

To: Board of Management

From: Senior Director, Corporate Projects & Human Resources

Subject: **2020-2025 TORONTO ZOO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Date: 2020-01-21

SUMMARY:

Toronto Zoo staff have been working with Zoo Advisors to develop a new 5 year Strategic Plan for the Toronto Zoo. Consultations have been extensive both internally and with the community, including stakeholders. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Board for the new plan. After approval an Action Plan for implementation will be developed to operationalize it.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Senior Director, Corporate Projects and Human Resources recommends that:

1. the Toronto Zoo Board of Management approve the draft 2020-2025 Strategic Plan attached to this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no financial impacts as a result of this report.

COMMENTS:

The Challenge

Zoos are increasingly relevant to wildlife conservation, sustainability and biodiversity loss mitigation as climate change accelerates. Zoos can help drive mitigation of climate change impacts through their strategic planning which informs their internal actions. Zoos also have an important role in increasing public understanding and action in respect to wildlife conservation and sustainability. The strategic planning process undertaken has sought to enable this mission.

The Process

The process of creating the new Strategic Plan had 4 phases:

- **Discovery** – examining the internal and external research data to understand the Zoo

- **Dreaming** – asking what do we want to be in an ideal world with no constraints?
- **Reality** – based on real world constraints what can we do?
- **Action** – what actions can the Zoo undertake to make the plan a reality?

The Plan was developed with significant internal and external consultation including:

- 16 external and 17 internal stakeholders interviews;
- 4 staff town hall staff/volunteer meetings;
- 4 staff planning liaison meetings;
- 3 staff planning team workshops;
- 1 staff “opportunities” workshop;
- 2 meetings with the union executive team;
- 1 community roundtable with a wide array of over 40 external stakeholder groups
- An online community survey with over 2,050 responses;
- Discussion with Strategic Planning Committee of the Board; and
- Several discussions with the senior management team.

Overall this process involved 400-450 staff persons and stakeholders and yielded over 2,600 individual “input opportunities” to the plan.

The Results: Core Values

On the highest level the Strategic Plan states the core values of the Toronto Zoo as 4 cares which are:

- Our animals
- Our team (employees/volunteers)
- Our guests; and
- Our community

Specifically it is our animals we value and care for as they are the basis of our conservation and public education efforts. We care about our team as they are the driving force behind our mission. Our guests are partners in our mission. We strive to provide comfortable, iconic and memorable experiences and learning. Our community are key champions for wildlife conservation and their support of the Zoo is critical.

The Results: Strategic Initiative

A number of Strategic Initiatives under the Mission Statement were developed. The Mission Statement for the Toronto Zoo is **Connecting people, animals and conservation science to fight extinction**. The vision, or end state desired is, A world where wildlife and wild spaces thrive. The strategic priorities to implement the Mission and achieve the Vision are to:

- Create a centre of excellence in conservation, sustainability, animal care, and science;
- Ignite the Passion: Build the team for the future;
- Create “Wow” – Reimagine the guest experience;
- Envision the Zoo as the heart of the community; and

- Lead the way for innovation and technology for Zoos worldwide.

SUMMARY:

An Action Plan will be developed to support the Strategic Initiatives. Each area of the Toronto Zoo will develop tactics within work programs to implement the Strategic Initiatives. Monitoring and progress will occur using a dashboard approach of key performance indicators. The Strategic Plan is the guiding document which will help the Zoo address climate change impacts by saving wildlife through conservation science and also providing excellent guest experience and learning.

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ATTACHMENTS:

Draft 2020-2025 Toronto Zoo Strategic Plan

To be available prior to the February 6, 2020 Toronto Zoo Board of Management Meeting