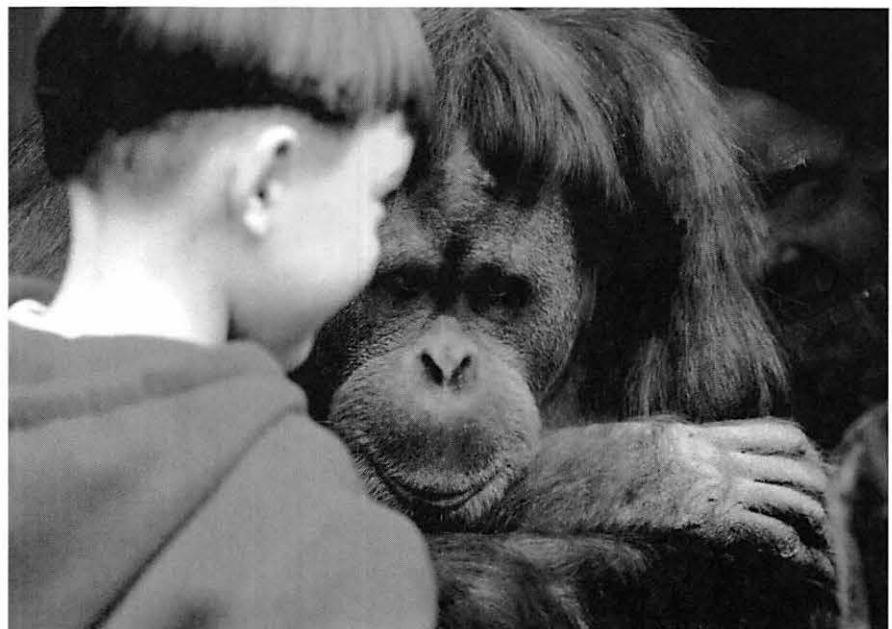
The Oregon Zoo's cost per visitor includes total direct operating expenses of the zoo and OZF, and an overhead chargeback allocation for Metro services. It does not include capital improvements or debt service allocations.

It should be noted that all of the above zoos have reported a "positive net change in assets" (operating surplus) during at least the past two years. This benchmark is used to reposition admission fees to reflect the quality of the experience offered.

The Oregon Zoo has one of the highest cost per visitor figures but one of the lowest admission fees among benchmark zoological institutions in the Northwest and institutions with similar governance and management structures.

Zoos have been realigning their admission-fee structures to balance against the increasing costs of operating their facilities. Most zoos report little negative "push-back" from the community following fee adjustments.

*THE OREGON ZOO'S COST PER VISITOR is high compared to other zoos, and its admission price is comparatively low.*



## Allocation of Resources and Utilization of Visitor Amenities

Revenue % of Total	OZ	Zoos	AAM*
Visitor & Program Services	57%	48%	25%
Grants & Donations	7%	18%	30%
Public/Property Revenue	34%	33%	35%
Investments & Other	2%	1%	10%
Utilization of Visitor Amenities	OZ	Zoos	AAM
Train	36%	32%	-
Simulator	6%	4%	-
Seasonal Exhibits	28%	22%	-

\*American Association of Museums

The zoo benchmarks identified above include zoos with annual operating budgets greater than \$5 million — about 36 institutions. We have noted the following:

- The Oregon Zoo's Visitor & Program revenues include excise tax revenues and the membership contribution from The Oregon Zoo Foundation.
- The lower percentage of Grants & Donations is in part the result of the OZF's restricted contributions, which are not recorded in the operating budget.
- The percentage of Oregon Zoo visitors riding the train and simulator and visiting seasonal exhibits (butterflies) exceeds industry benchmarks for zoos with similar amenities.
- The high ridership for the train is significant given the high rate of repeat visitation and the number of member visits. The historic element of the train and the quality of the experience appear to be the attractive characteristics of this ride.



*TRAIN RIDERSHIP at the Oregon Zoo exceeds industry benchmarks and contributes to high per capita revenue.*

## II. The State of the Oregon Zoo

### Personnel Services as a Percentage of Total Operating Expenses

- Oregon Zoo: 59%
- Zoo Industry Standard: 58%–62%

The Oregon Zoo's expenses for personnel services, while consistent with the industry standard for accredited zoos with annual operating budgets greater than \$5 million, reflect a relatively lean operation. West Coast zoos tend to have higher salaries and employee benefits. All of the Oregon Zoo's senior management staff members are paid below the average for staff in comparable positions at zoos where the annual operating budget exceeds \$10 million (yet the Oregon Zoo is not experiencing difficulties in hiring or retention).

The zoo director's current annual salary is \$70,000 below the average for AZA institutions with 800,000 visitors or more (37 of the 122 reporting institutions) and \$140,000 below the average for AZA institutions with an annual operating budget of \$24 million or more (12 of the 122 reporting institutions, including the Oregon Zoo).

The Zoo Benchmark Survey showed that line staff salaries are in accord with other comparable institutions.

### Marketing Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Operating Expenses

- Oregon Zoo: 2%
- Zoo Industry Standard: 5%–7%

The Oregon Zoo budgeted \$446,000 for marketing in 2006–07, about 2 percent of its total budget, compared with an industry average of 5 percent to 7 percent. (Neither figure includes staff resources or salaries.) Current staff, interns and volunteers are performing well, but additional marketing and advertising resources are needed to strengthen public awareness of the zoo, enhance its conservation image and ensure its continued success.

