

REID PARK ZOO AFRICA PHASE II

MASTER PLAN



AFRICA MASTER PLAN NARRATIVE: EXPEDITION IMMERSION SAFARI

“Venture into the Wild - Every Expedition Tells a Story.”



<https://safariuideafrica.com/safaris-for-the-disabled/>

UNDERLYING THEME

At the heart of this master plan is the spirit of discovery. Each expedition is designed to awaken the explorer in every guest, transforming the zoo from a place of observation into a place of participation. These expeditions foster stewardship and wonder, revealing that even the smallest actions contribute to the larger narrative of conservation. Whether it is hearing keeper talks under a shady canopy, watching Pygmy Hippos glide silently through water, or solving riddles on a scavenger hunt, each moment becomes part of a shared family story. When guests feel like explorers rather than spectators, they don't just leave with photos, they leave inspired.

OVERVIEW

The reimagined Africa Master Plan at Reid Park Zoo invites guests on a journey across the African continent through an immersive series of themed expeditions that celebrate its iconic ecosystems, animals, and conservation stories. Building on the success of Expedition Tanzania, two new expeditions, Expedition Liberia and Expedition Botswana, complete a trilogy that transforms passive observation into active exploration.

3

BOTSWANA LIBERIA TANZANIA

More than just habitats, these expeditions are living stories. Families, grandparents and grandchildren alike, explore side by side, guided by animal ID books, scavenger hunts, and interactive elements that unlock hidden secrets. Throughout the journey, multilingual signage ensures equal opportunity for learning, while accessible paths accommodate both wheelchairs and strollers, allowing every generation to participate fully in the adventure. Shaded plazas, covered walkways, and groves of native trees provide respite from the desert sun, creating comfortable gathering places for learning, sharing, and memory-making.

Through hands-on experiences, volunteer-led programming, and interpretive storytelling, guests step into the shoes of scientists, conservationists, and local communities working to protect Africa's wildlife. These expeditions don't just showcase the animals, they ignite empathy, spark curiosity, and empower action, connecting guests emotionally and intellectually to Africa's wild places and Reid Park Zoo's conservation impact.



<https://joyaquarelie.pages.dev/rcmkkn-reid-park-zoo-2024-gyhdtksmr-photos/>

WALKTHROUGH EXPERIENCE

An explorative journey through the landscapes of Africa.

GUEST WALKTHROUGH

The journey begins in a shaded plaza at the threshold of Africa. Visitors are welcomed by panoramic views of the savanna and playful African Wild Dogs racing through the grass. The boundary between guest and habitat is artfully blended using berms and open-air viewing, inviting visitors to feel like fellow travelers standing on the edge of the wild. From here, a path winds through Africa's distinct ecological regions—lush West African jungles, kopje formations of Tanzania, and the open plains of Botswana. Each environment offers awe-inspiring animal encounters, shaded rest areas, and engaging interpretive experiences, all designed with universal accessibility in mind. This isn't just a day at the zoo, it's an unfolding expedition.

EXPEDITION BOTSWANA

Guests are immediately immersed in the expanse of a mixed-species savanna. Giraffes browse acacia trees, while Rhinos and antelopes move across rolling terrain. Clever sightlines and layered habitats create the illusion of predator and prey sharing space, blurring the line between the natural and the designed. This expedition immerses guests in the story of sub-Saharan species like the African Wild Dog—once widespread, now endangered due to habitat loss and conflict. Through keeper talks and interpretives, guests are introduced to conservation initiatives of this species, and how Reid Park Zoo is helping protect these intelligent, social animals. As the trail leads to a rocky kopje, Lions appear atop sun-warmed boulders, their gaze meeting guests' through open air barriers. These formations are more than scenic, they provide critical resources like water, shade, and safety, essential to wildlife survival. Educational touchpoints reveal how kopjes influence animal behavior and how conservationists track species across such rugged terrain.



<https://wildsafariguide.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Moremi-Game-Reserve-1170x400.jpg>

EXPEDITION LIBERIA

Guests step into a cool, shaded refuge that contrasts with the surrounding Sonoran Desert. Dense jungle plantings, cool mist, and the sounds of water transport visitors to West Africa's tropical forests. Here, families can quietly observe the majestic horns of the scimitar oryx slipping through foliage or watch an adorable baby Pygmy Hippo swim underwater. The experience feels personal and intimate, with discovery elements around every corner. Warthogs forage, meerkats dash, and children peer through foliage alongside their parents and friends, discovering animals together. Interpretive signage in multiple languages shares both scientific insight and regional folklore, connecting cultural narratives to conservation efforts. This expedition spotlights Reid Park Zoo's partnerships with programs focused on anti-poaching, sustainable forest management, and community-based habitat restoration. Hands-on exhibits and volunteer engagement reinforce the message that protecting these fragile ecosystems requires global collaboration, and that everyone has a role to play.



