MASTER PLAN
Adopted by the Park Board December 15, 2011
Contents

Executive Summary ................................................. 1
Springfield ................................................................. 2
History of the HRZ ..................................................... 6
Tour of the Zoo ........................................................ 7
Comparisons .......................................................... 15
Process ................................................................. 17
Constructing Project Purpose ................................... 19
Henson Robinson Zoo Strategic Plan ...................... 20
Data Collection and Design .................................... 27
Data Collection and Report Out ............................. 28
Data Analysis .......................................................... 32
The Future of HRZ
   Facilities Plan .................................................. 38
   Marketing and Branding Plan ............................... 49
   Educational Program Plan ................................... 55
   Economic Development Plan ............................... 59
   Budget ............................................................ 64
   Implementation ............................................... 66
Conclusion Analysis ................................................ 67
References ............................................................. 68

Professional Services rendered toward the development of the Master Plan

Facilitators
Dalitso S. Sulamoyo, Ph.D
President
DSS Organizational Consulting

Tiffany Yates, Ph.D
President
Dacite, LLC

Architectural Designs and Services
Bruce Ferry
Ferry and Associates Architects

Graphic Design and Content Layout
Sara Ratcliffe

Zoo Photographic Credits
Robert Pinkston
Jackie Peeler
Shelley Lutes
Kim Alexander
Executive Summary

The Henson Robinson Zoo began as just a dream of a prominent Springfield citizen by the name of Henson C. Robinson. In 1967, a tract of land was donated to the Springfield Park District by the city of Springfield to fulfill his dream. Construction of the zoo began in 1968 and on August 29, 1970, the Henson Robinson Zoo was officially opened. Over the years, the zoo has grown and expanded with the addition of several new animals as well as exhibits.

The zoo is now home to more than 300 animals native to Australia, Africa, Asia and North and South America. Over 90 species of native and exotic animals are housed here among naturalistic exhibits. The zoo participates in scientific research studies and conservation efforts in addition to providing a fun and educational environment for people of all ages.

Henson Robinson Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA is America’s leading accrediting organization for zoos and aquariums and accredits only those institutions that have achieved rigorous, professional standards for animal care, education, wildlife conservation and science. As a member of AZA, Henson Robinson Zoo joins more than 200 other accredited zoos and aquariums in building North America’s largest wildlife conservation movement.

The Springfield Park Board approved and gave direction for a master plan to be developed for the Henson Robinson Zoo in October 2010. Subsequent to that decision, facilitators were engaged by the Park Board in February 2011 to guide a process that would lead to the development of a master plan that would contain reasonable goals and expectations. Why is master planning particularly important for the Henson Robinson Zoo or the Springfield Park District? The purposes and audiences of the Henson Robinson Zoo are very diverse. With the recent downturn of the economy, funding and public support are changing and unpredictable. The Zoo has to ensure that there is public support and adequate resources in order for it to meet its long term goals. This is why it is critical for the Zoo and the Springfield Park District to map out a plan which takes into account available and future resources that will ensure future success.

The proposed Master Plan will create a vision that should be supported by policies, guidelines, and priorities of the Springfield community. The Master Plan will guide the development and evolution of the zoo. The Master Planning Task Force charged with the development of the Master Plan brought diverse representation from the Park Board, Park District Administrative Staff, Zoo Administrative Staff, Zookeepers, Zoological Members and Community Members. The Zoo elected to engage the services of facilitators to guide the Task Force through the process of developing the Master Plan. The facilitators brought their experiences in designing, planning, and facilitating a process that resulted in the development of a Master Plan.

It is critical to have a Master Plan in place because it will support the coordinated growth of the zoo and avoid “ad-hoc” development of the zoo. The Master Plan should guide future decisions about the design and development of the zoo.

The Henson Robinson Zoo underwent the development of a Master Plan to cover future development, growth and change. The last Master Plan was developed in 1987. A Zoo Master Planning Task Force was constituted to work with facilitators in developing a new Master Plan. The Task Force had representatives of the Park Board, Park Administrative Staff, Zoo Administrative Staff, Zoo Keepers, Zoological Members and Community Members. These volunteers met regularly over a 9 month period to develop this plan. This proposed plan assesses the needs of the zoo and the manner in which the zoo serves the needs of the Springfield community.
Springfield

It is important to understand the background of the city of Springfield in order to assess the community’s capacity to support the growth and sustainability of the Henson Robinson Zoo. Springfield is a community of about 116,000 people nestled in the heart of Illinois. The city serves as the capital of Illinois and the county seat for Sangamon County.

History

Springfield is a city that is rich in history. The most notable historical figure associated with the city is Abraham Lincoln. The city is the location of Lincoln’s home, law office, tomb, several other Lincoln artifacts and the Lincoln Museum and library. The city also has the Old State Capitol where Lincoln delivered his “A house divided against itself cannot stand” speech during a debate against Stephen Douglas while running for the U.S. Senate. Scholars and Lincoln enthusiasts come from all over the world to study Lincoln in Springfield.

Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city of Springfield has a population of about 116,000. The racial composition of that population is as follows:

- White – 75.8%
- Black or African American – 18.5%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native – 0.2%
- Asian – 2.2%
- Other – 0.7%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>7,547</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9 years</td>
<td>7,569</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 years</td>
<td>7,065</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19 years</td>
<td>7,437</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td>8,044</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 29 years</td>
<td>8,614</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 34 years</td>
<td>7,619</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 39 years</td>
<td>6,779</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 44 years</td>
<td>7,077</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 49 years</td>
<td>8,264</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 54 years</td>
<td>8,495</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59 years</td>
<td>8,233</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64 years</td>
<td>6,919</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 69 years</td>
<td>4,728</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 74 years</td>
<td>3,560</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 79 years</td>
<td>3,030</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 84 years</td>
<td>2,624</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 years and over</td>
<td>2,646</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census
Culture

Due to the various historical connections to Lincoln and other Springfield attractions, the city is a destination for many tourists from all over the country and the world. The city hosts the Illinois State Fair and several other festivals throughout the year. There are several organizations that have been established to support tourism in Springfield namely the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, Downtown Springfield Inc. and special events groups. Springfield offers many parks and facilities for recreational purposes though the Springfield Park District. The Springfield Park District offers a variety of educational and recreational programs, classes and events for people ranging in age from 6 months to seniors. The Park District partners with several local organizations and clubs to provide athletic programming such as youth baseball/softball, men’s soccer, disk golf leagues, cricket, youth football, bicycling clubs and related clubs/groups. Additionally, the Springfield Park District also maintains intergovernmental/cooperative agreement with the City and County Police Departments, School District and local colleges.

In 2011 the Henson Robinson Zoo was ranked 8th out of 19 local tourist attractions by the Springfield Business Journal.

1. Lincoln’s Home
2. Lincoln’s Tomb
3. Lincoln’s Museum and Library
4. Vietnam, Korean, WWII War Memorials
5. Illinois State Museum
6. Illinois State Capitol
7. Illinois Old State Capital
8. Henson Robinson Zoo
9. Illinois Executive Mansion
10. Washington Park Botanical Garden
11. Lincoln Memorial Gardens
12. Dana Thomas House
13. Lincoln-Herndon Law Office
14. Thomas Rees Memorial Carillon
15. Camp Butler National Cemetery
16. The Lincoln Depot
17. Illinois State Military Museum
18. Adams Wildlife Sanctuary
19. Edwards Place Historic Home

Community Facilities/Recreation (Source: Q5 Community Profile 2010)

- Amusement Facilities: 7
- Attractions/sites: 42
- Ball Parks/Diamonds: 58
- Beaches: 1
- Bike/Hike Paths: 4
- Bowling Facilities: 3
- Campgrounds: 7
- Churches: 190
- Comedy Clubs: 1
- Dog Parks: 1
- Drive-Ins (outdoor movie theater): 1
- Golf Courses: 14
- Ice Skating (indoor): 1
- In-line skating (outdoor): 3
- Lakes: 2
- Live Theater/entertainment: 6
- Museums: 13
- Off-track Betting Parlor: 1
- Private Clubs: 2
- Public Parks: 58
- Public Swimming Pools: 2
- Roller Skating (indoor): 1
- Shopping Centers: 10
- Skateboarding: 1
- State Park: 1
- Water Park: 1
- Zoo: 1

UIS Auditorium
Muni Opera
Hoogland Center for the Arts
Economy

Due to the fact that Springfield serves as the capital of Illinois and the county seat for Sangamon County, the largest employer is government. The following are the major employers in Springfield according to the City’s 2010 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th># of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>State of Illinois</td>
<td>18,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Memorial Health System</td>
<td>6,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>St. John's Hospital</td>
<td>3,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Springfield Public Schools #186</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Springfield Clinic, LLP</td>
<td>2,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Illinois National Guard</td>
<td>1,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Southern Illinois University School of Medicine</td>
<td>1,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>City of Springfield</td>
<td>1,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Springfield</td>
<td>1,166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Springfield Business Journal 2011-2012 Book of Lists

According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security’s local unemployment rates reports (4/21/2011 and 9/22/2011), the unemployment rate of Springfield has continued to decline slightly. According to IDEAS officials, these reports are indicators of improvement compared to 2010.

### Not Seasonal Adjusted Unemployment Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metropolitan Area</th>
<th>March 2011</th>
<th>March 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IDES 4/21/2011

### Employment Status

(The employment statistics are for the population of individuals 16 years and over.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 years and over</td>
<td>88,375</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>59,815</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Labor Force</td>
<td>59,619</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Labor Force</td>
<td>28,560</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

### Household Income in 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>4,304</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $14,999</td>
<td>3,399</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to $24,999</td>
<td>6,982</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>6,938</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>8,467</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>9,091</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>4,696</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>3,179</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 to $199,999</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 or more</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census
The city of Springfield has both public and private educational institutions providing education from kindergarten through graduate school.

### City of Springfield District #186 Facilities – Public

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary (K-5)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Schools (6-8)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (9-12)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnet (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Area Career Center</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Q5 Community Profile 2010

### City of Springfield – Parochial Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary (K-8)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (9-12)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Q5 Community Profile 2010

### Sangamon County – Public Schools Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball – Chatham</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Berlin</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawnee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Plains</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverton</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>3A</td>
<td>2,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-City</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamsville</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Q5 Community Profile 2010

### Colleges/Universities (Within a 60 mile Radius of Springfield)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Springfield</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>4 year, graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Morris University</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>4 year, graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Land Community College</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>2 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benedictine University</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>4 year, graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest Technical Institute</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s College of Nursing</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>Nursing/Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIU School of Medicine</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>Graduate, Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln College</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>2 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Christian College</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>4 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacMurray College</td>
<td>Jacksonville</td>
<td>4 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois College</td>
<td>Jacksonville</td>
<td>4 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millikin University</td>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>4 year, graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richland Community College</td>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>2 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackburn College</td>
<td>Carlinville</td>
<td>4 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Q5 Community Profile 2010
History

The Henson Robinson Zoo was the dream of the late Henson C. Robinson, a prominent citizen and civic leader in Springfield in the mid-twentieth century. In June of 1967 a tract of land was donated to the Springfield Park District by the City of Springfield for the development of a zoo. Construction began in 1968 and the zoo eventually opened on August 29, 1970. The zoo was officially dedicated by the late Mr. Marlin Perkins, director Emeritus of the St. Louis Zoological Gardens and the host of Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom. In 1972 a seven exhibit nocturnal house was dedicated and opened. Also in 1972, the Springfield Zoological Society (SZS) was formed. The SZS was formed to help promote the zoo’s activities, serve in a public relations capacity, and to engage in fund raising activities for improvements and additions to zoo facilities.

Two Asiatic black bears were purchased from the San Diego Zoo in 1981. The zoo also acquired two cougars during the same year. The acquisitions were made in hopes of generating larger attendance numbers and additional revenue. The first annual Dr. Doolittle Day, the zoo’s grand opening was held on May 16, 1982. A variety of vendors were invited to the zoo to add in the fun and excitement. The admission was free for the day. In 1983 a female bald eagle was acquired on loan from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Due to the success of Dr. Doolittle Day, the zoo’s first grand closing event the Fur, Feather, Fin, Fall Fling was held on October 2, 1983. The admission was also free for the day.

The zoo became an accredited member of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) in September of 1986. In October the zoo’s first Zoolie Ghoulie event was held. It was promoted as a safe way for children to enjoy trick or treating. In September of 1987 a new enclosure for African penguins was open with a colony of six penguins. With the addition of this new enclosure the attendance rose to 102,363, the highest in the zoo’s history. In 1989 a new river otter and beaver enclosure was completed, along with enclosures for a variety of lemur species. Funding for the lemur enclosure was made possible through a grant that the zoo received earlier that year.

Over the next three years the zoo continued to grow adding new exhibits to house cougars, red wolves, and cheetahs. Plans were started to build a new enclosure for the Asiatic black bears. In 1994 the keeper staff formed the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers. The new bear enclosure opened in October, which marked the first time the zoo had expanded its initial boundaries since the zoo was first opened. In 1995 the zoo celebrated its 25th Anniversary. The zoo was rededicated by Jim Fowler, the current host of Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom. A number of new exhibits were added to the zoo that year including areas for gibbons, langurs, muntjac, and a new five section bird of prey area for North American raptors. A new Docent Program was started during this year, for volunteers.

A 4,003 square foot administration building was built in 1996. The building is comprised of administration offices, public restrooms, a gift shop and concession area, and a new classroom. 1996 was the inaugural year for a variety of new special events. Earth Day, Teddy Bear Clinic, Cultural Day and Holiday Light at the zoo were initiated to stimulate attendance and financial growth. The Henson Robinson Zoo Docent Association became a chapter member of the association of Zoo and Aquarium Docents. With the success of the new special events added to the calendar last year two new ideas were created for this year including Down on the Farm and “Purr “form for the Animals.