*THE ZOO'S MARKETING BUDGET, as a percentage of total budget, is only about one-third that of comparable zoos. Increased advertising would lead to increased attendance, thus generating more funding for mission-related programs.*



## III. Challenges

**A**LTHOUGH THE OREGON ZOO is currently a very successful financial model, a number of the key issues and trends need to be addressed to ensure operational and financial success in the future:

### Access Limitations

Increase on-site parking and secure the long-term use of the off-site lot, as well as promote light-rail use.

### Operating Costs/Revenues

The admission price needs to be more in line with the cost per visitor. Over time, cost per visitor will outstrip the zoo's ability to generate additional operating revenues needed to meet higher operating standards and cost escalation.

### Increased Demand and Opportunity for Conservation Programs

Increase program support and create new facilities and programs to support the demand and achieve the zoo's mission.

### Reinvestment of Operating Surpluses

Continue to ensure a high-quality visitor experience through timely reinvestment in the zoo. In addition...

- Chargebacks and excise fees: Limit and/or make predictable.
- Capital funding: Develop a funding plan, in concert with the OZF, for both public and private sources to address needed deferred maintenance and major capital improvements.

### Marketing

Focus increased resources on marketing, special events and sponsorships.

**Goal:** *Expand our leadership role in conservation/education to inspire people to take action to preserve wildlife/nature.*



**T**HE PLANNING TEAM and Vision Committee had numerous discussions involving both the conservation (research and captive breeding) and public education programs sponsored and operated by the zoo. While these programs are commendable in their current scope — with more than 30,000 participants in the zoo’s education programs annually and many innovative research/captive breeding projects — the Oregon Zoo of the future will focus much more intently in these areas.

Many of the country’s leading zoological institutions have “planted the flag,” making education, conservation and research their core mission. The Oregon Zoo can strengthen its role in providing wildlife conservation programming while establishing new standards for redefining and rebranding its conservation roles. To be known as the premier conservation institution of the region, additional resources and facilities are required. Key issues to be addressed include the following:

- **FACILITIES:** An education/conservation “campus” is proposed to signal the importance of this function (though conservation education opportunities should also remain a focus throughout zoo grounds). The proposed new campus would replace two temporary classrooms and allow prominent access and exposure to an expanded audience of groups and casual visitors. It would also provide a learning facility for much greater outreach to area schools and cooperation with other local and regional conservation groups.
- **FUNDING:** While current programs generate revenues equal to about half of the operating budget for education and conservation programs, funding will need to increase to meet new expectations as well as meet the needs of the lower-income school population. This report suggests that the OZF be utilized more effectively in generating funding as well as in assuming management responsibility for the programs. Donors may be more willing to give to the nonprofit OZF.
- **METRO BOND MEASURE:** A bond measure for environmental education that is currently being discussed would benefit the zoo significantly. Bond funding could jump-start the zoo’s outreach efforts and provide a stable base on which to expand as new facilities are added.

## IV. Conservation Programs and Education

### 2006-07 Zoo Conservation Program Attendance

- Assembly shows: 265,638
- Day camps: 6,057
- Classes: 1,862
- Conservation Lecture Series: 826
- Behind the scenes tours: 1,423
- Overnights: 4,787
- Head Start Zoomobiles: 3,791
- Senior Zoomobiles: 2,570
- ZAP shows: 13,250

### Oregon Zoo’s NW Species Conservation Projects

- Oregon silverspot butterflies
- Taylor’s checkerspot
- Mardon skipper
- Columbia basin pygmy rabbit
- California condor
- Western pond turtle



