

Proposed Budget - Department Overview

FY 2025-26



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Zoo, March 17, 2025

Summary of Department Budget for FY26 Proposed Budget

For FY 2026 the zoo's main operating fund has a total appropriations budget of \$75.6 million, \$3 million less than FY 2025 due to a smaller required transfer to the Capital Fund to cover CIP projects. The zoo's Capital Projects fund, responsible for funding internal capital and renewal & replacement projects, has an appropriations budget of \$15.1 million for FY 2026, about \$7 million less than FY 2025. The 2024 zoo bond fund, established in FY2025 to fund construction projects as part of the 2024 campus plan, has an appropriations budget of \$69 million for FY 2026. For FY 2026, the total number of budgeted FTEs for the zoo is 210.1, which includes a total of 10.0 FTEs on the zoo design & construction team.

The zoo's funding sources for FY 2026 are about the same as FY 2025: 40% of revenues coming from the permanent property tax rate, 55% of revenues coming from charges for service, attendance-based revenue and memberships, and about 5% from the Oregon Zoo Foundation.

The zoo's main operating fund continues to have six major program areas include the following: Animal Health & Animal Care, Conservation & Education, Facilities, Business Operations, Zoo Administration, Marketing and Communications.

This past year the zoo welcomed approximately 1.32 million visitors, an increase of 8% over the previous year. This included 70,000 school students from more than 650 schools, almost 400,000 Oregon Zoo members, and 100,000 discounted and free tickets, including those for low-income community members.

In February 2025, Asian elephant Rose-Tu gave birth to a healthy female calf. The new arrival, named Tula-Tu, has brought excitement to the elephant family, a spark of joy to the community, and hope for her endangered counterparts in the wild. In March of 2025 the zoo celebrated the completion of a new 3-year Strategic Plan, focusing on transforming the zoo campus, increasing our conservation impact, and enhancing the zoo experience for everyone.

Ongoing Department Growth and/or Reductions included in FY26 Proposed Budget

The main area of growth for the zoo in FY 2026 is in the zoo bond fund which receives funding from the recent voter approved zoo bond and has approximately \$21 million in budgeted capital projects for FY 2026. An additional 4.0 FTEs are requested for the zoo bond fund for FY 2026. Otherwise, for FY 2026, the main area of growth for the zoo is in admissions-based revenues, such as ticket sales, membership sales, and events, where the zoo has budgeted an increase of almost 5% in revenue compared to FY 2025. With the modest growth in revenue in the main operating fund, the zoo has requested an additional 4.0 FTEs to its main operating fund for FY2026. This includes 4 Animal Keepers, two full-time and two part-time positions. In addition, the zoo has requested a full-time Program Coordinator position to help coordinate and support current and future conservation and species recovery partnerships and funding.

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Highlighted Significant Changes from FY25 Budget

Overall, for FY 2026 there are only minor changes compared to the FY 2025 budget and no significant changes in the zoo's main operating fund. No zoo admission cost increases are planned for FY 2026.

Any Other Overall Impacts that Require Council Direction and/or Attention

For the zoo's FY 2026 proposed budget there are no other overall impacts that require council direction and/or attention. The zoo is presenting a balanced budget and projecting revenues to both fund the requested additional positions and has budgeted reserves above minimum target levels for the upcoming fiscal year. Approval of the zoo's proposed budget allows the zoo to move forward on ballot measure commitments and conservation action.

Attachments:

Org Chart



Public → Metro Council → Metro Chief Operating Officer

OREGON ZOO
Director
Heidi Rahn

Oregon Zoo Foundation
Sharla Settlemier
(interim)

Animal Care

Registrar
Peter Grimm

Animal Health and Nutrition

Exec Admin
Maureen Newman

Operations

Guest Services Admin
Angela Beam

Communications and Marketing

Education

Employee Engagement & Training

Campus Planning

DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Rachel Ritchason

DIRECTOR OF ANIMAL HEALTH
Carlos Sanchez

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS
Utpal Passi

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
vacant

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Hova Najarian

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & CONSERVATION
Melanie Sorensen

CULTURE, INCLUSION & ADMINISTRATION
Lori Ford

DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
Beth Redmond-Jones

Elephant Curator
Steve Lefave

Primates / Ambassador Animals Curator
Kate Gilmore

Africa / Marine Life Curator
Kelly Gomez

Director of Animal Welfare & Research
Nadja Wielebnowski

Veterinarian
Taylor Bliss
Josie Rose (VHE)
Tina Batek

Animal Nutrition Manager
Jennifer D'Amato-Anderson

Director of Facilities
Tim McCormack

Business Operations Director
Ivan Ratcliff

Senior Designer
Tyson Stoianoff

Zoo Photographer
Michael Durham

Conservation Manager
Sherwin Hess

Program Impact Manager
Michelle Mileham

Education Program Manager
Melinda Shutler

Equity & Engagement Program Manager
Charetta Long

Area Supervisor / North America, Inverts & Farm
Jen Osburn- Eliot

Area Supervisor / Elephants
Marcus Jason

Area Supervisor / Primates
Asaba Mukobi

Area Supervisor / Ambassador Animals
Eliza Lee

Area Supervisor / Birds
Marcus Jason

Area Supervisor / Africa
Chad Harmon

Area Supervisor / Marine Life
Amy Hash

Maintenance Manager
Michael Harris

Horticulture Manager
Scott DeSelle

Projects & Planning Manager
Chris Sun

Building Controls Manager
Jesse Lene

Guest Services Director
Stephanie Altishin

Public Safety Manager
Sean Sherrodd

Director of Events
Jamie Inglis

Safety & Health Program Manager
Jennifer Burns

North America Keepers
Sara Morgan (SR)
Tina Parr
Zach Shoemaker
Ali Azevedo
Sarah Plouff
Alexa Godfrey
Michelle Larsen (VHE)