The Australian Walkthru was opened in 1999. This new exhibit was an immersion walkthrough which housed a variety of Australian animals, including wallabies, wallaroos, ducks, emus and geese. In 2000 a South American section to the zoo was developed. It consisted of exhibits for spider monkeys, coati, Galapagos tortoise, sloths, tamarins and marmosets. A summer free day, ZooFari, was added to the zoo’s special events calendar in conjunction with the Springfield Park District’s 100th Anniversary. The Springfield Park District approved the zoo to be open year round beginning March of 2001. Several new events were added to the special events’ calendar, including For the Birds, Zoo Family Challenge and an Animal Enrichment Day during 2001. An enclosure for wolverines was completed in the fall for the zoo’s inaugural winter hours.
Tour of the Zoo

African Region

This area of the zoo includes five enclosures for animals native to mainland Africa and a separate building that houses a variety of species native to Madagascar. The animals exhibited in this region represent a diverse range of habitats found in Africa.

1. African Penguin Enclosure
2. African Wild Dog
3. African Porcupine
4. Sulcata Tortoise
5. Lemur Building

African Penguin Enclosure Exhibit

The African Penguin exhibit opened in 1987. This exhibit is the first large enclosure that visitors come to once they enter the zoo. It is an open enclosure that allows the public to view the penguins from the front and sides of the enclosure. The enclosure includes a small waterfall that leads into a large fresh water pool. The yard includes a sandy beach with shallow artificial rock burrows for the birds to have as shelter while out during the day. There are several large yews that the birds can use as shade at both ends of the yard. The front of the yard has pea gravel and additional plants to discourage the penguins from staying in the front. A building is utilized for the evening hours and during the winter months when it is too cold outside for the penguins. Inside they have a smaller pool with a large window so that the public can still view them while they are inside.

African penguins are also known as the Jackass Penguin due to their unique vocalization that sounds like a donkey braying. In the wild they are found off the western coast of South Africa. They eat a diet of fish, squid and small crustaceans. African penguin populations in captivity are managed through a Species Survival Program (SSP). The Henson Robinson Zoo is a member of the SSP program and currently has two breeding recommendations for the colony.

African Wild Dog Exhibit

The African Wild Dog exhibit opened in 1992, the enclosure includes a holding building (16 X 22) and a large grassy yard (70 X 120). Cheetahs were exhibited here until 2002. Due to the low numbers of available cheetahs in the United States the decision was made to pursue other possible species. Also at this junction modifications were made to the front left corner to add another species to this region. This enclosure has well established deciduous Oak trees that provide ample shade and a variety of smaller trees that provide additional shelter and shade. The African wild dogs are an established SSP program and the zoo is currently listed as a holding facility. The dogs are colorful and live in extended families in the wild and work together as a pack. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.
The African Porcupine Exhibit

The African porcupine enclosure is a modified enclosure in the front left corner of the African Wild dog enclosure. This enclosure is undergoing modification to house the porcupine in a more natural enclosure. Due to their extensive digging behavior the bottom of the enclosure will be cemented and then covered in mulch to allow for them to dig. This enclosure is chain link and cement and has shade provided by well established deciduous trees adjacent to the enclosure. The African porcupine is managed through the rodent Taxon Advisory Group (TAG). The Zoo currently houses a male with the opportunity to acquire a female for breeding. These porcupines are land dwelling species with large showy quills. They are nocturnal by nature but due to their large size are typically viewable by the public during the day.

Sulcata Tortoises Exhibit

The large grassy area adjacent to the African wild dog enclosure has been enclosed to create a holding area to display Sulcata Tortoises during the summer months. The Sulcata or spur-thigh tortoise is a large species of tortoise which can weigh up to 240 pounds. The enclosure is viewable from a walkway along the side of the African wild dog enclosure and from the front. Shade is provided by established trees in the yard. The zoo currently has two male Sulcata tortoises which cannot currently be housed together due to fighting.

Lemur Exhibit

The Lemur building was completed in 1990. This building allowed for the housing of three different species of lemurs: Mouse, Red-ruffed and black lemur. The building has both inside and outside holding areas for a variety of lemur species. The public can view the two larger enclosures through glass windows during the winter months. Over the years a few modifications were added including changing the mouse lemur enclosure into a reptile enclosure and adding another species of lemur to create several mixed species enclosures. During the summer of 2010 the zoo suffered an electrical fire which resulted in the rebuilding of the inside of the building. Renovations of the building included a new roof, heating/cooling unit, and new fencing inside the building. The zoo continues to house three types of lemurs including ring-tail, black, and red-ruffed lemurs. The lemurs are managed through established SSP programs through the American Zoo Association (AZA).
Asian Region

The Asian region of the zoo includes five enclosures located in the south east corner of the zoo.

1. Dusky-leaf monkey enclosure
2. Gibbon enclosure
3. Muntjac yard
4. Tortoise Yard
5. Bear enclosure
6. Cinereous Vulture (Eurasian Black Vulture)

Dusky Leaf Monkeys and Gibbons Exhibit

In 1995 the Asian Primate building was built to house White-handed Gibbons and Dusky-leaf Monkeys. Both species have inside and outside areas. Public viewing of the inside areas is available through large windows on the front of the building. The holding building has an additional back holding area that is off exhibit, allowing the animals the opportunity to be off exhibit if and when needed. During the winter months the off exhibit area is utilized for operant training with both the Gibbons and Dusky-leaf monkeys. The Gibbons are managed through an established SSP program and the zoo currently has a recommendation to breed the pair. The Dusky-leaf monkeys are managed through an established studbook and we currently house two males. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.

Muntjac Exhibit

A small group of Reeves’ Muntjac has the ability to roam throughout the fenced in area surrounding all of the Asian Exhibits. Several shelters and feeding stations are set up throughout the area for the animals to utilize. The current group contains only neutered males and several females.

Asian Tortoise Exhibit

A small Asian tortoise yard was completed to house an Asian Brown Tortoise. The enclosure has a small shallow pond and a shelter for inclement weather and to be used as shade. Currently the tortoise is housed indoors overnight and taken out to the unit daily, weather permitting.

Asiatic Black Bear Exhibit

The Asiatic Black Bear enclosure was completed in 1994 for the current pair of bears. The yard is 56’ X 88’ with a large fresh water pool near the large viewing window. The holding building has two inside dens for the bears. The public can view this enclosure from a lower path which allows them to view from the front and from a back viewing window by the pool at this point they can also see inside the dens through a large window located in one the dens. By accessing a wooden walkway the visitors can also view the exhibit from above the holding building. The zoo currently houses just one older female Asiatic Black Bear.

Eurasian Black Vulture Exhibit

The Eurasian Black Vulture enclosure is an old corn crib exhibit which is slated for replacement. The zoo currently houses a young breeding pair of vultures.
Australian Region

1. Australian Walkthru
2. Australian Holding building
3. Australian Off Exhibit Holding
4. Kookaburra Enclosure

The Australian region of the zoo includes one major exhibit with several separate holding areas within the overall enclosure. Visitors can walk along a fenced walkway that goes throughout the enclosure.

The Australian enclosure was completed in the fall of 2000. This enclosure allows the visitor the opportunity to physically enter the enclosure and view the Australian animals up close and without extensive barriers. The enclosure is 7,800 square feet in size with a 6 foot chain link fence. This area houses a variety of compatible wallaby species, common Wallaroo and a pair of Magpie geese. The holding building has four separate stalls that can be closed off to separate individual animals when needed. The building also has two smaller holding units for birds. Adjacent to the building are three small outdoor runs, which can be also used to separate animals if needed. In 2007 an additional larger holding area was added to the back side of the building to house groups of animals if and when needed off exhibit. The zoo currently exhibits a pair of Parma Wallaby’s (SSP), a male Bennett Wallaby (PMP) and two young common Wallaroos. (PMP)

The main yard contains a large man made pool with a small waterfall that holds 7,000 gallons of water for the Australian Waterfowl. There are numerous mature trees in the yard that add plenty of shade during the summer months. The public has access along a four foot wide asphalt pathway that is lined with a two foot fence. The yard has proven very popular with the visitors.

In 2011 an enclosure for kookaburras was added along the pathway. This enclosure is spacious with plenty of perching for the birds. Due to the size of the enclosure other species that would be compatible with Kookaburras could be added in the future. In addition there is room to add another small aviary for summer housing of the zoo’s cockatoo.
North American Region

The North American region of the zoo includes a total of nine exhibit areas and is currently the largest section of the zoo.

1. Otter/Alligator Building
2. Bobcat
3. Eagle
4. Sand hill Crane
5. Cougar
6. Box Turtle
7. Red Wolf Enclosure
8. Wolverine
9. Bird of Prey Run

Otter and Alligator Exhibit

In 1989 the zoo opened an enclosure that housed both North American River Otters and North American Beavers. The enclosure contains a centralized building with indoor holding and two large yards with pools to house aquatic animals. Both yards are concrete with planted and rocked areas and two pools; a smaller upper pool with an overflow to a larger lower pool. A local artist painted a mural along the backs and sides of both outside enclosures. Instead of Beavers the enclosure now houses North American Alligators on the north side and a pair of North American River Otters on the south side.

Bobcat Exhibit

In 2010 a new bobcat enclosure was opened. This enclosure has a large grassy yard with public viewing through 4 foot high windows at the front of the enclosure. The enclosure also contains a small block holding building with a separate chain-linked holding area on the back of the building. This enclosure is adjacent to a wooded area which provides shade in the afternoon. The zoo currently houses two females that were hand raised at the zoo. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.

Bald Eagles and Sand Hill Cranes Exhibit

During the fall of 2011 the zoo opened new enclosures for both Bald Eagles and Sand hill Cranes. These new enclosures were made possible by a state grant. This area includes a covered enclosure for Bald Eagles that is approximately 48 foot by 20 foot (960 square feet). The enclosure is 12’ heigh with the back of the exhibit enclosed with PDS tan colored slates. A large shelter is located in the back of the enclosure with a small pond. Perching is placed at a variety of heights throughout the enclosure. The zoo currently exhibits a flighted male. Another bird has been lined up for display as well and will be relocated here once his wing injury is healed.

Adjacent to the new eagle enclosure is the zoo’s new Sand hill crane enclosure. This is an L-shaped exhibit with a small barn attached to house the birds in at night. This enclosure is 8’ foot high with an open top that is 56’ X 37’ at it’s longest points. The ground is a grassy sand mix with planted prairie grasses throughout the enclosure. Both of these enclosures are near mature trees that add shade during the day. The zoo has two non-flighted females on display.
Cougar Exhibit

The Cougar Exhibit was opened in the early 1990’s. This enclosure included a holding building with dens to separate the cats if needed. The yard has a shallow pool and natural substrate. Public viewing is through a raised glass and wood viewing platform. As of the fall of 2011 this enclosure is undergoing a major renovation made possible by a state grant. The viewing area and outside fencing is being replaced and updated. The renovation work is slated to be completed in the early winter of 2012.

Box Turtle Exhibit

To the east of the cougar enclosure is the Box Turtle enclosure which housed Prairie Dogs in the past. This enclosure has a cement and wire bottom with topsoil fill. It currently houses a small group of Box turtles. This enclosure is slated for renovation in the next couple of years.

Wolverine Exhibit

In 2002 the Wolverine enclosure was opened. This enclosure includes an indoor holding area with three dens and a large yard. The yard contains natural grass substrate and small shrubs. The enclosure features a 12’ waterfall, stream, and large pool. The public viewing is from the front and through two large viewing windows. One window is located in front of the pool and the other is located in front of a grassy area. The zoo currently houses a single male wolverine. He has proven very popular with the visitors especially during the winter months. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.

Red Wolf Exhibit

The Red Wolf enclosure is approximately 125’ X 75’ in size. The enclosure is comprised of a chain link fence perimeter and two separate denning boxes/shelters. Large logs, trees, and various grasses allow the wolves seclusion when needed. The zoo currently holds a trio of females, they are part of an established SSP plan. Public viewing is through the fence from the front only.

Birds of Prey Exhibit

In 1995 the Birds of Prey habitat was opened. This area allowed for the display of five different species of native Birds of Prey. Here visitors can view a variety of birds found in the United States and see them up close. The collection includes Red-tailed Hawks, Barred Owl, Turkey Vulture, Great Horned Owl and Harris Hawks from the desert southwest. These birds are all birds that were either injured in the wild or born in captivity and cannot be released. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.
Reptile Collection

A majority of the reptile collection is housed in the upstairs section of the barn. The exceptions to this include animals on exhibit in the front building and some of the larger species that are on display throughout the zoo. Many of the specimens came to the zoo through private donations over the years.

The zoo has had breeding success with both the Madagascar Giant Day Gecko and the Madagascar Ground Boa.

This proposed master plan includes plans for a reptile building to house a variety of reptiles from around the world. This would allow the zoo to house many of our reptiles that are currently off exhibit. This building would allow the zoo to house the collection in a manner that would increase the public’s knowledge and awareness about the reptiles on display and their habitats.

South American Region

This area of the zoo includes five enclosures. The species exhibited here cover a variety of diverse habitats found throughout South America. The enclosures include:

1. Spider Monkey Enclosure
2. Galapagos Tortoise Yard
3. South America I
4. South America II
5. South America III

The area chosen for this region had a good number of mature trees already established and a good amount of well established undergrowth, to give the area a closed in feeling, similar to that found in the tropics. Most of the animals exhibited here have been at the facility but were spread out throughout the zoo.

Spider Monkey Exhibit

In 2000, work started on a new spider monkey enclosure to eliminate their transfer to an island for summer holding. The new enclosure is located off of the holding building to allow for both inside holding and a large outdoor enclosure. The new enclosure allowed for them to be outdoors for longer periods of the year. Renovation work inside the building in 2008 increased the size of their inside holding areas. The zoo currently has an older breeding pair on exhibit at the zoo. They are part of an established SSP program. This exhibit was supported by a grant from the Springfield Zoological Society.

South America I Exhibit

South America I was built the same year (2000) to house both Sloths and Khul’s Marmosets in a mixed species enclosure. During the winter both of these species are moved into winter holding areas. Currently this enclosure houses a Sloth with Marmosets. Both of these species have established programs through AZA.
South America III

Also constructed that year was a Coati Enclosure (South America III). This unit has small nest boxes on the back side of the enclosure and several shelves with climbing structures. This enclosure has a wood chip and dirt bottom to allow for digging by the Coatis.

South America II

South America II was completed the following year to house Emperor Tamarins and Three-banded Armadillo. This enclosure now houses Khuls Marmoset with a prehensile-tailed porcupine.