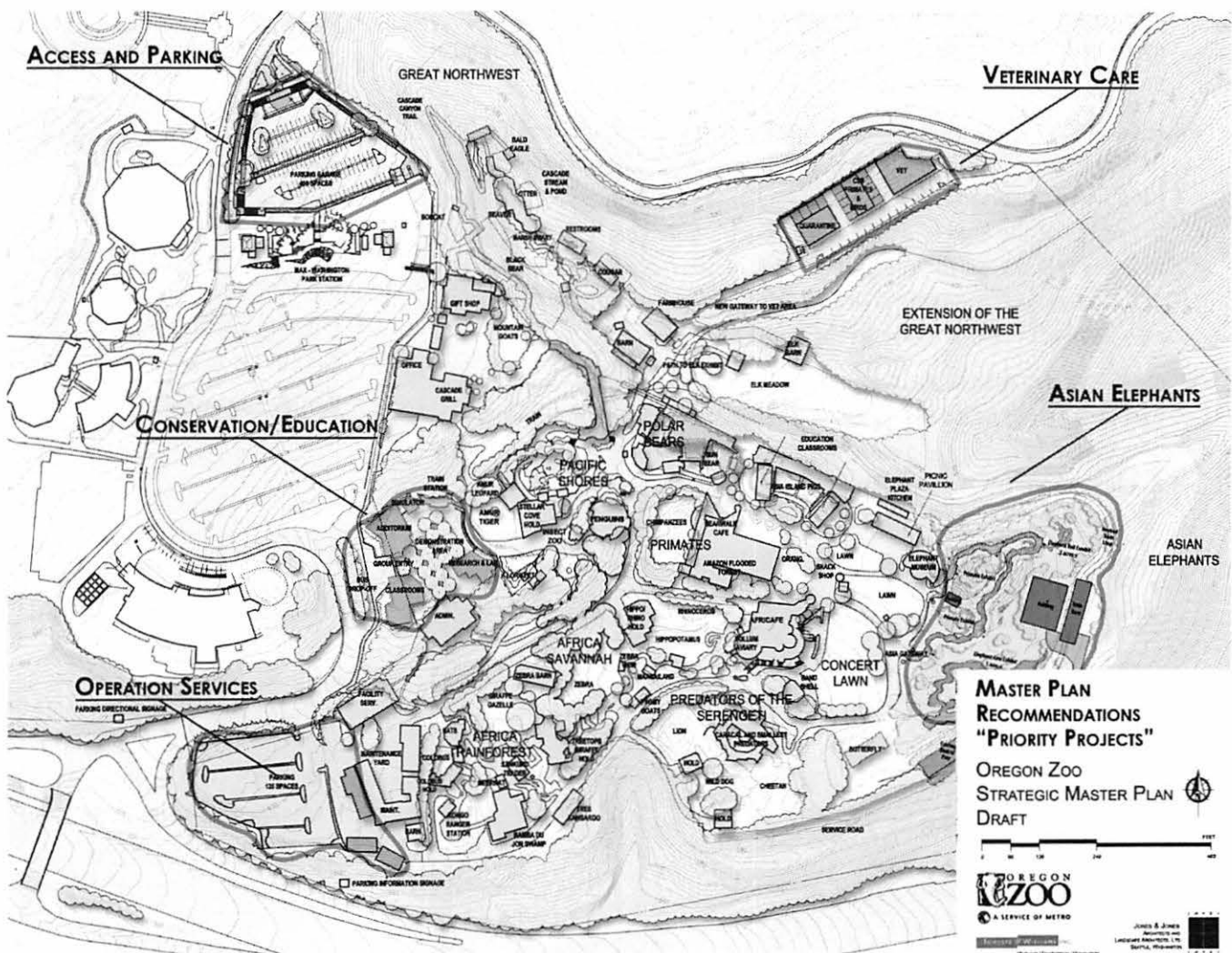
*CAMPS AND CLASSES are currently housed in less-than-ideal temporary modular classrooms, the basement of the concert amphitheater and canopied outdoor shelters. A new conservation complex with permanent classrooms and camp spaces is proposed.*

## V. Facilities and Exhibits

FOUR PHYSICAL ELEMENTS have been identified as the primary capital needs:

1. Access and Parking Improvements
2. Animal Care and Maintenance Buildings
3. Elephant Care and Exhibit
4. Conservation and Education Campus

The planning team has identified early action steps, concept options and prioritization for each of the priority capital needs and a long-term operating plan to minimize future operating expenditures. Total projected capital investment for the priority projects is estimated at \$90 million. These recommendations are made with the clear understanding that the Oregon Zoo will continue to be and promote itself as a green zoo with sustainable design.







## V. Facilities and Exhibits

### Access

#### SHORT-TERM ACTION STEPS:

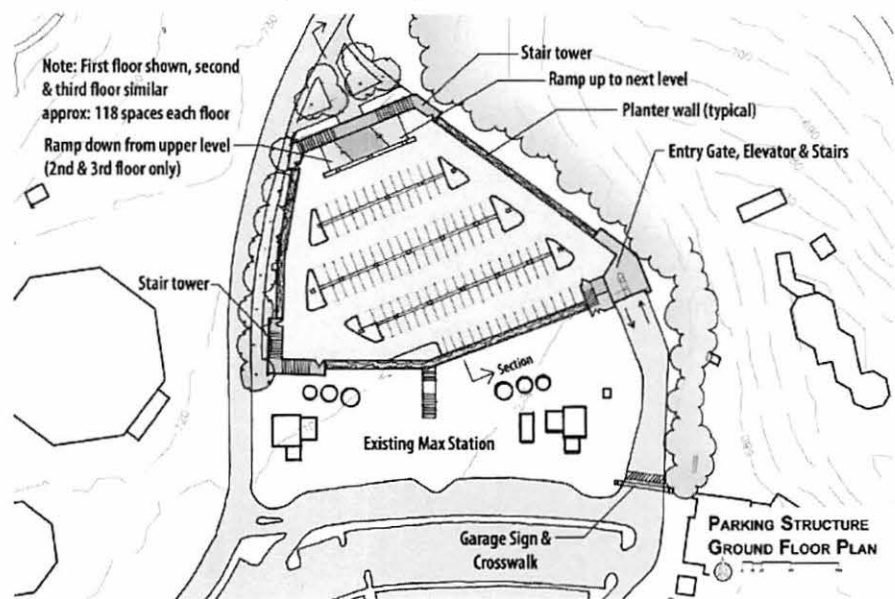
- Obtain a LONG-TERM LEASE FOR OVERFLOW PARKING at the Sylvan interchange.
- IMPROVE SIGNAGE, including the use of digital information at key Washington Park access points, to alleviate the frustration and confusion visitors experience on busy days.
- PROVIDE REAL-TIME TRAFFIC AND PARKING INFORMATION on the zoo's Web site.
- In cooperation with TriMet, TEST WEEKEND DISCOUNTS, FREE RIDES TO MEMBERS AND OTHER INCENTIVES during peak periods, to triple light-rail use by zoo visitors.

