



City Council Report

915 I Street, 1st Floor

Sacramento, CA 95814

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May 28, 2019

Discussion Item 30

Title: Sacramento Zoo – Potential Expansion and Relocation

Location: 3930 West Land Park Drive, District 4

Recommendation: Provide direction to the City Manager on the future vision for the Sacramento Zoo.

Contact: Fran Halbakken, Project Executive, (916) 808-7194, Office of the City Manager

Presenter: Fran Halbakken, Elizabeth Stallard (Zoo Board Chair), Jason Jacobs (Zoo Director) and Rick Biddle (Schultz & Williams Consultant)

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: In 1927, the Sacramento Zoo initially opened on a 4-acre site and expanded to its current 14.8 acres in 1968. The zoo was first accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in 1975. Since that time, the AZA's standards have shifted to require larger exhibit areas with an emphasis on public education and animal enrichment. Due to this pressure from increasing AZA standards for animal care, the zoo can no longer exhibit many larger animals that were once housed in Sacramento. To maintain accreditation, the zoo needs to address exhibit requirements and animal management guidelines. The zoo will be required to change its core focus and the species it exhibits if the location remains within the current Land Park site. It is doubtful that this shifted focus will be economically viable. An option is to consider a larger location for relocation with opportunities to expand in the future.

Policy Considerations: The City's General Plan 2035 includes a policy, ERC 5.1.1 Development and Expansion of Attractions - The City shall support the development and expansion of destination attractions throughout Sacramento including museums, zoos, historic sites, and the Sacramento River and American River waterfronts.

Economic Impacts: A renovated or expanded zoo can be a significant attraction for both residents and tourists with resultant direct and sustainable economic benefits to the City and community. However, a major expansion project requires an in-depth business operations and funding and phasing analysis to consider various sites in terms of size of space, cost of property, infrastructure needs, parking, revenue, and other operational factors.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): This report does not involve activities that constitute a "project" as defined by Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 Cal. Code Reg. § 15000 et seq.).

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: Not applicable.

Rationale for Recommendation: By not addressing current and future space needs of the Sacramento Zoo, the zoo will be challenged to maintain AZA accreditation while continuing to operate as a viable and sustainable cultural and community asset. A relocated zoo will create a destination for local residents and tourists. It will also increase conservation efforts for various animal species.

Financial Considerations: The economic feasibility study, including a business operations and investment analysis, is estimated to cost \$150,000 and take about six months to complete. If City Council directs the City Manager to proceed with the relocation study, staff will need to identify funding for the cost of the study. Staff will report to City Council with a recommendation for a preferred site based upon the additional analysis and if necessary, request recommended budgetary actions.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Background: In 2010, the City of Sacramento engaged Schultz & Williams to develop a feasibility study to determine if Sutter's Landing Park was a well-suited site location for a relocated Sacramento Zoo. In consultation with City planning staff, a list of potential alternative sites for relocation were identified. In 2018 and 2019, Schultz & Williams prepared additional information and updates of the 2010 study.

The focus of this effort is to identify a site that will do the following:

- Serve as a premier destination for residents and visitors to the Sacramento valley;
- Provide fun and engaging animal & educational experiences that connect our communities with wildlife;
- Generate a sustainable business model to support the Zoo's core mission;
- Provide the highest level of animal care while ensuring that animal management "best practices" are maintained for future generations; and
- Allow for the development of a successful, viable, and sustainable AZA-accredited 21st century zoo.

Schultz & Williams has utilized a list of site criteria in evaluating the alternatives. The criteria include: acreage and expansion capacity; vehicle access; transit access; ability to exhibit a diverse animal collection; partner/supporting use opportunities; marketability; return on investment from operations; availability of utilities; level of flood protection, ability to utilize the site for a zoo; and opportunities for the City to repurpose an existing City asset. The list of alternative sites evaluated include (in no particular order):

- Natomas Joint Vision
- North Natomas Regional Park
- Haggin Oaks Golf Course
- Cal Expo
- Granite Regional Park
- Job Corps
- Delta Shores Regional Park

- Bartley Cavanaugh Golf Course
- Former Sleep Train Arena
- Bing Maloney Golf Course
- Del Paso Regional Park (Renfree Field) and
- Executive Airport.

Note: In 2010, the Sutter's Landing Regional Park was already found to be a very challenging site due to significant investment costs unique to that site.

1st Tier Sites (Best Sites, based on current level of information)

Bing Maloney Golf Course
Former Sleep Train Arena
North Natomas Regional Park

2nd Tier Sites (Potentially Viable, need more information))

Del Paso Regional Park
Executive Airport
Natomas Joint Vision

3rd Tier Sites (Not Recommended)

Bartley Cavanaugh Golf Course
Cal Expo
Delta Shores Regional Park
Granite Regional Park
Haggin Oaks Golf Course
Job Corps

The next steps in the planning process will be to undertake an in-depth feasibility assessment of the prequalified sites that best meet the criteria and analyze the key economic aspects of the sites, along with development of a funding and phasing plan. The economic feasibility study, including a business operations and investment analysis, is estimated to cost \$150,000 and take about six months to complete.