Galapagos Tortoises

Also completed was a new enclosure for the Galapagos Tortoises with inside holding and a shift door to their outside yard. They have a large sunny yard with areas for mud baths. Due to their size renovation work will be needed to their inside holding area to accommodate both of the tortoises in the near future.

All of the enclosures can be viewed from a woodchip pathway that meanders through the area. Roping and bamboo fencing were utilized as a public barrier to allow for a more tropical look.
The purpose of this section is to compare the Henson Robinson Zoo in terms of its size, number of employees, operating budget and animal collection. The Zoos that have been selected for this comparative analysis are small zoos from Illinois and all of them except for Cosley Zoo were visited by the Master Plan Task Force members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoo</th>
<th>Annual Budget, Expenditures &amp; Attendance</th>
<th># of Employees</th>
<th>Acreage, Parking Spaces</th>
<th>Admission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henson Robinson Zoo</td>
<td>$700,534 - Budget $65,000 - Capital Expenditures 82,233 - Attendance</td>
<td>8 - Full Time 6 - Part Time 14 - Total Staff</td>
<td>14 - Developed 15 - Total 65 - Parking Spaces</td>
<td>$4.50 - Adults $2.75 - Children $3.00 - Seniors $45.00 - Family Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niabi Zoo</td>
<td>$1,600,000 - Budget $3,000,000 - Capital Expenditures 225,000 - Attendance</td>
<td>17 - Full Time 60 - Part Time 78 - Total Staff</td>
<td>50 - Developed 240 - Total 800 - Parking Spaces 30 - Buses</td>
<td>$6.00 - Adults $5.00 - Children $5.50 - Seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Valley, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Zoo</td>
<td>$2,549,165 - Budget $203,145 - Capital Expenditures 211,428 - Attendance</td>
<td>19 - Full Time 16.5 - Part Time 35.5 - Total Staff</td>
<td>14 - Developed</td>
<td>$8.50 - Adults $4.75 - Children $7.50 - Seniors $80.00 - Family Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scovill Zoo</td>
<td>$948,092 - Budget $154,000 - Capital Expenditures</td>
<td>11 - Full Time 5 - Part Time 7 - Temporary 16 - Total Staff</td>
<td>15 - Developed 15 - Total 162 - Parking Spaces 20 - Buses</td>
<td>$5.00 - Adults $3.00 - Children $4.00 - Seniors $60.00 - Family Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Park Zoo</td>
<td>$1,100,000 - Budget</td>
<td>8 - Full Time 5.84 - Part Time .75 - Outsourced 14.59 - Total Staff</td>
<td>8 - Developed 8 - Total 80 - Parking Spaces 2 - Buses</td>
<td>$5.00 - Adults $3.50 - Children $50.00 - Family Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomington, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosley Zoo</td>
<td>$1,158,574 - Budget $200,000 - Capital Expenditures</td>
<td>7 - Full Time 11.5 - Part Time 1.4 - Temporary 18.5 - Total Staff</td>
<td>5.13 - Developed 7.91 - Total 80 - Parking Spaces</td>
<td>$3.00 - Adults $0.00 - Children (0-17) $2.00 - Seniors $55.00 - Family Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheaton, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Henson Robinson Zoo has the smallest operating budget when compared to the other 5 zoos. However, the Henson Robinson Zoo has staffing levels comparable to Scovill, Miller Park and Cosley even though they all have higher operating budgets. Niabi and Peoria have more than double the number of personnel than the Henson Robison Zoo and their operating budgets are significantly higher. The Henson Robinson Zoo compares in acreage with Peoria, Scovill and Miller Park. Cosley is significantly smaller than the Henson Robinson Zoo while Niabi is significantly larger. The Henson Robinson Zoo has the least parking space available when compared to the other zoos. Finally, the Henson Robinson Zoos admissions are comparable to Scovill and Miller Park.
## Animal Collection Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoo</th>
<th>Amphibians</th>
<th>Birds</th>
<th>Terrestrial Invertebrates</th>
<th>Non Marine Mammals</th>
<th>Reptiles</th>
<th>Freshwater Fish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Henson Robinson</strong></td>
<td>25 (9 species, 12 specimen)</td>
<td>100 (24 species, 76 specimen)</td>
<td>4 (2 species, 2 colonies)</td>
<td>107 (33 species, 74 specimen)</td>
<td>90 (29 species, 61 specimen)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niabi</td>
<td>32 (8 species, 24 specimen)</td>
<td>260 (72 species, 188 specimen)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>126 (32 species, 94 specimen)</td>
<td>69 (29 species, 40 specimen)</td>
<td>1001 (1 species, 1000 specimen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peoria</strong></td>
<td>42 (7 species, 35 specimen)</td>
<td>39 (13 species, 26 specimen)</td>
<td>238 (5 species, 8 specimen, 225 groups)</td>
<td>159 (42 species, 105 specimen, 12 groups)</td>
<td>103 (23 species, 80 specimen)</td>
<td>28 (3 species, 25 specimen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scovill</td>
<td>12 (4 species, 8 specimen)</td>
<td>129 (25 species, 104 specimen)</td>
<td>21 (4 species, 4 specimen, 13 groups)</td>
<td>121 (30 species, 77 specimen, 14 groups)</td>
<td>106 (27 species, 79 specimen)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miller Park</strong></td>
<td>67 (15 species, 2 specimen, 50 groups)</td>
<td>185 (48 species, 99 specimen, 38 groups)</td>
<td>1233 (37 species, 79 specimen, 10 colonies, 1211 groups)</td>
<td>119 (37 species, 79 specimen, 3 groups)</td>
<td>56 (21 species, 35 specimen)</td>
<td>70 (3 species, 67 groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosley</td>
<td>12 (6 species, 6 specimen)</td>
<td>119 (34 species, 85 specimen)</td>
<td>7 (3 species, 3 specimen, 1 colony)</td>
<td>49 (16 species, 33 specimen)</td>
<td>52 (9 species, 43 specimen)</td>
<td>12 (2 species, 10 specimen)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Numbers in bold indicate total number of animals for a category.*
The Master Planning Task Force worked with the facilitators to develop this Master Planning document. The master planning process involved 10 developmental steps which built on each other. Each step was designed to have its own process that involved data gathering and deliberations to develop key strategies, plans and projects for the zoo to pursue in the future. The following are the steps that led to the development of the Henson Robinson Zoo 2011-2021 Master Plan:

Step 1: Kick Off of the Planning Process
- Introduction of facilitators and Master Planning Task Force
- Develop purpose statement for the Master Planning Process
- Review highlights of previous plan
- Presentation of the planning process by the facilitators to the Master Planning Task Force
- Develop calendar of events and activities

Step 2: Constructing a Project Purpose and Review of the Previous Master Plan
- Introduction of the previous master plan
  - Capital Funds Acquisition
  - Special Events
  - Role of Zoological Society
  - Fund Raising
  - Capital Funds Campaign
  - Board Referendum
  - Grants Acquisition
- What was successfully utilized from the plan?
- Why did parts of the previous plan fail?
- How can we learn from the past?

Step 3: Development of Strategic Plan
- Develop mission statement
- Develop vision statement
- SOAR analysis
- Scenario Thinking and Planning
- Development of Goals
- Development of Objectives
Step 4: Data Collection Design
- Identify list of documents and data to be gathered
- Develop surveying/questionnaire instrument
- Determine site visits and budget
- Design instrument for conducting site analysis
- Assign roles and responsibilities for data gathering
- Determine Report Formats

Step 5: Data Collection and Report Out
- Report collection of Data to the Task Force

Step 6: Data Analysis
- Development of data sets that compare the HR zoo to other zoos
- Determine public support and needs
- Determine needs of the zoo
- Determine space needs and opportunities
- Site Analysis (SWOB)

Step 7: Develop Organizational Theme
- Develop key messaging
- Brand and logo development
- Engage architect services and design rendering of theme

Step 8: Prioritization of Needs and Projects
- Project design and prioritization

Step 9: Phasing Plan
- Phasing plan developed with scenario thinking over the next 5-20 years
- Resource allocation and determination

Step 10: Presentation and Dissemination of the Plan
Constructing a Project Purpose

1. Organically develop a road map for the Park District and Zoo that will lead to improvements, enhancements and growth

2. Engage the public in the planning process and design of the zoo’s future

3. Present concepts and ideas for the zoo to utilize in future development

4. Planning documents are not blue prints – any plan as specific and inflexible as a blue print is doomed to failure

5. Good plans are flexible, living guidelines and policies, self correcting and adaptable to change

6. The implementation of the plan will be handled by the district and staff depending on availability of resources (people, time and funding)
HRZ Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

Strategic Planning was proposed as the first step to distinguish the fundamental goals and overall vision of the Zoo. This strategic planning process was designed to include intangibles such as the history of the Zoo, future goals, mission statements, breeding plan intentions, marketing strategies, financial strategies, partnerships and organizational plans. The goals developed from this process drove the development of the Master Plan.

The objective of this report was to gain a shared focus to prepare the Henson Robinson Zoo for further strategic planning processes and approaches. The Zoo’s Master Planning Task Force worked together to create and share a strategic focus for the Zoo. The purpose of this process was to gain an aligned commitment to action.

The strategic planning process was set to answer the following questions:
1. Where do we want the zoo to be in the future? (the vision)
2. Where is the zoo now? (the mission)
3. What is the “Best Game Plan” to get there from here? (the strategy and initiatives)

Methodology for Strategic Planning

Zoos survive and thrive when they are change capable. Community based organizations such as zoos are experiencing a greater demand for change because they face more difficult socio-economic challenges, a need to have an economic perspective, and the need to develop survival capabilities and sustainability. This environment of unprecedented change can prove to be an opportunity if an organization responds effectively and strategically. Changing effectively means pursuing the right changes and accomplishing these changes rapidly. In order to change effectively, organizations must develop a capability of constant inquiry and aligned action of the whole system.

A Strength-focused Whole System approach referred to as Appreciative Inquiry (AI) has helped many organizations reach a new level of change capability. Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system ‘life’ when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to heighten positive potential. It mobilizes inquiry through crafting an unconditional positive question often involving the stakeholders of an organization.

The traditional approach to change is to look for the problem, do a diagnosis, and find a solution. The primary focus is on what is wrong or broken; since we look for problems, we find them. By paying attention to problems, we emphasize and amplify them. Appreciative Inquiry suggests that we look for what works in an organization. The tangible result of the inquiry process is a series of statements that describe where the organization wants to be, based on the high moments of where they have been. Because the statements are grounded in real experience and his-
Appreciative Inquiry (AI) operates from the following assumptions:

1. In every organization, group, or individual something works and can be valued
2. People have more confidence to journey to the future when they carry forward the best parts of the past
3. The act of asking a question begins the change
4. The language we use creates our reality
5. What we focus on becomes the reality we create

P8 Strategic Engagement Framework

Traditional problem solving involves understanding what’s wrong in the current state, identifying problems and gaps, brainstorming solutions, selecting and testing a solution, and analyzing the results. This approach is especially effective with low level, bounded, mechanistic problems and has provided progress for centuries. What problem solving or deficit based thinking also does is focus on what’s wrong, broken, or sick. In certain situations, this approach may still be effective. It has been proven that this approach also lowers an individual’s energy and creativity.

The core of the strategic planning approach contains the “standby” of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis. The question this raises is if companies are using the traditional strategic planning approach—and aren’t achieving their expectations, perhaps we need to challenge the approach. Alternative approaches have proved to shift organizations and individual’s effectiveness by focusing on what’s right, positive, or possible.

The Henson Robinson Zoo Master Planning Task Force utilized a strategic formulation and implementation approach referred to as the P8 Wisdom Model (Sulamoyo, 2011): Strategic Engagement Framework (Past, Present, Prouds, Possibilities, Passions, Priorities, Provisions and Progress). The P8 methodology builds upon a more traditional SWOT strategic analysis to increase commitment and participation for a faster and more effective implementation. The P8 framework is an emerging framework that involves an appreciative relational process of creating an organization’s future. This framework allows an organization’s stakeholders to see where they were yesterday, where they are today and establish a vision of where they want to go. It helps them to clearly identify, understand and most importantly communicate the people and organizational values, direction (vision), purpose (mission), core and unique capabilities (internal analysis), possibilities (external analysis), strategies and tactics, structures and systems to create a positive organizational environment and build upon the positive core to sustain its unique value offering.
Mission Statement Re-write

A significant accomplishment of the planning process was the work done to revisit the Henson Robinson Zoo’s Mission Statement. Since the Mission Statement is a key document to gain clarity and alignment, it was important to have the Master Planning Task Force agree on the final product the zoo would operate under on a daily basis. Usually, crafting a Mission Statement can take weeks or months. However, because of the dynamic and thought-provoking strength focused conversations, the Mission Statement was revised during the session. The newly revised mission statement is compared to the old mission statement as presented below:

**Mission Statement**
The mission statement should...
- Guide the actions of the organization,
- Spell out its overall goal,
- Provide a sense of direction, and
- Guide decision-making.

**Current Mission Statement**
To enhance the education of our community to wildlife and its conservation while providing an enjoyable and recreational experience.

**Proposed Mission Statement**
*The Henson Robinson Zoo strives to enhance education of the community about wildlife while providing an enjoyable and recreational experience.*

**Vision Statement**
A vision statement captures the long-term picture of what the organization wants to become. The Zoo does not have a current vision statement. The Master Planning Task Force developed a vision statement for the Henson Robinson Zoo as follows:

**Proposed Vision Statement**
*To be a leader in wildlife conservation education and awareness; while providing an enjoyable experience.*
Past

The Henson Robinson Zoo did not have a recent strategic plan in place. The most recent planning document was the Master Plan that was developed by Zoological Planning Associates of Wichita, Kansas. The total cost of the Master Plan was $4,296,809.40.

Major Components – Completed:
- Lemurs - 1990
- Otters - 1989
- Penguins - 1987
- Australia Walkthrough – 1999
- Cougars – 1991
- Spider Monkeys – 2000

Major Components – Not completed:
- Tiger
- New Parking Area
- Bison
- Elk
- Snow Monkeys

Recent Exhibits not included in Master Plan:
- Asiatic black bear – Snow Monkeys
- Wolverine – American Black Bear
- Bobcat – Lynx
- Playground - Amphitheater

Prouds (Strengths)

The purpose of this section is to acknowledge and gain a shared understanding of our Henson Robinson Zoo capabilities. We are also seeking to increase confidence and energy for what the Zoo can accomplish in the future.