#### LONG-TERM ACTION STEPS:

- Explore options for a NEW PARKING DECK.
- Commence planning and design to CONVERT THE CURRENT MAINTENANCE LOT INTO ON-SITE PARKING, especially for access to the proposed conservation campus at the old zoo entrance.

*FOR YEARS, PARKING HAS BEEN A LIMITING FACTOR on Oregon Zoo attendance and the zoo's future. On busy days, visitors with strollers and small children in tow must take a shuttle from a remote lot. Light-rail use needs to be encouraged, but more parking spaces are needed as well.*

#### Recommended Concepts: Parking Deck



**Goal:** Secure and maximize access to the zoo; triple non-automotive travel to the zoo.



**Goal:** Provide quality support facilities that enhance the zoo's animal management programs (funded plan in place by 2010 accreditation).



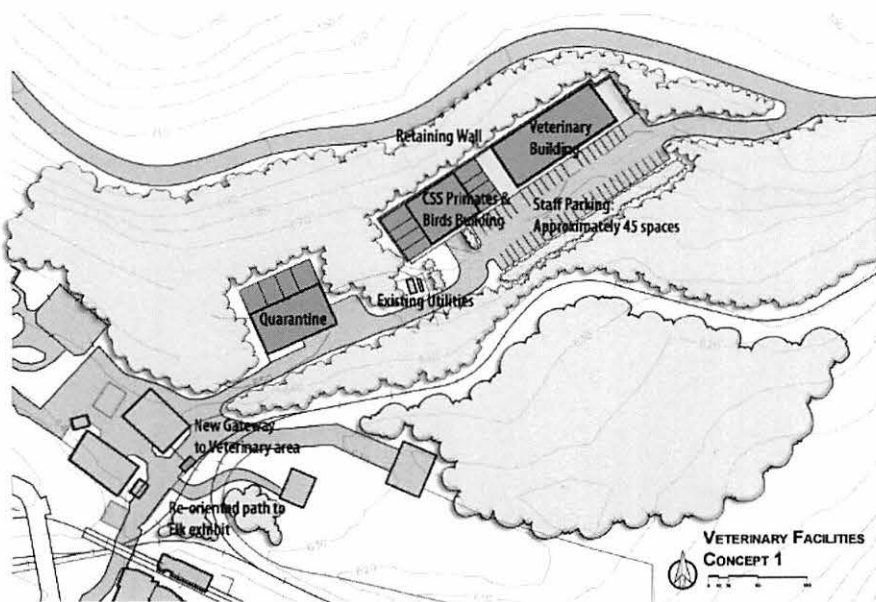
## Animal Care and Maintenance Facilities

## V. Facilities and Exhibits

### SHORT-TERM ACTION STEPS:

- Commence planning and design on new VET/QUARANTINE BUILDINGS in 2008, with major progress made before the 2010 accreditation inspection. Because of present limitations and concerns raised by the last AZA accreditation report, this should be a high priority.
- Initiate planning and design on a new maintenance facility in 2008. This should also be a high priority because of the current facility's condition and the potential to use the space for parking.

### Recommended Concept: Veterinary Hospital Complex



*A REPLACEMENT FOR THE ZOO'S VET HOSPITAL and quarantine facilities is a high priority.*

**SHORT-TERM ACTION STEPS:**

- Commence design development planning for a 1.5-ACRE IMPROVEMENT at the existing elephant exhibit, with a RELOCATED TRAIN LOOP. This concept would allow construction of a new building while maintaining the elephants on-site in their current holding with use of the front exhibit yard. A relocated train loop would move the train tracks and barn to the east, increasing the length of the existing train line. This new visitor experience would circulate visitors through a FORESTED LOOP TREK OF SMALL PRIMATE EXHIBITS with views of the elephants along a riverbank.

