

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2018	2020	2022
Revitalize the Zoo	1	GO	\$ 36,500	\$ 12,000	\$ 21,000
Asset Preservation	2	GO	\$ 18,050	\$ 20,900	\$ 7,900
<b>Total Project Requests</b>			<b>\$ 54,550</b>	<b>\$ 32,900</b>	<b>\$ 28,900</b>
<b>General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total</b>			<b>\$ 54,550</b>	<b>\$ 32,900</b>	<b>\$ 28,900</b>

## Revitalize the Zoo

**AT A GLANCE****2018 Request Amount:** \$36,500**Priority Ranking:** 1

**Project Summary:** The Minnesota Zoo requests funding to revitalize its 40-year old, 485-acre campus. This request is part of a 10-year plan focused on renewing Zoo exhibits, enhancing animal welfare, and improving the guest experience. Priority projects include completing a revised vision for our Heart of the Zoo II project, enhancing the existing moose exhibit, and renovating the Zoo's animal hospital to align with today's animal care standards.

**Project Description**

This request is part of the Minnesota Zoo's 10 year plan to revitalize the Zoo's 40 year old campus through the renovation of existing exhibits, buildings, and facilities. The goal of this plan is to ensure that the Zoo's facilities meet quality and safety standards for the next 40 years. The Zoo's top priority remains completing Heart of the Zoo II, which will continue to include a refreshed snow monkey exhibit, a new meerkat exhibit, and improved amenities but at a smaller scale than originally proposed. Additional priorities include major enhancements to the existing moose exhibit to better engage guests in understanding one of Minnesota's most iconic creatures and significant improvements to our animal hospital and tiger holding facilities required to meet today's animal welfare standards. This request also includes much needed improved amenities for guests in the Zoo's Crossroads Park area surrounding the privately funded Conservation Carousel and Hanifl Family Wildwoods Play Area and the renovation of the currently unused portion of the Tropics Trail that originally housed the now long-closed nocturnal exhibit. This request would also launch the re-imagining of the prior monorail track into an elevated walkway for guests, and expand the Zoo's greenhouse to adequately house the plant collection.

State bond funds requested for this 10 year plan will be accompanied by a private capital campaign for other revitalization projects. The Zoo currently has efforts underway to raise funding for the revitalization of the farm exhibit and plans to pursue funding to help with the moose exhibit and other projects.

**Project Rationale**

This funding ensures that the Zoo's 40 year old, 485-acre campus will continue to meet the needs of its guests and its animal collection for the next 40 years. The projects included in this revitalization address a number of operational needs without adding significant operational costs. Projects in this plan are designed to balance animal welfare concerns with guest experiences at the Zoo.

Over 50% of the Zoo's operating budget comes from admissions, membership, and other earned income streams. Consequently, the guest experience at the Zoo is a critical part of the Zoo's success. This funding will ensure that the Zoo will continue to be a beloved state asset for decades to come.

**Project Timeline**

This request is part of a ten year plan to revitalize the Zoo. Projects that are included in this request

would be completed within the four year timeframe that the funding is available.

### **Other Considerations**

This request supports the Zoo's continued financial success by both addressing the needs of an aging facility and through supporting continued attendance that is the main revenue driver for the Zoo.

### **Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

This funding supports the on-going financial stability of the Minnesota Zoo by both addressing the needs of an aging site and improving the guest experience. Over 50% of the Zoo's operating budget comes from gate admissions, membership, education programs, and other earned income streams that are highly correlated with attendance. This funding will improve the guest experience through public facing projects like the opening of a new meerkat exhibit, improved snow monkey exhibit, remodeled moose exhibit, and the re-opening of the nocturnal trail, which was closed almost 10 years ago.

This revitalization plan is designed to invest in the Zoo's existing facilities and will have only minimal increased operating costs. For example, both the refined Heart of the Zoo II project and enhanced moose exhibit will not add any additional operating costs, but will help sustain and hopefully increase attendance. A few projects in this 10 year revitalization plan do have some operating costs. For example, re-opening the nocturnal trail will require 2 additional full-time zookeepers to maintain the additional animals. The redesign of the prior monorail track into an elevated walkway for guests would also cause additional building services and grounds keeper hours. The goal is that these costs would be off-set by increased attendance to the Zoo.

### **Description of Previous Appropriations**

The Zoo received \$5 million in 2014 to design and begin the Heart of the Zoo II project:  
Laws 2014, Chapter 294, Article 1, Section 11:"for the design, renovation, and repair of the upper and lower plazas; for the design and extension of the plaza; and for design of the Heart of the Zoo II project."

### **Project Contact Person**

Mary Robison  
Chief Financial Officer  
952-431-9469  
mary.robison@state.mn.us

**Asset Preservation****AT A GLANCE****2018 Request Amount:** \$18,050**Priority Ranking:** 2

**Project Summary:** This request is for asset preservation dollars to maintain the Minnesota Zoo's 40-year old, 485-acre campus. Priority asset preservation projects include repair and replacement of animal containment areas, replacement of failing skylights in the Zoo's tropics building, repair of railings and bridges, as well as roof, road, mechanical system, and sewer repairs throughout the Zoo.

**Project Description**

Asset preservation funding is used to meet the Zoo's most basic and fundamental infrastructure needs. Minnesota's "New Zoo" is now 40-years old, and the campus is rapidly aging. Priorities for this funding will address animal containment concerns, exhibit repairs, replacement of failing skylights, as well as needed repairs to roofs, roads, bridges, and mechanical and electrical systems.

**Project Rationale**

Asset preservation funding is critical to maintain the Zoo, and to ensure the safety and security of both our animals and guests. Asset preservation funding supports the successful operation and functioning of the Zoo in years to come, by ensuring that essential mechanical and heating systems remain working. It also ensures that the Zoo continues to be a safe and fun place to visit. Asset preservation funding is part of how the State of Minnesota shows continued commitment to its Zoo.

**Project Timeline**

Asset preservation funding will be spent throughout the four year appropriation.

**Other Considerations**

Asset preservation funding supports the successful operating and revenue generation of the Minnesota Zoo by providing for needed repairs that support the Zoo's essential systems, such as heat, security, gates, and other mechanical systems. Through asset preservation funding, the Zoo remains a safe, secure, and fun destination for families.

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

There will be no additional operating costs as a result of these asset preservation funds. In fact, this funding supports the successful, continued operation of the Minnesota Zoo. Over 50% of the Zoo's operating budget is earned through admissions, membership, education, and other programming. Therefore, supporting the guest experience through maintaining the Zoo's campus is essential to its continued operation.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

Laws of Minnesota, 2017, First Special Session, Chapter 8, Article 1, Section 10

Laws of Minnesota, 2014, Chapter 294, Article 1, Section 11

Laws of Minnesota, 2012, Chapter 293, Section 12  
Laws of Minnesota 2011, First Special Session, Chapter 12, Section 8  
Laws of Minnesota, 2010, Chapter 189, Section 10  
Laws of Minnesota, 2009, Article 1, Section 8  
Laws of Minnesota, 2008, Chapter 179, Section 11

**Project Contact Person**

Mary Robison  
Chief Financial Officer  
952-431-9469  
mary.robison@state.mn.us