Below is a collective inventory of capabilities of the Henson Robinson Zoo:
- The passion of the zoo’s staff
- The animal collection such as the penguins
- Springfield residents and people from nearby communities have fond memories since childhood
- The zoo has a park like setting
- The zoo offers fun programming
- Playground area is well used
- Picnic shelter is available for guests
- The zoo offers conservation projects and programs
- Zoo patrons are able to interact with the animals due to their ability to get close
- The zoo offers great volunteerism through the zoological society and other means
- The zoo offers uniqueness of exhibits
- Size of the zoo is ideal for families
- Resources are available from the park district to support the zoo
- Impact the zoo makes with the available animals – wolverine, breeding and etc.
- Ideal location in central Illinois
- The zoo is handicap accessible
- The location of the zoo offers diversity of topography
- There is free and easy parking
- The zoo has supportive neighbors
- There is a genuine recognition of weaknesses and concerted effort to improve them
- The facility is open year round
- The gift shop and other attractions prolong the stay of a zoo visitor
- Successful zoo birthday parties
- The Junior Zoo keepers educational program
- 83,411 people visited the zoo in 2010
- There is something new to see all year round, every season offers something unique
- There is great potential for growth
- The zoo is a source of knowledge
- The zoo is well respected by the public
- The community is supportive of the zoo
- Staff are knowledgeable, passionate, and loyal
- Park District and Board are supportive of the zoo - available to help when needed
- Fun and safe place for families
- Only zoo around
- Location on the lake
- Loyal membership
- Educational outreach program is effective
- The zoo is affordable for visitors

Present

Park District Background
- Large organization covering over 60 square miles
- 2500 acres
- Two 18 hole golf courses
- Indoor and outdoor swimming facilities
- Over 37 parks
- Larger than the city of Springfield

Park District Financial Information
- $10.5 million budget
- Issues bonds
- Receives grants

Park District Financial Challenges
- In 1996 there was a referendum on tax caps which limits levying abilities. This has an impact on growth.
- Tax cap limitation affects opportunities for growth
- 60% of the budget’s revenue is from tax levies
- Revenue from receipts has been going down due to the economy
- 40% of the budget is from other revenue generating entities
Possibilities (opportunities)

The purpose of this section is to develop organizational alignment with the external environment by recognizing opportunities amongst: Trends – State, National, Community; Current Challenges; What’s Changed – What hasn’t; and How should we respond?

Below is a collective inventory of possible opportunities for the Henson Robinson Zoo:

- Get community involved and engaged in the zoo
- Enhancement of school outreach. Animals can be taken to schools for educational purposes and programs
- The zoo could offer additional onsite education programs
- Ground to expand – CWLP land, accessing the various grades of topography, and creating a sense of adventure
- Meeting the animals and their zoo keepers adopted by sponsors
- Creating a passport with other local museums – get a stamp at every place and want to see them all
- Partnerships with other local events for marketing – Fat Ass 5k, Sliders...
- Increase the number of mixed species exhibits
- Grow the number of interactive exhibits for children
- Solicitation of corporate volunteerism
- Membership expansion
- Better utilization of staff’s knowledge about animals
- New face for the zoo with logo/brand
- More unique opportunities that the public can support which will enhance revenue
- Build a donation relationship – experiential, special tours or penguins
- Utilize the unfair advantage in fundraising
- Harness the great spirit of volunteerism within the community with projects that help the zoo – create a sense of ownership and involvement
- Create a program that offers service hours for volunteers
- Build outreach program to charge fees for annual membership
- Increase educational green practices
- Traveling exhibits – changing and rotating exhibits
- Accessing education related grants
- Build reptile house with an educational room
- Diversification of revenue sources
- Cooperation with other areas of the park district
- Build an identity to leverage the new logo – create free media with the logo launch
- Build an application for the I-phone
- Bring in animals that connect with the public and draw people in
- Increase avenues for up selling
- Change the exhibits to get new people in the zoo – rotate or change out exhibits
- Partner with other agencies to offer new exhibits
- Improve animal adoption program
- Foster partnerships with other events in the district
- Promote reciprocal agreements with other zoos
- Utilize volunteers to help with marketing
- Expand educational activities and volunteerism to higher education
- Cash Flow of the Zoo

Projects/Plans (Aspirations)

The purpose of this section is to develop an alignment of who the Henson Robinson Zoo should become and what they aspire to be.

Below is a collective inventory of future aspirations that invoke the passion for the Henson Robinson Zoo:

- We aspire to be a leader in conservation, including endangered species and native species
- Be a leader in education
- To become the top source of animal information
- To become the top source of animal information
- To be the best possible stewards of animal care
- Maintain a clean zoo
- Be the “go-to” place that people want to come back to
- Offer new exhibits every year and season
- Be a safe place for staff and visitors
- Provide the community (family, individual, and corporate) with a personal experience
- Exceed accessibility to make the experience enjoyable for all
- Increase grant money
- Increase the awareness of the zoo membership
- Keep our membership with the American Zoological Association (AZA)
- Increase the number of visitors on a yearly basis
- Keep staff current on zoological information
- To become financially sustainable
- Welcome people to the zoo with a positive image
- Become the top source of animal information within the community – people come to us with questions about animals
- Create innovative exhibits to draw new visitors
- Provide activities for a wide variety of interests
- Increase partnerships with other agencies – “passport”
- Build a brand that is known for a quality experience for the community
- To be the best zoo in central Illinois

Big Ideas for Future Discussion

- Mayor’s green space ordinance
- Leveraging the topography for interactive adventure space for children
- Location of the parking
- Public transportation
- Cash Flow of the Zoo
Priorities (Passion)

The Henson Robinson Zoo envisions the following strategies will serve as a guide in moving Henson Robinson Zoo towards successful accomplishments. These strategies and initiatives were developed from the intentional and candid conversations among the Task Force members participating in the strategic planning session.

The purpose of this section is to decide on the actions and responsibilities to execute the strategies. Below is a collective inventory of possible strategic initiatives for the Henson Robinson Zoo:

**Initiative 1: Branding/Marketing**

- Goal 1: Bring to life a compelling and unified brand; build connections with the families in our community
- Goal 2: Become a “regional class” destination
- Goal 3: Establish a productive marketing program to the “whole package” offered by the zoo
- Goal 4: Enhance awareness of native animals in the region covered/represented by the zoo
- Goal 5: Build a customer service plan
- Goal 6: Make Springfield excited about the zoo again
- Goal 7: Provide a place where families want to gather and linger
- Goal 8: Build a plan to expand the membership programs

**Initiative 2: Economic Development**

- Goal 1: Create an endowment or savings for special projects
- Goal 2: Find funding opportunities
- Goal 3: Become financially self sufficient
- Goal 4: Build a fundraising plan that encompasses: money campaign, membership, endowment, and grant development

**Initiative 3: Educational Programming**

- Goal 1: Develop curricula in conjunction with state standards for education – build awareness for all ages
- Goal 2: Increase the educational options for people visiting the zoo
- Goal 3: Grow the volunteer program
- Goal 4: Improve our conservation impact – breeding, funding, release program – be the place to learn how to practice being “green”.

**Initiative 4: Expansion, Enhancement and Improvement**

- Goal 1: Enhance the exhibits ability to utilize all of the topography – use the space we have
- Goal 2: Develop a plan to create a welcoming, exciting, awesome environment – build the personal experience
- Goal 3: Re-build the structures so that they are as inviting and welcoming to visitors
- Goal 5: Build an exhibition plan

Provisions (Resources)

The Master Planning Task Force developed resources for the proposed projects and initiatives in sub-committees. These resources will be part of the Henson Robinson Zoo’s Master Plan.

Progress (Results)

The purpose of this section is to consider how the Strengths, Opportunities, and Aspirations might be translated into evidence that our desired outcomes are being achieved. Here the Henson Robison Zoo Master Plan Task Force put together a list of indicators/measurements that might be the success factors that indicate progress. This section seeks to identify leading measures of desired strategic outcomes.

- Increase the number of organized school trips
- Develop 8-10 monthly outreach programs
- Increase in retail sales
- Increase in the number of partnerships created – higher education
Strategic Integration

A vision is set by a core set of values. A mission is defined by a vision. Goals and objectives are defined by the mission. Strategies are set based on the goals and enabling objectives. A plan requires a strategy. Action moves forward from a plan. Change requires action.

The following are the steps that followed the strategic planning process:

**Idea 1: Integrating Strategic Initiatives into the Master Plan**

The initiatives identified in this strategic plan need to be integrated into the Master plan as driving factors. The initiatives will need to be further developed with the following:

- Develop tasks in terms of who would be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the initiatives
- Identify resources needed to ensure the successful implementation of the initiatives
- Develop specific projects which will support the full implementation of the initiatives in the master plan
- Develop a timeline for the initiatives in the master plan

**Idea 2: Implementing Strategic Initiatives**

The Zoo needs to develop plans and resources for the 4 initiatives identified during the planning process.

- Launching the Initiatives
- Managing the effort by holding resources accountable for the timeline expectation
- Sustaining growth by communicating the initiatives with the Park Board and community on an ongoing basis
- Keeping momentum by recognizing success and fulfilling exhausted resources
- Assessing the current state are re-defining ideal outcomes
Data Collection and Design

The purpose for data collection was as follows:

- To engage the public and stakeholders in the planning process by soliciting input.
- To obtain diverse, candid and first-hand views on the conditions of the Zoo and its direction.
- To identify issues and ideas that should be considered in planning for the future.

The following was the methodology that led to the collection of data for the master planning process:

**Interviewing**

- To motivate respondents and enlist cooperation
- To address large range of subjects and issues
- To allow free expression
- To allow flexibility if inquiry needs to go to a different direction
- Clarification for both interviewer and interviewee
- To probe deeper and elicit more information
- To observe non-verbal behavior
- To surface sensitive information
- To access inner states, intentions, feelings and meanings

**Observation**

- To gain understanding of the context and of how people operate in the system
- To learn things participants may be unwilling to talk about in an interview or focus group
- To confirm or disconfirm what has been learned through interviews
- To capture events in real time rather than as retrospective
- To access things that escape the conscious awareness of those who work at the agency
- To witness interpersonal dynamics

**Surveying**

- To collect data from a large group of people in a short time
- To cover a wide range of topics
- Affords anonymity for people who are likely to disclose critical information
- Easily quantifiable and summarized
- Useful in making comparisons across groups
- Can be self administered by mail or on-line
- To produce timely feedback for the peer consultants

**Focus Group**

- To obtain many points of view from a variety of individuals in a small amount of time
- To produce rich data when members of the focus group have synergy
- Could become an intervention as a result of the engagement

The following were the sources of information gathering:

**Interviews**

- Park Board Trustees
- Zoo staff

**Surveys/Questionnaires**

- Zoo visitors
- Zoo membership
- Zoo volunteers
- General public

**Observation**

- Niabi Zoo (Quad Cities)
- Peoria Zoo
- Miller Park Zoo (Bloomington)
- Scovill Zoo (Decatur)
- Henson Robinson Zoo (Springfield)

**Focus group**

- Park Board
- Planning Committee
Data Collection and Report Out

Results
- Results are presented based on responses to the surveys, interviews and observations
- The responses are grouped into themes
- The data reported out is based on the questions formulated by the Task Force

Visitor’s and Public Survey
A survey/questionnaire was administered for the zoo visitors and the public to provide input toward the development of a comprehensive Master Plan. The survey/questionnaire was provided to the visitors at the zoo and made available online to the public.

How often do you visit the zoo?
1. Weekly (3)
2. Monthly (17)
3. Annually (52)
4. Only Special Events (23)
5. 2-6 Times (13)

How would you rank the educational value that the zoo provides?
1. Perfect (24)
2. Average (78)
3. Needs Improvement (16)
4. Poor (1)

What would you like to see more of at the zoo?
1. Animals (99)
2. Educational Programs (18)
3. Concessions (9)
4. Special Events (19)

How would you rank the cleanliness of the zoo?
1. Very satisfied (48)
2. Average (51)
3. Needs Improvement (10)
4. Poor (1)

What do you like about the zoo?
1. Animals (peacocks, turtles and otters)
2. Playground
3. Educational programs

What do you dislike about the zoo?
1. Lack of exotic animals (tigers, lions, dolphins, elephants, giraffe, zebras etc) and ordinary animals
2. Closed exhibits

Visitor’s Survey Residence
Springfield, IL (57)
Virden, IL
Jacksonville, IL (29)
Chatham, IL (7)
Hillsboro, IL (4)
Hampshire, IL (3)
Riverton, IL (4)
Petersburg, IL (2)
Chicago, IL (2)
Kincaid, IL (2)
Athens, IL
Claremont, IL
Litchfield, IL
Pleasant Plains, IL
Rochester, IL (2)
Centralia, IL
Lincoln, IL (2)
Moline, IL
Athens, IL
Blue Mound, IL
Pleasant Plains, IL (2)
Ashland, IL (2)
Woodstock, IL
Loami, IL
Channahon, IL (2)
Findlay, IL
Carlinville, IL (2)
Moline, IL
Dawson, IL
Greenfield, IL
Willow Springs, IL
Neenah, WI
Livingston, LA
Chester, VA
Davenport, IA
Guilderland, NY
Yale, MI
Brookfield, MO (3)

In total, 149 people completed a survey.
How do you envision the zoo fitting into the long range plan of the district?

1. It needs to be part of the district’s bigger and long range plan
2. All programs including the zoo need to be fully integrated into the district- 1 park district versus 40 operating silos
3. The zoo should offer a unique and family oriented nature experience
4. Funding gap needs to be addressed

What are your constituents’ views of the zoo?

1. Events draw people to the zoo
2. Enjoyable educational programs
3. A place for moms with small children to visit
4. Zoo staff are dedicated to the animals but have low morale
5. Zoo experience is below average
6. The zoo is hard to find without way finding
7. Takes 30-40 minutes to see because there are not enough activities to engage visitors

What would be the first project you would like the zoo to undertake?