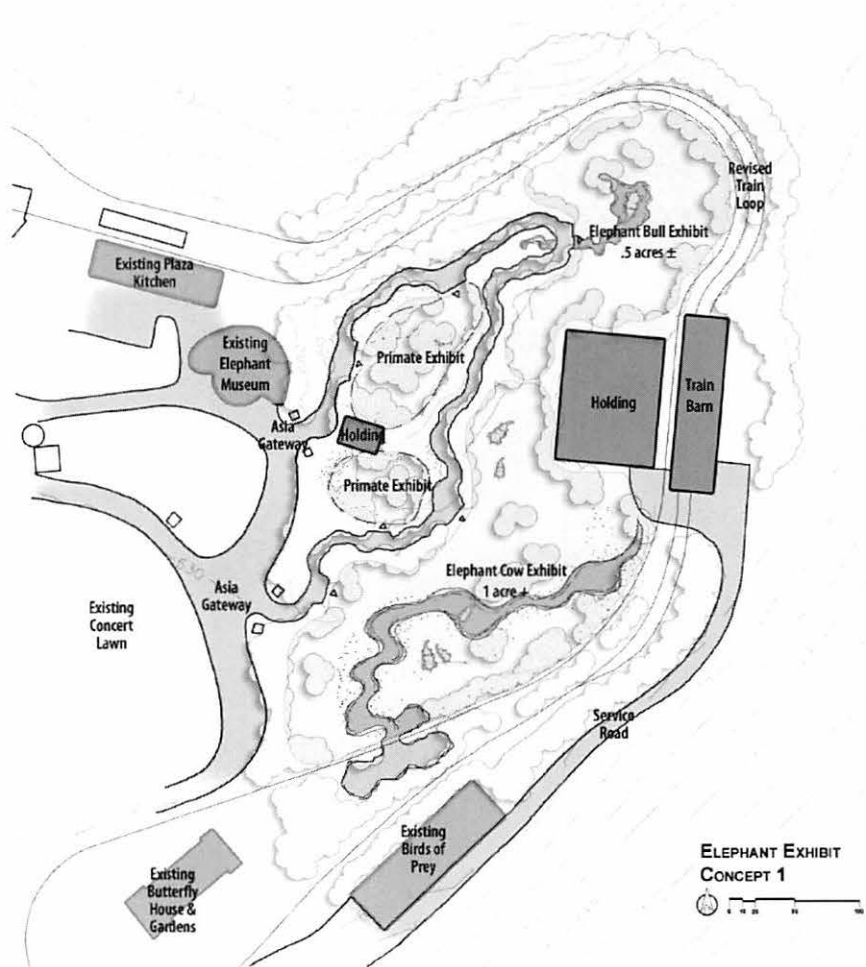
The proposed elephant improvement provides adequate space as well as structures to facilitate breeding. The outdoor yard would have areas for swimming, mud wallowing and grazing.

**LONG-TERM ACTION STEP:**

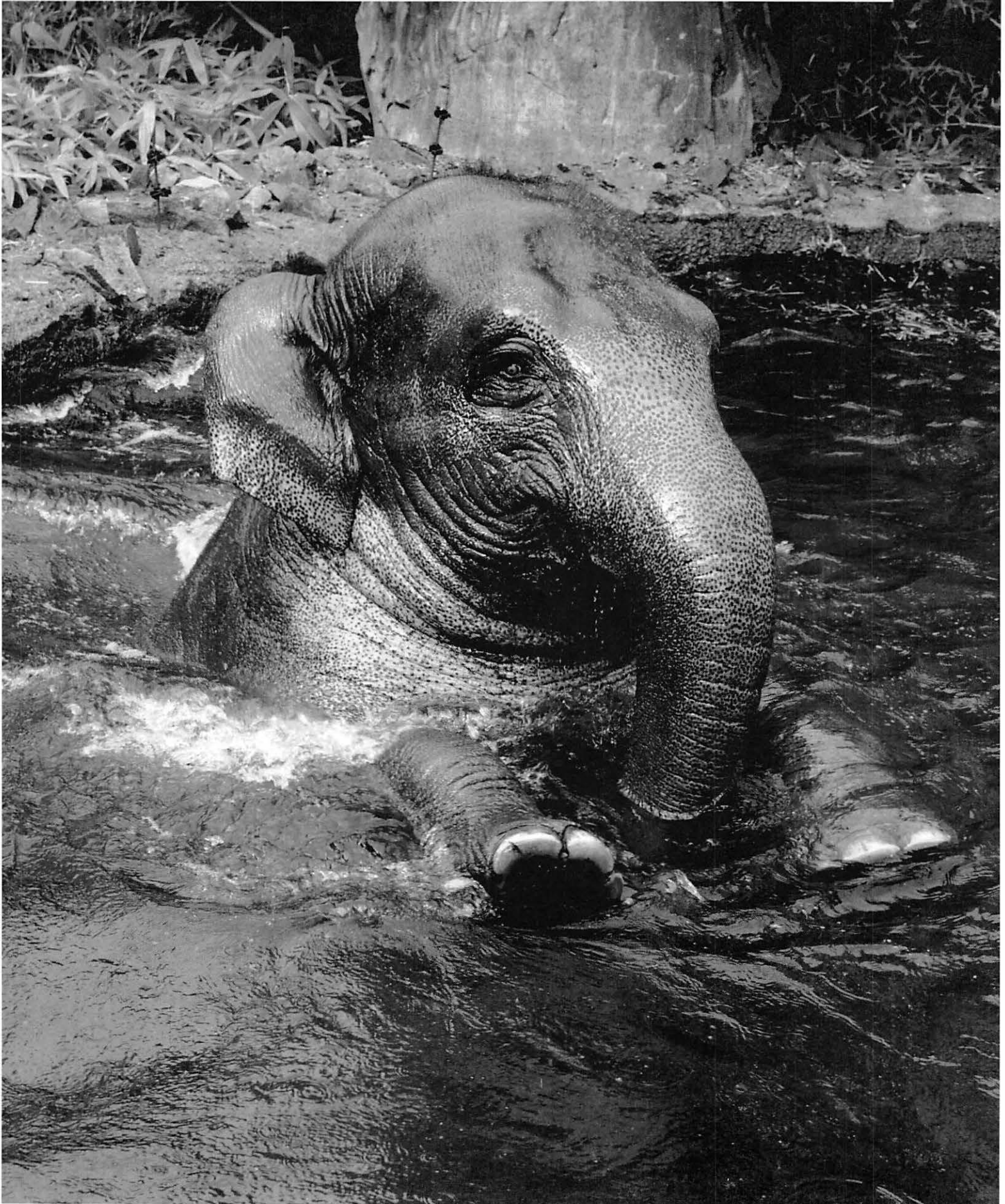
- Continue to evaluate and explore possibilities for an off-site elephant facility.