Elephant Keepers
Dimas Dominguez (SR)
Gilbert Gomez
Pamela Starkey
Tarah Bedrossian
Jason Miles
Joe Sebastiani
Aimee Bischoff

Primate Keepers
Scott Jackson (SR)
Colleen Reed
Lindsey Gruber
Jason Delibero
Hannah Carbonneau
Miranda Cays

Ambassador Animal Educators
Shannon Lamonica
Bree Boothe
Bailey Blanchette
Rachel Skrobot
Kara Hewitt
Mandy Stanford (VHE)

Bird Keepers
Barbara Suhn (SR)
Steve Hash
Jill Cunningham
Tracy Mott
Matt Bickford
Jen Holler (VHE)
Kaley McClung
Amy Tom (VHE)

Rhino/ Hoofstock Keepers
Michelle Schireman (SR)
Virgina Grimley
Michael Suhn

Marine Life Keepers
Nicole Nicasso-Hiskey (SR)
Julie Christie
Rob Draughon
Megan Hagedorn
Philip Fensterer
Jill Harmon
Molly McGuire
Mandy Sims (VHE)
Maddy Rosborough
Ada Barbee

Auto Maintenance
Kristofer Allison

Horticulture
Jeff Pera
David Mejia
Becca Smith
Don Smith
Brent Wong
Ben Darling- Budner
Daniel Morena
Ricky Luna
Aidan Smith (VHE)

Projects
Lucy Wells
John Deegan

HVAC
Nathan Butler
Anthony Grober

Guest Services Managers
Todd Moore
Adam Swoboda

Custodial Manager
Emily Lash

Public Safety Officers
Erica Luke (lead)
Ben Neifert (lead)
Chris Sparrows
Kyle Mann
Matt Glazier
Robert Burdick
Justin Bubna
Trevor Turner
Jeri Rabyne

Event Sales Manager
Kara Swadley

Events Manager
Mickey Webb

Assistant Events Manager
Jason Greeley- Roberts

Operations Worker
Bob Stanko

Family Farm Educators
Brianna Zanella
Kat Barnum-Palit
Rachel Martin (VHE)
Anna Neufeld

Late Keepers
Mitch Bergren
Kyla Gottgetreu

Condor Keepers
Kelli Walker-Morrison (SR)
Liz Musich
Martj Jenkins
Mary Coolidge

Predators / Small Mammals Keepers
Kristina McMahon (SR)
Beth Foster
Anne Lauerman
Hannah Molony
Noah Eye

Invertebrate Keepers
Julia Low
Amber Valdez

Welfare Monitoring Specialist
Laurel Westcott

Endocrinology Research Tech
Candace Scarlota

Vet Techs
Kelli Harvison (lead)
Jordan Butler
Vishnu Reddy
Rachel Wells (VHE)
Heather Brittingham(VHE)

Animal Nutrition Techs
Jessica Real
Monique Bickel
Curtis VanAlstine
Erik Clouser
Andrew Banas (VHE)
Cody Fort (VHE)

Aquatics Maintenance
Tom Glover (lead)
Kyle Hascall
Thomas Larimer
vacant

Guest Services Leads
Robert Olmsted
Jennifer Thomson
Kim Warren
Sarah Yandle
Louis Lucifora

Custodians
Bill Edinger (lead)
Shannon Hawkins
Nat Boyer
Harley Gagnon
Melody Denis-Lopez
Jae Love
Inga Sorensen
Kaila Shutz- Berry
vacant

Guest Services Worker
Marina Garcia
Paul Fuerstenau
Ashley Crislip

Guest Services
Robert Olmsted
Jennifer Thomson
Kim Warren
Sarah Yandle
Louis Lucifora

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Paul Fuerstenau
Ashley Crislip

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Paul Fuerstenau
Ashley Crislip

C3/ VMC Admin
Tracy Modde

FM Admin
Celess Edinger

Finance Manager
Tom Andrews

Projects
Staci Pfau
Kristin Hennings

Senior Mgmt Analyst
Darby Ellison
Kim Gotter

Financial Analyst
vacant

Assistant Mgmt Analyst
Shanta Adams
Sarah Cole- Sigmon

Education Admin
Ariel Owens- Barham

HR Deputy Director
Cassie Porter

Labor Relations Manager
Dale Yee

HR Business Partner
Iyali Osuna

- Bold outline denotes manager/supervisor**
- Member of administrative team**
- Dotted line relationship; reports to another department**
- ¹ Event Network contract
- ¹ Mystery Pix contract
- ¹ Levy (food service) contract