1. Visual improvement (fresh paint, clean up, etc)
2. Adequate exhibits that are interesting and exciting
3. Specialization (niche) – brand awareness and effectiveness
4. More natural looking habitats
5. Expand educational programs
6. Build closer collaboration between the Park Board and zoo staff
7. Improve overall experience of the zoo
8. More PR on new items or events
9. Offer a unique experience

What do you see as the biggest challenge for the zoo’s operations?

1. The zoo needs to be operated more as a business and find other financial support
2. Develop a master plan for grant writing
3. Need a full time person for marketing and public relations
4. Limited financial resources to support the zoo’s growth
5. Limited space and location

What does the zoo do well?

1. Community festivals and seasonal events
2. Educational programs
3. Family oriented experience

What type of activities would you like to see more of?

1. Enhanced corporate sponsorships
2. Specialization
3. Enhanced public relations
4. Develop volunteer program
5. Increase number of local animals
6. Improve the grounds
7. Healthy looking exhibits

What types of activities would like to see less of?

1. Costly animal exhibits that do not attract visitors
2. Create the habitat first, then find the animal

How can the zoo best serve the community of Springfield in the future?

1. Leverage joint educational programs
2. Corporate sponsorships
3. Work closer with elected officials
4. Specialization
5. Close encounters with animals
6. Zoological society needs to raise more money

How important do you feel the zoo is to the community and Park Board?

1. Partnerships with District 186 and surrounding school districts will be beneficial on co-development of educational programs
2. It is a unique park that needs to be leveraged
3. People have childhood memories of the zoo
Park Board and Zoo Master Planning Task Force Visit of the Zoo

The Park Board and members of the Zoo Master Planning Task Force toured the Henson Robinson Zoo and were asked to make observations and comment.

Describe the Entrance
1. pretty non-descript
2. Does not look bad
3. Inviting and optimizes use
4. Sufficient
5. Needs more sound
6. Needs more color
7. Appears friendly but not exciting
8. difficult to see name on building, too tall branches, lacks branding
9. inside space is appealing, classroom is a nice space

What do you like about the overall zoo experience?
1. Staff are knowledgeable and passionate
2. Amazing animal collection

How would you rank the educational value that the zoo provides?
1. Needs improvement
2. Need more interactive exhibits
3. Very good
4. Perfect – one of the stronger qualities

What animals would like to see more of at the zoo?
1. Exotic animals
2. Animals native to the area

How would you rank the cleanliness of the zoo?
1. Split among average, needs improvement to very satisfied
2. Does not always look neat

What do you dislike about the zoo?
1. Signage needs improvement
2. Insufficient space for animals
3. Needs updating
4. Too small
5. Not enough marketing
6. Buildings in disrepair

Ideas for the zoo
1. Add native plants to exhibits
2. Touch points
3. Need to move sign for red wolves closer to the visitors
4. Interactive apps for smart phones
5. Amphitheater for animals, zoo talks and special events

Ideas for the zoo
1. Need to integrate color into the buildings
2. Need better pathways
3. Get contractor to finish outstanding projects
4. Improve adopt an animal program
5. See Ft. Worth, TX for inspiration
6. Power wash fencing
7. Add art to concrete cylinders
8. Bald eagle exhibit needs more attractive elements

Ideas for the zoo
1. Turtles are in need of bath tubs
2. Bring animals on TV on a regular basis
3. Decorations need to match habitat
4. Keeper chats
5. Equine grooming
6. Reptile house
7. Murals
8. Organized tours

Ideas for the zoo
1. Need animal mascot
2. Provide sense of adventure
3. Black tie fundraiser
4. Featured guests at the zoo
5. Update website regularly
6. Seek corporate sponsorships
Zoo Membership Survey

The zoo has members who pay an established fee to enjoy benefits at the Henson Robinson Zoo as well as other zoos with which it has reciprocal agreements. The members are an important constituent of the zoo because of their regular patronage.

Are you aware of the reciprocal membership with other zoos?
1. 100% Responded Yes

How many times do you visit other zoos compared to our zoo?
1. 1-2 times (11) (31%)
2. 3 times (3) (8%)
3. 4 times (1) (3%)
4. Occasional/seldom (21) (58%)

Is your intent to renew membership? If yes, why? If not, Why?
1. Yes (35) (97%)
   • Because of Children
   • Discounts
   • Support the community and zoo
2. No (1) (3%)
   • Don’t visit the zoo that often

What would you like to see more at the zoo?
1. More animals (variety)
2. More flora
3. Better upkeep with updated exhibits
4. More children's activities
5. Better signs with information about animals

What can we do to enhance your zoo experience?
1. More exciting animals
2. Children's activities
3. Tidy up appearance of the zoo
4. More special events
5. Better food at concession stand
6. Allow members to get in early
7. Landscaping
8. Open earlier in the morning
9. Update information on animals
10. Better theme

How long have you been a member?
1. Less than 1 year (4) (12.5%)
2. 1 year (4) (12.5%)
3. 2 years (4) (12.5%)
4. 3 years (2) (6%)
5. 4 years (4) (12.5%)
6. 5 years or greater (14) (44%)
7. Longest membership (30 years)

Why did you become a member?
1. For our children (top response)
2. Affordability
3. Love and support the zoo

Suggestions/Comments
1. The train is a neat addition. However, at $3 a person, it is unlikely that we will ever use the train.
2. I would get the word out that it is a great place to visit around feeding time, and list the feeding times. When we’ve been there at that time, it’s so fun to see the animals.
3. I hate the playground. It takes away from why we are at the zoo, and kids just beg to be there, not to learn and see the animals.
4. Consider contacting local Boy Scouts and see if there is an Eagle Scout looking for a project.
5. Thanks for asking for input – we are excited to see what the future holds for the zoo.
6. The staff is wonderful and friendly.
7. Please, please, do not listen to the suggestions that we have elephants, hippos, etc. This is central Illinois!!!!!!! If you really want big cats, can they be cared for properly here? We are not Chicago or St. Louis.
8. I would inquire of the children to see if they have suggestions.
9. I believe the zoo is an asset to our community and the comments from the park board about disbanding the zoo are outrageous. It is a shame that Peoria and Decatur can support a zoo, but the capital city cannot.
10. I am just glad to have a place to go to locally that does not cost an arm & a leg that is fun as well as educational.
11. Having a children's museum and good zoo will keep people from feeling the need to travel to other communities for the same amenities.
12. Open earlier
13. A short term plan and a long term vision would be best suited for the zoo.
14. Improve the gift shop with a nice selection at reasonable prices like Scovill zoo. Scovill zoo has one of the nicest gift shops I have seen in a zoo, even better than the St. Louis zoo.
15. Sell ice cream bars, snow cones and other novelty items that won’t hurt the animals, not just as you enter, but maybe from a cart inside the zoo during peak times.
16. Photo taking with the animals, as long as it doesn’t become obnoxious is another great dollar generator. Professional photos of the actual animals for sale in the gift shop.
17. Charging to feed animals other than the goats is also a great money generator.
18. Behind the scenes tours can be another revenue generator. St. Louis charges $150 for a 1 hour behind the scenes (we have done several) and extra after that for hands on with a particular animal.
20. Kid friendly website
Executive Summary

Data was collected as part of the master planning process for the following purposes:

- To engage the public and stakeholders in the planning process by soliciting input.
- To obtain diverse, candid and first-hand views on the conditions of the Zoo and its direction.
- To identify issues and ideas that should be considered in planning for the future.

The data was collected through the following methods:

- Interviews (Park Board Trustees, zoo staff)
- Surveys/questionnaires (zoo visitors, members, volunteers and the general public)
- Observation (tours of regional zoos — Niabi, Peoria, Miller Park, Scovill and Henson Robinson)
- Focus group (Park Board and Planning Committee)

This report was developed for purposes of delegating the results from the data collection exercises to the appropriate committees for inclusion in their planning and deliberations. This was done to ensure that the public’s needs and suggestions were included in the planning process. There were instances where there was overlap among the designated committees. There were also instances where suggestions made by the public were appropriate for the zoo staff or the district. In those instances, the committees still discussed the suggestions and then deferred them to the appropriate body.
Facilities Committee

The goals of the Facilities Committee were as follows:

- Enhance the exhibits ability to utilize all of the topography – use the space we have
- Develop a plan to create a welcoming, exciting, awesome environment – build the personal experience
- Re-build the structures so that they as inviting and welcoming to visitors

The following were the suggestions made from the public as a result of the data collection process:

- Closed exhibits
- Habitats and exhibits need improvement (signage and adequate space for animals)
- General clean up of the zoo
- Need more benches for visitors
- Bus parking
- Bigger zoo
- Visual improvement (fresh paint, clean up)
- Explore additional space for growth
- Need more color
- Need more sound
- Buildings are in disrepair
- Need to integrate color into the buildings
- Need better pathways
- Get contractor to finish outstanding projects
- Power wash fencing
- Add art to the concrete cylinders
- Decorations need to match habitat
Marketing/Branding Committee

The goals of the Marketing/Branding Committee were as follows:

- Establish a productive marketing program to the “whole package” offered by the zoo
- Enhance awareness of native animals in the region covered/represented by the zoo
- Build a customer service plan
- Make Springfield excited about the zoo again
- Provide a place where families want to gather and linger
- Bring to life a compelling and unified brand; build connections with the families in our community
- Become a “regional class” destination
- Build a plan to expand the membership programs

The following were the suggestions from the public through the data collection process:

- Specialization (niche) – brand awareness and effectiveness
- More public relations on new items or events
- Need more events because they draw people to the zoo
- Way finding
- The zoo is a unique park that needs to be leveraged
- The zoo is a place where people have childhood memories
- Need a full time person for marketing and public relations
- It is difficult to see the name on the entrance of the building. Lacks branding
- Improve adopt an animal program
- See Ft. Worth, TX for inspiration
- Bring animals on TV on a regular basis
- Need an animal mascot
- Update website regularly
- Better food at concession stand
- Open earlier in the morning
- Allow zoo members to get in early
- Better theme for the zoo
- Souvenirs with zoo’s brand
- Market feeding times and list them out
- Improve the gift shop with a nice selection at reasonable prices like scovill zoo. Scovill zoo has one of the nicest gift shops even better than the St. Louis zoo.
- Sell ice cream bars, snow cones and other novelty items that won’t hurt the animals, not just as you enter, but maybe from a cart inside the zoo during peak times.
- Kid friendly website
Educational Committee

Goal/Mission for the Educational Programs:
The Henson Robinson Zoo Education Department is dedicated to providing, at the zoo and in the surrounding community, a variety of educational opportunities that connect people of all ages to the world’s ecosystems and that change the knowledge levels, beliefs, and behaviors of people towards the animals living in those ecosystems in order to promote their continued conservation.

Goals:
1. Improve revenue generation for the zoo.
2. Build awareness and marketing efforts of the HRZ value to the community of Springfield.
3. Help educate the community on animal and conservational awareness.
4. Provide an enjoyable recreational experience for the learner (child, adult, and family).
5. Establish a personal connection with animals and the community of Springfield.
6. Evaluate the return on investment for educational programs offered.
7. Educate visitors on the important role that the HRZ plays on promoting significant conservational efforts and accomplishments.
8. Grow the volunteer program
9. Develop curricula in conjunction with state standards for education – build awareness for all ages
10. Increase the educational options for people visiting the zoo
11. Improve our conservation impact – breeding, funding, release program – be the place for people to learn how to practice “green”

Current Programs Offered:
- Zoo Tots
- ZooperEdventures for ages 5-9
- Project H.O.W.L. for ages 10-12
- HRZ Camps and Classes for Kids for ages 5-6, 7-9, and 10-12
- Junior ZooKeepers for Ages 13-17
- Party Wild ages 4-12
- Discovery After Dark
- Evening Hike
- Family Camp Out
- Scout Campout
- Zoo to You

Current Challenges:
- Staffing availability and scheduling limitations
- Limitation on space
- Lack of marketing efforts, limited public awareness
- How do we generate attendance to the programs?
- Costs (price points for programs) may be prohibiting for low income families
- Location has limited mass transit transportation (not on bus route)
- Increased demand in outreach programs than can be supported
- Lack of consistency amongst volunteers
- Timing of scheduling for volunteers
- Limited motivation within
- High turnover
- Low retention for volunteers
- Lack of motivation for volunteers to come in on a regular basis, engage with the keepers
- Need to improve structure of signup (accountability) for the volunteers

The following were the suggestions made from the public as a result of the data collection process:
- Offer more feeding times to the public on a daily basis
- Improved signage with animal factoids
- More hands on experience, interaction and learning opportunities for children
- Keeper chats
- Make the zoo fun and interactive
- Animal classes
- Expand educational programs
- Improve overall experience of the zoo
- Offer unique experience that is a family oriented nature experience
- Enjoyable educational programs
- A place for moms with small children to visit
- Partnerships with District 186 and surrounding school districts will be beneficial on co-development of educational programs
- Develop volunteer program
- Leverage joint educational programs
- Closer encounters with animals
- Need more interactive exhibits
- Touch points
- Need to move sign for red wolves closer to the visitors
- Interactive maps for smart phones
- Amphitheater for animals, zoo talks and special events
- Organized tours
- Equine grooming
- More children’s activities
- More special events
- Update information on animals
- Consider contacting local Boy Scouts and see if there is an Eagle Scout looking for a project.
- Having a children’s museum and good zoo will keep people from feeling the need to travel to other communities for the same amenities.
- Behind the scenes tours can be another revenue generator. St. Louis charges $150 for a 1 hour behind the scenes (we have done several) and extra after that for hands on with a particular animal.
Economic Development Committee

Goals
- Create an endowment or savings for special projects
- Find funding opportunities
- Become financially self-sufficient
- Build a fundraising plan that encompasses: money campaign, membership, endowment, and grant development

Purpose:
To develop a fundraising plan and determine the best route or vehicle to raise funds which will complement the zoo’s master plan.

Current Efforts:
Fund Raising Structure – The committee discussed the fundraising structures that are already in place for the zoo. More specifically the committee discussed the roles of the Springfield Zoological Society and the Springfield Parks Foundation. The Parks Foundation was set up by the Park District to raise funds for the enhancement of the use, growth and preservation of the community’s parks. The Zoological Society was established by the Zoo to be its fundraising arm. The discussion led to clarification of the roles of the two entities and the determination by the committee that the Zoological Society was the appropriate entity to continue fundraising on behalf of the Zoo.