**Recommended Concept: 1.5-Acre Improvement**

*A NEW 1.5-ACRE ELEPHANT EXHIBIT would double the amount of outdoor space available to the elephants. It would have separate interaction areas for swimming, mud wallowing and grazing.*



**Goal:** Continue the zoo's leadership role in elephant management and conservation.



**Education and Conservation**

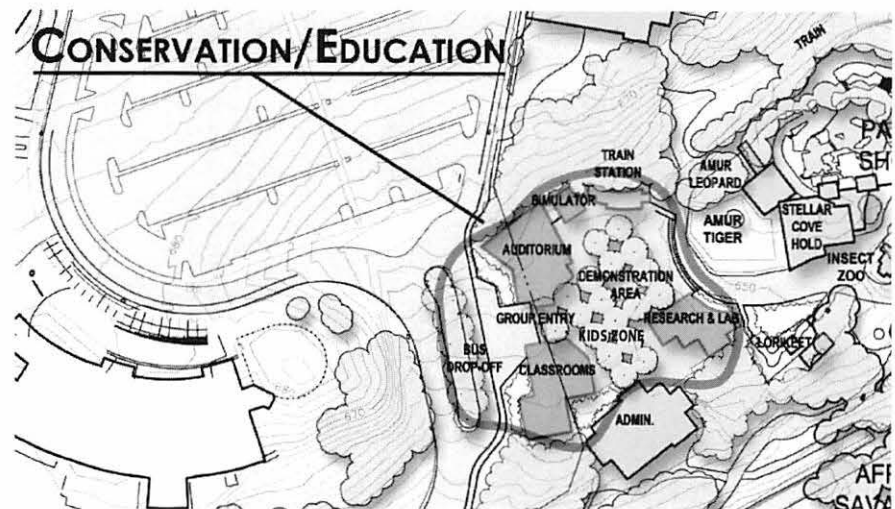
**SHORT-TERM ACTION STEPS:**

- Undertake development of a NEW EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION CAMPUS, including an improved, interactive Insect Zoo. This should offer the OZF opportunities for creative grants and private fund-raising for both capital and program needs.

Planning should emphasize high-quality visitor experiences, such as play activities with an environmental education component, along with the ALL-WEATHER CAPABILITY to attract and serve a much broader audience. It should also offer the capacity for GREATER COLLABORATION with other conservation organizations for both on-site and outreach programs.

**Recommended Concept: Conservation Education Campus**

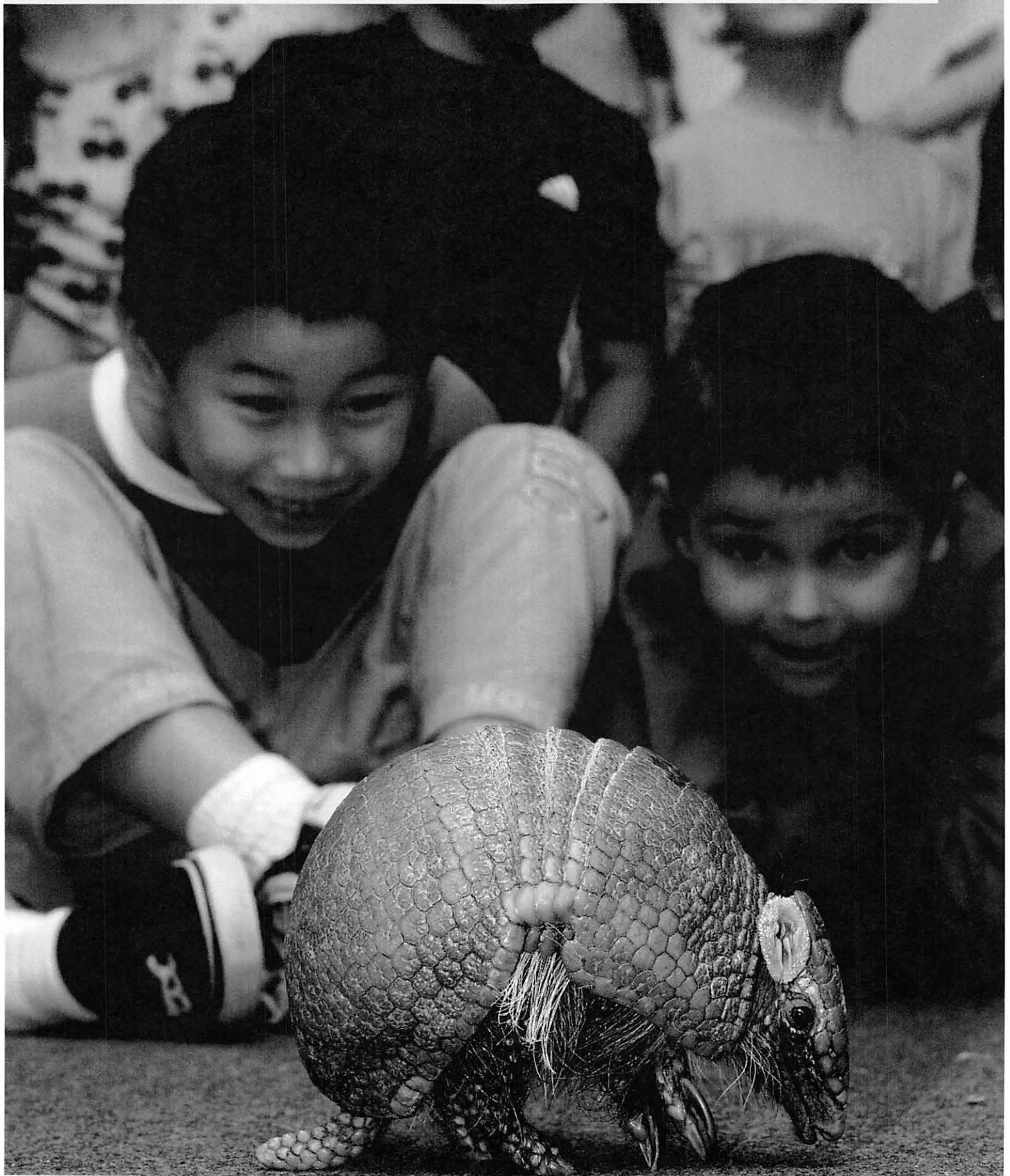
*CURRENTLY, IMPORTANT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS have been shoehorned into keeper areas. Staff and volunteers in our very successful butterfly conservation program work in a concrete former storage space above the polar bear exhibit.*