The following were the suggestions made as a result of the data collection process:
- Affordable train rides
- Funding gap needs to be addressed
- The zoo needs to be part of the district’s bigger and long range plan
- The zoo needs to be operated more as a business and find other financial support
- Develop a master plan for grant writing
- Need additional resources to support the zoo’s growth
- Enhance corporate sponsorships
- Zoological society needs to raise more money
- Black tie fund raiser
- Keep the zoo affordable for the public
- Photo taking with the animals, as long as it doesn’t become obnoxious is another great dollar generator. Professional photos of the actual animals for sale in the gift shop.
- Charging to feed animals other than the goats is also a great money generator
Animal Collection and Flora Committee

The animal collection and Flora Committee consisted of the Zoo staff to develop a collection that is consistent with the public desires space and resource availability. The Zoo staff developed an animal collection plan along the guidelines provided by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) during the development of the Master Plan. The animal collection plan will be a component of the zoo’s accreditation by the AZA.

The following were the suggestions made from the public as a result of the data collection process:

- Explore the inclusion of more exotic animals (Tigers, lions, dolphins, elephants, giraffes, zebras)
- Healthier looking animals
- More animal exhibits (bats, reptiles, cougar, water animals)
- Nocturnal house
- Adequate exhibits that are interesting and exciting
- More natural looking habitats
- Increase number of local animals
- Need adequate space for the animals
- Add native plants to exhibits
- Bald eagle exhibit needs more attractive elements
- Turtles are in need of bath tubs
- Reptile house
- Careful consideration needs to be given toward the request for big exotic animals.

The zoo is located in central Illinois and in a small location. Bigger animals require more costly care.
The facilities committee evaluated all of the buildings and dwellings at the zoo based on criteria that assessed conditions with supporting comments. The buildings and exhibits were assessed if they were in poor, good or fair conditions. The committee discussed the following broad issues:

- Street/road in front of the zoo
- Expansion of the parking lot

The committee was tasked with figuring out what could be done to existing structures.
### Existing Facility Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Exhibit</th>
<th>Current Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. African Wild Dog</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA. Stage/Amphitheater</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Possible Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Kitchen/Quarantine</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Replace Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB. Box Turtle</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No Repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Animal Holding</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Interior remodeling required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC. Education Birds of Prey</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Replace and relocate – Relocation concurrent with outdoor Quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Horse Shelter</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Barn</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No Repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Asian Primates</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Minor Repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Penguin Building</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Replace Building – Pond in Good Condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Entrance/Administration Building</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Immediate: Make entrance handicap accessible. Short Term: Create drop off area – Remodel building interior to better facilitate functions served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Play Ground/Shelter Picnic</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Provide playground lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Otter/Alligator Exhibit</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Otter/Alligator targeted for new locations – reuse exhibit for other animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Wolverine</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Lemur</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Cougar</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Hay Barn/Garage</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Maintenance Building</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vulture Exhibit</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Removal/Replacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Bear Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Eagle Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Crane Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Bobcat Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. Red Wolf Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fence repairs required/possible structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Old Eagle Exhibit</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Will be replaced with new Otter exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Birds of Prey Exhibit</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Replace exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Contact Area</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Groundhog</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y. Australia Building</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Replace Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Coati Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Marmoset Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Sloth Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Spider Monkey Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pond</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Remove island and shoreline restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RR. Parking</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Parking deficient and in need of bus parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed Site Plan

Facility/Exhibit Condition Comments
A. African Wild Dog Good No repairs Required
BB. Box Turtle Good No Repairs Required
D. Horse Shelter Good No repairs Required
E. Barn Good No Repairs Required
K. Wolverine Good No repairs Required
L. Lemur Good No repairs Required
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Exhibit</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Cougar</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Hay Barn/Garage</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Maintenance Building</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Bear Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Eagle Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Crane Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Bobcat Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Contact Area</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Groundhog</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Coati Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Marmoset Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Sloth Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z. Spider Monkey Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RR. Restroom</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No repairs Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proposed Repairs**

The following facilities require repairs. They will however remain in their present locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Exhibit</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Animal Holding</td>
<td>Remodel</td>
<td>Interior remodeling required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Asian Primates</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Minor Repairs Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Entrance/Administration Building</td>
<td>Remodel</td>
<td>Immediate: Make entrance handicap accessible. Short Term: Create drop off area – Remodel building interior to better facilitate functions served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Play Ground/Shelter Picnic</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Provide playground lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pond</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Remove island and shoreline restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. Red Wolf Exhibit</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fence repairs required/possible structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proposed New Facilities**

The following sketches/drawings represent concepts that the Enhancement and Improvement Committee developed. These conceptual drawings do not represent fully developed plans for the Master Plan. These drawings/sketches represent possibilities for the Henson Robinson Zoo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Exhibit</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA. Stage/Amphitheater</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Relocate and Update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Kitchen/Quarantine</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Replace Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC. Education Birds of Prey</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Relocate near vehicle access point, concurrent with new outdoor quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Penguin Building</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Replace building and improve visibility – Pond in good condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Exhibit</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Reuse exhibit for other animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vulture Exhibit</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Removal/Replacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Otter Exhibit</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>New Exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Birds of Prey Exhibit</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Replace exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y. Australia Building</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Replace Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QQ. Outdoor Quarantine</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Relocation concurrent with Kitchen/Quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZZ. Reptile Building</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>New Exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Create covered drop off area – add 60 vehicle and six bus parking spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Construct concurrent with potential new exhibit area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed Parking

The current parking space was assessed as not adequate to accommodate Zoo visitors during special events hosted at the zoo. Currently, the parking space can accommodate approximately 65 vehicles without any buses. During special events such as Zoolie Ghoulie when there are hundreds of visitors to the zoo, the space across the street from the zoo is utilized to accommodate zoo visitors. That space/property is owned by the city of Springfield’s City Water Light and Power (CWLP). The sketch below represents the current parking space.

The concept sketch below represents a concept for additional parking should the city of Springfield lease the land across the street from the zoo to the Park District. Should the CWLP land be annexed for parking, the zoo could increase its available parking to 105 for vehicles and 6 for buses. The street (Zoo Trail) that separates the zoo from the CWLP land would have to be closed. The existing parking lot would be connected to the proposed addition through a tree lined path.
Proposed Entrance/Administration Building

The concept sketches below are from a vision of a welcoming and imposing entrance that is representative of zoo. This entrance would greet the visitor with expectations of a journey into an animal kingdom which is representative of different parts of the world. The entrance would invite the visitor to explore what the zoo has to offer with passage through the main administrative building and outside to the various exhibits. The entrance would also provide shelter and a drop off location for visitors.
Proposed Amphitheater and Stage

The concept sketch below represents the proposed amphitheater for the zoo. The amphitheater would be built utilizing the topography of the land where the zoo is located. This would provide the amphitheater with natural elevations. This proposed amphitheater would be able to accommodate at least 150 visitors for special presentations such as keeper chats.
Proposed Elevated Walkway

The concept sketches below represent the vision of having an elevated walkway that would take visitors through a number of exhibits. The elevated walkway would be built utilizing the topographical elevations within the zoo’s property. This concept would allow the zoo to add new exhibits on parts of the property that would otherwise not be accessible without a walkway. The elevated walkway would provide visitors with an exciting high vantage point into exhibits and an illusion of being in the exhibit itself.
Reptile Building

For a number of years now, the Henson Robinson Zoo has been without a home for its reptile collection. Some of the reptiles are housed in the administrative building while others are housed in various buildings of the zoo. The public, through the surveys that were administered for this master plan have asked for a home to be built for the reptile collection. The proposed Reptile House at the Henson Robinson Zoo will be home to a variety of reptile and amphibian species from around the world. From tiny frogs to American alligators, visitors will be able to explore the diversity of these magnificent creatures. Animals from the African desert, the South American rainforest, and the prairies of central Illinois will all be on display in this unique experience. The visual concept below is of the building that would be home to all of the zoo’s reptiles. The building would overlook the pond that will hold the alligators. This would allow the visitor to also view the alligators from the Reptile Building.

The layout of the building will have a diamond shaped exhibit in its center to allow visitors to flow easily through the exhibit. The diamond shaped exhibit would thus naturally control the flow of traffic.
Marketing and Branding Plan

Marketing Strategy:

As the zoo moves forward with marketing and branding and in order to create a whole campaign that is cohesive and holds true to the mission and vision statements contained in its strategic plan, the following is the general recommendation on marketing strategy:

*The Henson Robinson Zoo needs to create a niche for itself capitalizing on the unique animal collection it currently possesses.*

The following are the projects/initiatives at a glance proposed to enhance the Henson Robinson Zoo’s marketing and branding efforts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Sales and Promotion: Master Plan Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Visual Branding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Physical/Onsite Branding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communications: Website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Brand Launch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Media Relations - General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Media Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Annual Theme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Specialized Promotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sales and Promotion: Strategic Alliances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Marketing and Media Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marketing and Branding Plan Implementation

**Strategy 1: Sales and Promotion: Master Plan Completion**

- Host an unveiling reception for the Master Plan Committee Members and the media
  - Host reception in the morning to allow media to attend and get sound bites and images to use throughout their daily broadcasts
  - Hosting options:
  - Host at Erin’s Pavilion to minimize the impact of the weather
  - Include photos of the zoo
  - Have animals present if possible
  - Has plenty of space so people do not feel cramped and can be comfortable
  - Host at the Zoo to show the zoo in its current state and highlight the need for the recommended changes
  - Weather permitting, take the media on a tour of the zoo and point out where the changes will take place and specify how it is a benefit to the zoo and the community
  - Include media from Springfield and surrounding communities such as Decatur, Bloomington/Normal, Champaign and Peoria
  - A formal but BRIEF presentation from the zoo and Park District representatives
Strategy 2: Visual Branding
With the new logo it is essential that graphic standards be established which would include specific details of the logo presentation in all of its various forms including but not limited to stationary, print communications, electronic applications, on and off site signage.

Once the technical attributes of the graphic standards have been formalized, these need to be applied to physical applications including but not limited to:
- Company letter head and envelopes
- On site signage
- All print marketing materials i.e. brochures
- Electronic usage such as the website

Strategy 3: Physical / Onsite Branding
Once the technical attributes of the graphic standards have been formalized, the application of branding, graphics, color, etc. need to be applied to zoo’s external and internal physical environment to improve and enhance its look and to position the zoo as “a fun and rewarding” place to visit and support.

Additionally, many improvements can be made without high costs or changes to infrastructure, i.e., painting the building’s entry areas. Other improvements can be made at modest investment by utilizing Park District capabilities or resources to coordinate and execute, i.e., modifying the zoo sign to reflect the new logo, graphics and color appeal. A specific plan can be developed to be reviewed and prioritized with the zoo and Park Board.

The following are recommendations on improvements and finalization, including but not limited to:
- Re-do or upgraded permanent site sign (by road)
- Add signage on fencing along parking lot to improve visual appeal
- Design, paint and enhance outside Entry area
- Design and modify existing Interior area with new paint and graphics
- Design color scheme and graphics for modifying exhibit and animal posts/signage
- Fix, via routine maintenance, run-down and unattractive, exhibit buildings, fencing, and gathering areas (for example, seed and maintain central grassy common area)
  - Seek advice and expertise from Park District’s in-house botanical department
- Create long-term plan for exhibit area graphics, directional signs and color scheme
- Add colorful “way-finding” map
  - Opens up potential for sponsorship dollars
Strategy 4: Communications: Website
The current website was assessed by the committee.

Recommendations for the new website include:
• New logo needs to be throughout the entire site
• Ability to purchase memberships or donate to the zoo online
  ◦ A downloadable PDF fact sheet of gifting the zoo through an estate or will
• Store which visitors could purchase zoo memorabilia
• Searchable calendar of events
• Searchable database of classes
  ◦ Online registration for classes
  ◦ Ability to pay class registration fees online
• Interactive elements
  ◦ Zoo keeper blog
  ◦ You tube videos of the animals
  ◦ Pictures of zoo events and the ability for visitors to submit their own pictures of zoo visits
• Interactive Children’s’ page (Monkey Business)
  ◦ Q&A fun quizzes about the zoo and wild life in general
  ◦ Downloadable coloring pages
• Educator Area
  ◦ Restricted area for teachers only
  ◦ Informational materials for class
  ◦ Prep material for field trips or in school visits
• Link to Facebook page throughout the site
• Link page
  ◦ Links to reciprocal zoos’ website
  ◦ Links to other websites dealing with animals and conservation
• Recognition page for corporate members and sponsors
• Ability to subscribe to an electronic newsletter through the site

Strategy 5: Sales and Promotion: Brand Launch
The following are recommendations for the brand launch:
• Host an afterhours media/VIP invitation only “preview” of the zoo
  ◦ Include media from all surrounding communities
  ◦ Include local VIPS- the mayor and other high profile community members
    ▪ The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce members
    ▪ Springfield Young Professionals
  ◦ Offer invitation “prize packages” to local radio stations to have as give always to help promote the event
• Dr. Doolittle Day (May 5, 2012?)
  ◦ Make this a larger than life day
    ▪ Live music
    ▪ Face painting for the kids
    ▪ Zoo keeper chats
    ▪ Behinds the scenes opportunities
    ▪ Give aways
    ▪ Showcase new graphics and displays
    ▪ Have displays about the new changes coming to the zoo so visitors can start to get excited about the zoo

Strategy 6: Sales and Promotion: Media Relations- General
The following are the recommendations to develop and distribute media kits on the Zoo:
• Send Press Kits to all the TV stations who serve the Central Illinois Area
  ◦ Press kits need to be colorful and creative not just factual
  ◦ Create a master list of all the TV stations with their addresses, phone numbers and name of the contact person for promotions and public service announcements.
  ◦ Determine specific deadline needs for each entity in regards for broadcasting announcements
  ◦ Send announcements and press releases on a regular and consistent schedule
    ▪ Remember these announcements do not need to be “real” news. They can be about feeding times, animals celebrating a birthday, special events- any reason to reach out to the media
Strategy 7: Sales and Promotion: Media Relations - Central IL
The following are the recommendations to build effective media relations in Central Illinois:

- Establish a monthly opportunity to go on the air with stations that reach the primary demographic with a “What’s New at the Zoo” feature
- Create family prize packages and send them to the radio stations to give away especially around the time of special (entry fee required) events
  - Family four pack of day passes, and a couple of items such as a t-shirt or mug with the new logo on it is ideal
  - Send these packages to the stations who cater to moms or kids
    - WNNS
    - WDBR
    - KISS FM
    - ABE
    - WFMB
  - Send at least 5 packages to each station. The packages can be staggered throughout the year so all the stations are not doing the same giveaways at the same time
- Get media sponsorships for other major events at the zoo and work on building those events to the level and expectations of Zoolie Ghoulie

Strategy 8: Sales and Promotion: Media Relations - Annual Theme
The following are recommendations on developing an annual theme:

- Work with zoo staff to identify a unique theme for each year
  - Theme could center around an animal, event or idea such as conservation
- Create a formal promotion calendar of how that theme will be implemented throughout the year
  - Special events at the zoo
  - Website components
  - Facebook components
- Press releases to the media as dictated by the individual press guidelines
Strategy 9: Sales and Promotion: Membership

It is recommended that the Zoo staff should review current membership rates and develop strategies to increase membership fees and the following recommended ideas.

- Enhance the existing membership package
  - Add a coupon sheet or book that features discounts to community businesses
  - Ideally these would be businesses that have corporate memberships with the zoo or that the zoo has some type of strategic alliance
  - Specifically spell out the value of the reciprocal membership
- Establish a Corporate membership in addition to the individual/family memberships
  - Corporate membership will have three levels
    - **“Penguin” Level I**
      - Cost TBD (i.e., $250)
      - Window cling sign
      - Formal thank you letter
      - Website listing
      - Listing on a display at the zoo of corporate members
      - Employees would receive a specified dollar amount off the purchase of a zoo membership
      - Additional benefits to be determined with zoo staff
    - **“Peacock” Level II**
      - Cost TBD ($500)
      - Window cling
      - Formal thank you letter
      - Website listing
      - Listing on a display at the zoo of corporate members
      - Employees would receive a larger specified dollar amount off the purchase of a zoo membership
      - Additional benefits to be determined with zoo staff
    - **“Eagle” Level III**
      - Cost TBD ($1,000) – Same as Peacock Level II but with additional benefits and recognition

*Benefits and membership costs listed here are tentative and for illustration purposes. Number of levels and actual figures to be determined by the Zoo staff.*

- Conduct membership drive from May 5th through August 15, 2012
  - Corporate membership goal- 150 new members
  - Individual/Family membership goal- 250 new members
- Potential members will be reached in the following manner
  - Corporate membership
    - Direct mail
    - Email Blast
    - Direct Calling
  - Individual/Family Membership
    - Offsite membership drives
      - Booths at the State Fair
      - Booths at County Fairs
      - Table at Movies and Music in the Park Series
      - Booth at the Mall (if allowed)
      - Booth space at various festivals as theme and time allow
- The table top displays need to be updated and made attractive and approachable
  - Add an info Kiosk
  - Add and A/V display
  - Purchase an “EZ Up” style tent to increase visibility at outdoor events
Strategy 10: Sales and Promotion: Specialized Programs

- Develop the Lemur Mascot (i.e., Larry the Lemur, Lu Lu the Lemur etc.) to tie in with new logo
  - Hold a “Name the Mascot Contest”
    - People submit their name suggestions via the website for a period of time
    - The zoo determined no more than 5 “acceptable” options.
    - The public can then vote on those 5 options
    - Winner receives a $1000 “Scholarship”

- Strategy for use is to increase visibility at:
  - Parades
  - School Events
  - Zoo Events
  - Membership Drives
  - Park Events

- Improve and better promote Adopt An Animal Program
  - Model values after Scovill Zoo
  - Establish a wall or other area recognizing people or businesses who adopt an animal
  - Improve quality of certificate of adoption (Keep plenty of signed certificates on hand to prevent delays and capitalize on impulse.)
  - Create a more attractive fact sheet and enhance sense of value
  - Host 2 or 3 after hour adoption events with zookeeper chats and behind the scenes opportunities

Strategy 11: Sales and Promotion: Strategic Alliances

- It is recommended that the Zoo work with local businesses and social groups within the community to develop mutual beneficial relationships

Strategy 12: Manager of Marketing and Media Relations

- Marketing and branding requires a tremendous amount of detail work. It is recommended that the zoo consider having this as a dedicated function to successfully implement the recommendations put forth in this plan. The Zoo would also need to consider establishing a committee of volunteers to advise it on marketing and branding.
The following are the projects/initiatives at a glance proposed to enhance the Henson Robinson Zoo’s educational efforts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interactive Graphics: Create permanent interactive activities that engage the visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Develop educational partnerships with colleges and universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Create Horticultural Opportunities for Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Build Programs for preschool and elementary students and teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Enhance the docent and junior volunteer involvement, engagement and recruitment process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Increase the number of onsite programs throughout the whole year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assessment of all educational programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Create partnerships with the school district to align programs with state standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Improve conservation impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Technological Enhancements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Plan Implementation**

**Strategy 1: Interactive Graphics: Create permanent interactive activities that engage the visitor.**

The following are the recommendations to create permanent interactive activities that engage visitors:

- Wing span of birds of prey
- Build a flower that identifies the parts of the flower
- Label the continents and the animals that are there
- Fur station, guess what fur?
- Primate hand prints – compare your hand print to the animals
- Australia- How far does a kangaroo jump?
- Foot prints painted on the pathways
- Skulls to touch
- Signage for goat area with picture and name
Strategy 2: Develop Educational Partnerships with Colleges and Universities

The following are the recommendations to develop partnerships with colleges and universities:

- Increase and improve the internship program by partnering with Lincoln Land Community College
  - Leverage them to help with animal care
  - Marketing efforts
  - Graphics and Signage
- Utilize college professors to be guest visitors
  - Increasing the scientific basis
  - Partner with to offer programs
- Partnering with Western Illinois University to clean the cadavers and bring back school
- Horticultural students
- Art students and photo classes

Strategy 3: Create Horticultural Opportunities for the Visitors

The following are the recommendations to create horticultural opportunities for the Zoo’s visitors:

- Create a gardening educational plan
- Cut out in the zoo
- Become a master gardener site
- Plant identification
- Makeover of Botany Bob
- Offer nursery workshops

Strategy 4: Build programs for preschool and elementary students and teachers

The following are the recommendations to build programs for preschool and elementary students and teachers:

- Develop a package for preschool children
  - Offer package for children – activity, animal engagements, lunch, learning and interactions
- Dress up for the zoo activity
  - Zoo keepers
- Teacher appreciation
  - After hour – What are we doing now? How can
  - Continuing Education – build in educational components for the teachers
- Resource center
  - Significant pre-visit curriculums for the zoo
  - Educational guides
  - Animal and conservation education guides
  - Ways to incorporate the zoo visit into the school curriculum
- Further build educational curriculums for children to do in the classroom
  - Coloring pages and fun facts
  - Classification worksheets
  - Offering information that supports the state educational program
Strategy 5: Enhance the Docent and Junior Volunteer Involvement, Engagement and Recruitment Process

The following are the recommendations to enhance the docent and junior volunteer involvement, engagement and recruitment process:

- Keep docents involved, active and engaged at the zoo
- Recruitment
  - Identify more participants
  - Assess the needs of the docents and junior volunteers
  - Provide a variety of programs that the docent can select from
  - Evaluate the recruitment process
  - Incorporate more retired people
- Scheduling
  - Offering more opportunities and programs, filling in the gaps of the educational programs
  - Having an area for docents to use – simple to use
  - Identifying the peak times and docent needs
  - Feedback from the docents and junior volunteers
- Combine activity station and the animal close encounter
  - Animal facts
  - Revaluate creative bio facts and activities
  - Enclosure for multi-use areas for animals
- Grab and Go more user friendly for docents and junior volunteers
- Develop simple user kits
  - Make it easy to show the animals
  - Build educational stations for the docents and junior volunteers

Build the relationship between the staff and the docents / Jr. Volunteers

- Keeper conversations with the docents
- Improve social interaction between staff and docents
- Improve retentions
- Increase the need and their value to the zoo
- Docent program that are tailored for what they want to do
- Appreciation day for the docent
- Evaluate the national associations for docents - the card maintains status to get into other museums free

Strategy 6: Increase the Number of Onsite Programs Throughout the Whole Year

The following are the recommendations to increase the number of onsite programs throughout the whole year:

- Animal feedings
- Docent activities
- Interpretive programs
- Keeper talks
- Amphitheater events
- Puppet shows
- Family Events
- Birthday parties
- Educational programs
- Diversify the schedule so that the timeslots accommodate with more families, allowing more people to participate in the educational programs
- Develop programs for the general public
- Schedule an all staff meeting to discuss new program ideas and creative ways to get people involved.
- Improve partnerships with SCOPE afterschool programs, H.S., and private before and after school day care
- Build programs to support the local Boy and Girl Scout troops
  - Badges
  - Curriculums for scouting programs
  - Eagle scout volunteers
- ROI for programs / Assessing Profit Margins
- Tracking effectiveness of programs
  - What are the kids interests and how much are they learning in the classroom
  - Fiscal Responsibility
    - Breakeven point - Break even sales = fixed cost + variable cost
    - How much prep time does it take?
  - Attendance / Demand / Retention
  - Survey responses / referrals
  - PR and awareness
  - People like the programs
  - Helping to fulfill the mission
Strategy 7: Assessment of All Educational Programs

The following are the recommendation to assess all educational programs:

- Price Points / Price tiered
- Number of attendees
- Time of the day – after hours pricing
- For-Profit versus Non-for-profit
- Staffing Resources
  - Time commitment for staff involvement
  - How to get help from docents, teachers, and volunteers
- Who is managing the cost versus return?
- Should part time staff be added?
- Evaluation of current programs
  - Financially doable
  - Increase the number of onsite programs throughout the year
  - How to improve
  - Youth day camp educational opportunities

Strategy 8: Create Partnerships with the School District to Align Programs with State Standards

The zoo needs to create partnerships with the school district in order to align its educational programs with state standards.

Strategy 9: Improve Conservation Impact

The zoo needs to develop a plan that enhances and improves its conservation impact.

Strategy 10: Technological Enhancements

The zoo needs to assess its technology for purposes of developing a technology plan which should enhance the visitors’ experience.
Economic Development Plan

Recommendations:
The following are the Economic Development recommendations at a glance developed for the Henson Robinson Zoo. The last two recommendations were specifically directed to the Zoological Society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Role of the Zoological Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Henson Robinson Zoo Annual Giving Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Henson Robinson Zoo Capital Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Henson Robinson Zoo Grant Seeking/Writing Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Henson Robison Zoo Bequests Society Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Henson Robison Zoo Fund Raising Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Henson Robison Zoo Corporate Giving Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fund Raising Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Capacity Building Grant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic Development Plan Implementation

Strategy 1: The Role of the Zoological Society
- The Zoological Society was established by the Zoo to be its fundraising arm.
- The Society can assist in raising awareness of the zoo through special fundraising efforts and gifts.
- The Society can raise awareness of the Zoo’s needs throughout the community.
- The Zoological Society is the appropriate entity to continue fundraising on behalf of the Zoo.
- The Zoological Society should establish an advisory committee that can assist the board in diversifying its fundraising role. Since the society has no staffing, the advisory committee could assist with fundraising efforts.
- The Zoological Society needs to enhance its marketing and branding efforts in the community.
- Brochure for the Zoological Society: The Zoological Society needs to create a new brochure that can be distributed throughout the community. This would address any perception issues about the organization and clarify its role in the community and district.
- The Society needs to have its own website/link on the zoo’s website.
- The society should utilize social media.
Strategy 2: Henson Robinson Zoo Annual Giving Plan

- Annual giving is one of the most important areas in an organization’s fundraising efforts. This involves the cultivation of donors to give on an annual basis.
- Any gift made during the year would fall into this category.
- An annual appeal to the public, members of the zoo and corporations would constitute the giving program.
- A membership plan needs to be developed. This would tie into the annual giving program and assist in clarifying where big endowments would go.
- Determine giving levels that challenge your donors to increase their financial support: for example, $100, $500, $1000.
- Plan to establish at least three giving clubs so donors see the progression in size of gifts – and thus upgrade their contributions: for example, $100, $200, and $400.
- Select a name for the giving club(s). Conventional names could include names of animals found at the zoo. The key will be to consider names unique to the zoo: the name of the zoo’s founder, a famous member, a historical figure embodying the organization’s mission, or a concept important to the organization.
- Determine the donor’s benefits at each level: plaques or certificates, parking, listing of name in program or annual report, access to special events.
- Decide how and where you will recognize and publicize giving club donors: newsletter, plaque, annual report, program, special brochure.
- Identify board members and key donors who can “seed” each giving club with their contributions. Contact them personally to ask them to serve as charter members.
- Build a database with benefactors and donors.
- Prepare a brochure for each club or a booklet for all clubs:
  
  Describe how the giving club works, stipulating an annual contribution of at least $__________ for (usually) unrestricted support.

  State whether gift can be made in several payments – and whether deferred gifts will be counted (some organizations have a giving club just for those who have remembered the organization in their wills).

  Identify and illustrate the benefits of membership. List charter members.

  For higher-level giving clubs, plan an annual special event such as a luncheon, dinner, or seminar. The executive director must be on hand. Consider inviting prominent person or special speaker (Jack Hanna, Jeff Corwin if they are in the area). These events will encourage renewal of contributions.

  At least once each year, list donors and giving levels for each club in your newsletter, annual report, or (preferably) special publication.
Strategy 3: Henson Robinson Zoo Capital Campaign

A capital campaign is a time-limited effort by a nonprofit organization to raise significant dollars for a specific project.

Often the money raised is to fund the acquisition, construction, or renovation of a building. Sometimes, capital campaigns are used to build an endowment for the future. In other cases, capital campaigns fund an extraordinary expenditure such as an expensive piece of equipment.