The recommended campus would have classrooms, OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACES AND A MULTI-USE FACILITY that would anchor the zoo’s conservation education and research programs. The campus would be located at the former zoo entry and would have a SECONDARY ENTRANCE FOR SCHOOL GROUPS, education lectures and other specialty visits. Placement of the research areas and lab — which would house activities for kids, offices for the education department, opportunities for viewing professional animal research activities, and an improved insect zoo — allows easy access by guests from within the zoo. This concept also creates a LARGE OUTDOOR AREA ACCESSIBLE from all the perimeter buildings as well as from within the zoo. A “KIDS ZONE” — a “learning through discovery and play environment” — would be located between the Research & Lab facility and classrooms in an area adjacent to the lorikeet aviary.



**Goal:** Create a campus learning environment that establishes the Oregon Zoo as "the leader" in education and conservation.



## VI. Management Structure and Performance

**A**LTHOUGH THE PARTNERSHIP between the Oregon Zoo and the OZF continues to be successful, there are opportunities to “strengthen the partnership,” leveraging the unique characteristics of the respective partners to further solidify the zoo’s core mission.

Strategic opportunities through management restructuring include:

- **METRO:** Operational responsibilities and risks can be transferred to OZF while freeing up revenues to support other zoo needs.
- **OZF:** Expanded program initiatives could increase private and individual support by increasing the awareness and image of the OZF as the zoo’s funding partner while providing internal resources and time for the foundation to strengthen its financial and organizational viability.

With the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the Oregon Zoo, there are a number of potential management options to consider:

- **CONTINUATION OF CURRENT MANAGEMENT:** No change to the existing roles and responsibilities of the partners or in how the zoo manages or operates.
- **GREATER FINANCIAL AUTONOMY:** No change to the existing roles and responsibilities of the partners, but significant enhancements in the zoo’s business practices — specifically in the reinvestment of operating surpluses, containment of Metro cost allocations, use of excise revenues earned at the zoo, and director’s program allocations and performance incentives.
- **EXPANDED ROLE FOR OZF:** Expand OZF’s role to include management of the zoo’s conservation education programs. OZF’s role could expand further pending its assumption of and success in managing the zoo’s programs and related activities.
- **NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT (PRIVATELY MANAGED BUT PUBLICLY OWNED PARTNERSHIP UNDER A LONG-TERM CONTRACT):** Although this option represents a trend within the zoo and aquarium industry, a significant change in the Oregon Zoo’s current management structure is not warranted at this time.

*THE ZOO’S CONSERVATION PROGRAMS are very popular with funders — both private individuals and granting agencies.*



**Goal:** *Ensure financial stability, so the zoo can fulfill its mission.*



## VI. Management Structure and Performance

### **Sustainable Operations: Setting an Example**

As this plan is implemented, the zoo will continue to innovate and set an example with green business practices.

A few of the zoo's past and current initiatives:

- Demonstration gardens for backyard habitats and green gardening
- Strict green-bid specifications for construction contractors
- Parking lot native plant bioswales
- An innovative employee commuting program
- Discount for visitors who arrive by MAX or bicycle
- Composting 100% of herbivore manure for use in zoo gardens
- 100% compostable group picnics — including flatware and food wastes
- Sustainably harvested seafood served to people and animals

## RECOMMENDED OPTION

After extensive discussion with the Vision Committee on the merits of each option, we recommend a two-step approach to the management/governance issue that encompasses (1) greater financial autonomy and (2) an expanded role for OZF.

### **Greater Financial Autonomy**

- Gain Metro approval for providing the zoo with more ownership and rewards in net revenue it generates. This would provide the incentive to run an efficient and profitable operation where revenue can be used (on a timely basis) to address staff-identified needs or expanded programs. With greater management flexibility and entrepreneurship would come greater incentives to operate effectively. Marketing, advertising and promotions could be increased if resources were available. The limiting of central service allocations and the possible use of current Metro excise fees by the zoo could provide funds for deferred maintenance and major repairs that otherwise would require special budget allocations or not be addressed. The zoo currently is not "broken" or in need of any drastic actions. This short-term step is more of a fine-tuning to make the zoo even more effective in its operations.

### **Expanded Role for OZF**

- Metro and the OZF should begin to evaluate how best to capitalize on OZF's nonprofit status in order to move the zoo to an even more entrepreneurial and efficient level. The trend in many major zoos is to encourage the nonprofit to assume much of the revenue-generating responsibilities, and in many cases actually take over management of the zoo. While such a move is not being recommended at this time, it is appropriate to look at how increasing OZF's role in and responsibility for zoo operations could be beneficial to all parties. Of particular interest would be the education and conservation programs, especially as they expand, and potentially the guest services function. Each has great public presence and is to a large degree revenue-based or a major generator of revenue.

Over the next year, the zoo should conduct a formal study on how best the OZF can partner with the zoo in managing and operating the conservation education programs and related resources. The study should identify the pro forma financial impacts on both Metro and the OZF for expanding the OZF's operating role in the areas of conservation/education and potentially guest services.

## VII. Strategic Business Practices

**T**HROUGH THE PLANNING TEAM'S REVIEW and assessment of the zoo's operations, and after numerous discussions with the Vision Committee, the following **STRATEGIC BUSINESS RECOMMENDATIONS** were made:

- INCREASE PARKING FEES from \$1 to \$3 per car to fund increased costs of off-site parking lots and shuttles and increased marketing expenditures with TriMet for "Max the MAX" transit ride programs.
- Implement a SEASONAL ADMISSION FEE PROGRAM:
  - a. Charge higher general admission fees from Memorial Day through Labor Day with increased marketing visibility of visitor programs and experiences — full-price adult and child categories would increase by a minimum of \$2.25 and a maximum of \$3.75, with no change to group pricing.
  - b. Increase the "value" of membership fees with a seasonal pricing strategy and allow OZF to increase current membership fee categories by an average of \$10. On-site membership fees would be full-price after November 2008 (at new higher fees) with discounts offered for Web-based sales/renewals and mail renewals.
- RE-BID RETAIL SERVICES in 2008 to provide increased commissions payable to the zoo.
- Work with Metro Council to establish a policy that allows REINVESTMENT OF EXCISE REVENUES collected at the zoo back into the zoo as a direct line-item allocation to fund deferred maintenance expenditures, commencing in 2009.
- Limit and/or MAKE PREDICTABLE METRO'S CENTRAL SERVICE ALLOCATIONS. One option discussed was capping allocations at 3 percent annual growth beyond 2008.
- INVEST IN SENIOR MANAGEMENT SALARIES. Key management positions are currently below benchmarks for similar-sized zoos. In particular, the zoo director's salary is at least 35 percent below the industry average for zoos of similar size and management structure. Increases could be phased in over a two- to three-year time period.

**Note:** As outlined in the Management Structure and Performance recommendations, two other key strategic business recommendations include: (1) identifying options and opportunities to allow for the timely reinvestment of the zoo's operating surpluses back into zoo programs and needs; and (2) assessing the expansion of the operating role of the OZF, specifically in conservation/education and, potentially, guest services.



*THE ZOO'S WILD LIFE LIVE SHOW and other programs are only available during the summer. Seasonal higher admission fees could reflect such enhanced visitor experiences.*

## VIII. From Vision to Reality: Implementing the Plan

THE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS outlined in this Executive Summary lay the groundwork for the Oregon Zoo's future growth and development. As noted throughout our work, the Oregon Zoo is a successful public/nonprofit partnership between Metro and The Oregon Zoo Foundation that served more than 1.5 million visitors in fiscal year 2007. Opportunities to strengthen the partnership between Metro and the OZF will further enhance the implementation of the zoo's Strategic Master Plan.

We have summarized the key action steps as follows:

- Work with Metro Council to IDENTIFY THE APPROPRIATE BOND MEASURE or operating levy to fund a projected \$90 million in new capital investments. Work with OZF to identify private donors to support the bond measure, including pre-election expenses.
- CONDUCT A FORMAL EVALUATION of potential benefits to be gained by The Oregon Zoo Foundation managing and operating conservation education programs and potentially guest services functions.
- CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH REGIONAL FUNDING AGENCIES to achieve the zoo's conservation education mission and its conservation education campus concept through the implementation of nature-based science education programs.
- Work with Metro Council to PROVIDE ZOO STAFF WITH GREATER MANAGEMENT FLEXIBILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP. Specifically:
  - a. Promote the timely reinvestment of any operating surpluses back into the zoo.
  - b. Investigate strategies to limit and/or make predictable the cost of central service allocations.
  - c. Reinvest excise revenues generated at the zoo to support deferred maintenance and major repair expenditures.
  - d. Implement seasonal admission pricing and parking fees.
  - e. Invest more in the zoo's senior management positions.
  - f. Develop and implement new visitor experiences and animal exhibits.

*CITIZENS OF THE METRO REGION can continue to be proud of their zoo, with its high attendance, excellent programs and efficient operations.*