Capital campaigns have a beginning and an end, but often span several years. A capital campaign employs all the usual means of raising funds such as direct mail and direct solicitation. Capital campaigns require extraordinary preparation and skillful execution.

- Conduct a feasibility study for a capital campaign.
- Select priorities from the master plan which need to be part of the capital campaign.
- Need to identify community leaders including the park board members to champion the campaign.
- Enlist local celebrities to champion the campaign.
- Visually communicate the need for the capital campaign.
- Develop a campaign theme and materials.
- Establish a goal.
- Identify volunteers who would work on the campaign. (Some of these volunteers could come from the membership of the zoo.)
- Build some fun activities with the campaign.
- Approach participants of the annual giving campaign for the capital campaign.
- Hire a professional consultant for the campaign.
- Ensure the visibility of the campaign to the public.
- Report on progress.

Strategy 4: Henson Robinson Zoo Grant Seeking/Writing Plan

Grants are funds that are disbursed by an entity to address specific needs. Entities that are involved in grant-making are foundations, the government, corporations, not for profits, trusts etc. In order for organizations or individuals to access grant funds there is usually a requirement for an application to be submitted. Grant makers generally would make their decisions based on the satisfaction of the following criteria:

1. Problems/Needs
2. Approach
3. Outcomes Expected
4. Evaluation
5. Organizational Profile/Experience
6. Budget

- After the master plan is completed and approved, the zoo needs to review the recommended projects and plans and begin to match them with potential funding.
- A database or spreadsheet with the master plan’s initiatives needs matched with potential funding opportunities (foundations, corporate and government) needs to be created.
- The Zoo needs to identify some grant writers in the community willing to volunteer their expertise to seek and write grants.
Strategy 5: Henson Robison Zoo Bequests Society Plan

- A Bequest is the act of giving or leaving personal property by a will.
- Something that is bequeathed; a legacy.
- A Bequest Society would consist of individuals who have decided to name the Zoo in their will.
- The society is set up to recognize and celebrate individuals who have made their decisions to bequeath to the Zoo.
- The first step will be to identify an individual who has named the Zoo in their will.
- The Society could be named after that individual or the founder of the Zoo.
- The Zoo would then work with the identified individual to cultivate others to make their decision to bequeath to the Zoo.

By designating 1%, 5%, 100% or any $ amount of your estate to the Henson Robinson Zoo, you can ensure that the Zoo will continue to be a place where families can learn about wildlife while providing an enjoyable recreational experience.

We value and appreciate all gifts, and believe the best gift is the one that’s right for you.

My Legacy

I have included the Henson Robinson Zoo in my estate plan. Please include me in Legacy Society invitations and communications.

☐ I am interested in including the Henson Robinson Zoo in my estate plan. Please contact me with more information.

☐ I am interested in including the Henson Robison Zoo in my estate plan. I’d like you to meet with my professional advisor.

Name

Phone  Email

Address

City   State   Zip

Professional Advisor

Firm

Phone  Email

Strategy 6: Henson Robison Zoo Fund Raising Plan

- The Zoo/Park District needs a dedicated position for fund raising and marketing.
- An evaluation of current staffing needs and roles needs to be undertaken to address the needs of the master plan.

The following are the zoo’s current special events and fund raising events:

- Breakfast with the Easter Bunny – This is an event that involves parents enjoying continental breakfast while the children in attendance visit with the Easter Bunny and hunt for eggs. Special prize eggs hidden around the zoo will offer a bonus for the lucky families that find them.
- Party for the Planet – This event involves honoring the earth as visitors learn about protecting the planet and how everyday decisions can make an impact.
- Dr. Doolittle Day – This is a free admission event which involves day long activities including animal programs, turtle races and more.
- Mother’s Day at the Zoo – Mothers get into the zoo free of charge. Children make a free craft to give to their mothers.
- World Ocean Day – The Zoo joins the Association of Zoo Aquariums and zoos across the country in examining the importance of oceans.
- Father’s Day at the Zoo - Fathers get into the zoo free of charge. Children make a free craft to give to their fathers.
- Zoofari – This is a free of charge event. Activities throughout the day demonstrate how the zoo staff keep the animals happy and active.
- Breakfast with the Animals – This event allows participants to experience the sounds of the zoo awakening while enjoying continental breakfast. Participants are able to view zoo animals receive special breakfast treats.
- Birdie for the Zoo – This is a golf outing fundraiser hosted by the Zoological Society.
- Members’ Picnic – This is a member only evening at the zoo with free cook out style food.
- Fur, Feather, Fin, Fall Filling – This is the final free admission event of the year. It is an event packed with activities.
- Zoolie – Ghoulie – Children collect candy at stations set up around the zoo. There is a costume contest at 5 pm each evening.
- Pancakes, Paws and Santa Claus – This is an event that has Santa Claus present. There is a pancake breakfast served and attendees are able to meet some of the animals. All children in attendance receive a free photo with Santa.
- Holiday Lights at the Zoo – Participants are able to tour the zoo which is lit with thousands of lights and displays creating a spectacular holiday experience. Attendees who bring unwrapped toys for tots get in free.
Strategy 7: Henson Robison Zoo Corporate Giving Plan
• Corporate giving, also known as corporate philanthropy, refers to the act of for-profit companies donating some of their profits or resources to charity. Donations may come from the company directly, or through a separate, company-sponsored foundation or public charity.
• The Zoo needs to identify potential corporate benefactors within the community for purposes of cultivating their support of the Zoo.

Strategy 8: Fund Raising
• The Zoo needs to dedicate within its existing structure a fundraising function. This function should be combined with the marketing function and have that as its sole focus.

Strategy 9: Capacity Building Grant
• The Zoo needs to explore capacity building grants that would help in developing its capacity to effectively market itself and launch a fundraising campaign. A foundation needs to be identified that can underwrite the cost of a fundraising campaign.
Budget
Operating Budget

Although not part of the scope of study by the master plan development team, a brief understanding of the budget is important to document for historical purposes as part of this report.

The annual operation budget of the Henson Robinson Zoo (2010/11) is approximately $770,000 of which approximately 70% represents wages and benefits to employees. The remaining 30% budget is primarily facility/grounds maintenance/repair, utilities and animal food and care.

Annual operating revenues are approximately $689,291 of which the primary source of revenue to support the operating budget is from the annual Museum Tax Levy that represents about 60% of all annual operating revenues. Other revenue streams to support annual operating expenses are admissions (18%); concessions and merchandising (10%), special events (3-4%) and memberships & adopt an animal program (2%).

The annual operating deficit is supported through the Springfield Park District General/Corporate Tax Levy. The Springfield Park District is restricted on its increase in its annual levy (including museum tax levy) as provided under the Illinois Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), also know as “tax caps”, since 1996/97 that puts additional challenges on budget/funding for services of the Park District.

Considerations

The Zoo Administrative Staff, Park Administrators and Board are encouraged to continue efforts to increase revenues and reduce expenses at the same time improving their offerings to the public through capital upgrades/exhibits and enhanced experiences and buy in from corporate and private donors.

Recommendations include the following:

- Increase current tax levy for museum to its maximum to support the zoo operations.
- Increase user fees in all areas to compare to other same/similar zoos.
- Increase marketing/promotion that will in-turn increase annual attendance/sales.
- Increase capital/bond expenditures for the Zoo each year to provide for new offerings.
- Increase zoo membership packages and interest in “adopt an animal” program.
- Increase zoo memberships to attract corporate donors/memberships.
- Increase donor engagement and interest in zoo (i.e. endowments)
- Consider changes in annual operating hours to the public to reduce expenses.

Overall Priority of the Zoo to the District & Community

The master plan process engaged the public and community through a survey to determine the viability and importance of the Henson Robinson Zoo for recreational, educational and quality of life for its citizens and visitors. Based on the results of the survey, it is to be reported that the overwhelming response to the future and viability of the Zoo is a very important part of the community, its history and its foreseeable future. With this said, the Master Plan team would encourage the Park District Board and its Administrators to continue to recognize the value of the Zoo in its current and future operational and long range planning initiatives in response to the public and community’s response and in conjunction with the District’s overall programming, parks, facilities and recreational opportunities for its community and visitors it serves and work toward reasonable and achievable enhancements for the continued enjoyment and positive experience of zoo patrons.
Exhibit/Building | Projected Cost
--- | ---
1 Kitchen/Quarantine | $90,000.00
2 Birds of Prey Holding | $10,000.00
3 Entrance/Administration Building (Provide ADA Access) | $8,000.00
4 Australia Building (Demolish and replace) | $45,000.00
5 Outdoor Quarantine | $10,000.00
6 Animal Holding Building (remodel existing building interior) | $180,000.00
7 Penguin Building (demolish and replace) | $12,000.00
8 Entrance/Administration Building (Update Zoo Entrance, Add Drop Off Area and remodel building interior to better serve functions) | $185,000.00
9 Reptile Building | $450,000.00
10 Birds of Prey Exhibit (demolish and replace) | $8,000.00
11 Pond (remove island and shoreline restoration) | $150,000.00
12 Parking (Add parking for 60 vehicles and parking for 6 buses) | $335,000.00
13 Amphitheater (demolish and replace) | $260,000.00
14 Elevated Walkway (concurrent with proposed new exhibit areas) | $285,000.00
15 Otter Exhibit | $80,000.00

**Grand Total** | **$2,108,000.00**

Projected Construction Projections based on 2012 Costs.
Projected Costs do not include Architectural/Engineering Fees
Implementation

The implementation of the components in this master plan is the responsibility of the Zoo Administration, Park Administration and the Park Board of Trustees. The Zoo and Park Administrations are encouraged to develop a written implementation/transition plan to accomplish the goals as set out in this report. The implementation plan should include phases and time lines to accomplish.

The implementation plan should take into account the current financial/budget conditions of the District, the important/priority the District and community places on the success and continuation of the Zoo, current funding resources for capital and related expenditures, donor, granting, foundation and related funding sources available to the zoo now and in the future.

Capital Improvements

The Master Plan for the Zoo entails a capital project improvement/rehabilitation of approximately $2,500,000. The Master Plan Team feels that this is both reasonable for the zoo and achievable for the District. The District and its administrators are charged with the responsibility to implement a written program of capital improvements with reasonable/achievable time lines to accomplish.

Suggested financial resources/strategies are as follows:

- Non-referendum Bonds.
- Granting Opportunities (Federal & State)
- Private Foundations Grants
- Private Donors.

Time Lines for Consideration

The Park District Board and its administration are charged with the responsibility of implementation of the Master Plan. It is recommended that an action plan be developed within the first three months after the adoption of this plan that will spell out the time line, funding mechanisms/capital campaigns and related factors to implement the provisions of this master plan.
Conclusion Analysis

The Springfield Park Board charged the Master Plan Taskforce with developing a master plan that would contain goals and concepts that were realistic and attainable given the present economic environment and that of the foreseeable future. This Master Plan presents concepts and ideas that are intended to provide the Henson Robinson Zoo and the Park District with a road map toward improving and enhancing the zoo to new heights.

Under the current economic climate, the federal government, State of Illinois, local governments and the corporate sector have been challenged to trim budgets in response to dwindling revenues. Zoos, such as the Henson Robinson Zoo, that are part of local government funding and support have had to make tough decisions in trimming expenditures while trying to continue to serve the demands and expectations of the public. This Master Plan strives to offer the Park District and the Zoo with strategies that have the potential of enhancing the interests and revenues for the Zoo thereby contributing to its overall patron experience and physical improvement.

The Master Plan was organically developed by a Task Force comprised of individuals with various backgrounds and experiences who were representative of the Zoo’s stakeholders and community. There were no preconceived ideas or suggestions that the Task Force had to work with. The development of this plan occurred through a facilitated process that drew input from all members of the Task Force. The Task Force met over a period of ten (10) months to develop the Zoo’s strategic plan, collect data and develop the strategies and projects of this Master Plan. The Task Force was a group of dedicated individuals who gave up their personal time to develop a realistic and achievable plan for the Zoo in order to benefit the public and community as a whole.

The Zoo now has an updated strategic plan with a mission and vision that will define the organization amidst the opportunities it hopes to pursue in order to enhance the experience of the visitor while continuing to provide a habitat for its animals. The strategic plan influenced the development of the Master Plan in that its initiatives were further developed into strategies and projects of the Master Plan. Even though the bulk of the work was done by the Task Force, the public was engaged through surveys and questionnaires. The public’s input helped to define the parameters of the Master Plan and clarify any expectations that the public has for the Zoo. The public’s suggestions were integrated into the sub-committee work that further developed the strategies and projects that make up the Master Plan.

As the Master Plan was in the process of getting developed, it was important for the Task Force to understand how the Henson Robinson Zoo compares to other zoos of same or similar size in Illinois. The Task Force used the 2011 AZA Directory and identified several Illinois Zoos that were comparable based on acreage, operating budgets, aesthetics and animal collections. The Task Force visited and met with Administrative staff of four Illinois zoos and gleaned from them much information and ideas. The gathered information and visits made by the Task Force were instrumental in the development of new and exciting ideas for the Henson Robinson Zoo’s Master Plan.

What is critical to note is that this Master Plan was developed with both constraints and opportunities in mind and keeping within the directives of the Park Board to develop a plan that is both realistic and achievable. One of the major constraints is that the Zoo is land locked for any further growth and development to occur. The concepts presented in this plan provide for a better utilization of the zoo’s existing acreage and the creative use of its rolling topography and dense wooded areas to enhance the visitor’s experience. However, parking at the Zoo is much needed and it was widely noted by the Task Force that expansion beyond the physical grounds of the Zoo should be investigated. This Master Plan suggests expansion of the existing parking into Center Park owned and operated by the City of Springfield.

Finally, the Task Force has developed a Master Plan that fulfills the original intent and direction provided by the Park Board which was to develop a plan that is realistic and achievable. The Task Force now recommends that the Park Board directs its Administration to develop a phased implementation plan which incorporates the many thoughts and ideas contained in this Master Plan. The phased implementation plan should become part of the district’s overall short and long range planning for its numerous district wide priorities. The Zoo is a specialized facility unlike any other in the surrounding community that receives over 85,000 visitors per year. It is a much respected and important recreational and educational program that enhances the quality of life for all of its animals.
References