<https://www.nationalgeographic.com>

EXPEDITION TANZANIA (ENHANCED)

Crossing into East Africa, guests ascend a shaded research outpost that overlooks a broad, open landscape. Elephants move calmly across the clearing, sharing the space with nimble Klipspringers and sun-loving Rock Hyrax. Elevated pathways offer shaded vantage points, giving visitors the sense of having stumbled upon a remote field site tucked deep within the wild. Winding paths lead through weathered rock formations, where children can spring across small boulders like Klipspringers or crouch low to peek into cracks in the kopje rocks, hoping to spot hidden critters or glinting beetles. Interactive exhibits nestled along the way invite guests to trace the ancient geological forces that shaped these lands, blending play with discovery as the story of erosion and evolution unfolds around them. Here, conservation isn't abstract—it's alive in the dust underfoot, the calls overhead, and the joyful laughter of children exploring beside their grandparents. This is a space where families learn together, rest under tree canopies, and celebrate the fragile balance of species, climate, and time—one small adventure at a time.



<https://www.exoticmiles.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Jaipur-Zoo.jpg>

PROGRAMMING AND ANIMAL WELLBEING

Events and behind the scenes.

INTERACTIVES & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Animal ID Guides: Multilingual printed guides and mobile app features invite guests to track animals, identify footprints, decode clues, and uncover “expedition secrets” along each trail—turning every visit into an active adventure.

Cultural & Thematic Workshops – Led by keepers, artisans, and volunteers, offering experiences like storytelling, jewelry-making, and conservation demonstrations.

Multilingual Signage – Designed for inclusivity, welcoming visitors from diverse backgrounds.

Accessibility Features – Smooth pathways, tactile exhibits, shaded rest zones, and seating areas accommodate all ages and abilities.

Keeper Talks & Animal Encounters: Scheduled experiences allow guests to meet animal care staff, observe feedings, and get up-close looks at animal training and enrichment, promoting empathy and understanding of individualized animal care.

Junior Ranger Passport Program: Kids collect stamps and earn badges as they complete learning challenges throughout the Africa zone, fostering engagement, critical thinking, and a sense of accomplishment.



<https://reidparkzoo.org/education/groups/>



https://www.enr.com/ext/resources/Issues/National_Issues/2017/03-March/06-March/Best-of-Best/ENR1003_CA_African-Adventure_giraffe-feeding1.jpg?1489780844

ANIMAL WELLBEING

State of the Art Facilities and Housing: Dedicated behind-the-scenes areas feature advanced veterinary spaces, temperature-controlled holding areas, and specialized care zones tailored to each species’ needs.

Rotational Habitats: Multiple connected habitats allow animals to rotate through diverse environments, supporting natural behaviors, mental stimulation, and social flexibility.

Animal Enrichment: Sensory enrichment, built-in anchor points, pulleys, climbing structures, and modular elements allow keepers to change enrichment frequently ensuring novelty, challenge, and stimulation.

Multigenerational Groups: Enhanced habitats that allow for breeding and multigenerational groups.

Climate-Adaptive Design: Shade structures, water features, and cooling zones are integrated throughout to ensure comfort in Tucson’s desert climate while still reflecting native African habitats.

Choice and Control for Animals: Animals are given access to indoor/outdoor spaces, vertical climbing areas, water features, and visual privacy—offering choice and autonomy throughout the day.

INVESTMENT AND REGIONAL IDENTITY

Inspired by Africa, grounded in Tucson.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Branded Expeditions & Retail Integration:

Themed “Expedition” gift lines, including branded guidebooks, plush animals, safari hats, and “Junior Explorer” kits with badges, binoculars, and activity books create an immersive souvenir experience and increase per-guest spending in retail locations.

Special Events & Sponsorships:

Seasonal “Expedition Days,” night tours, and after-hours family events attract repeat visitors and can be paired with conservation-themed sponsorships from local businesses or global brands. Opportunities include presenting sponsorships for habitat zones, naming rights for features like the Safari Plaza or Research Outpost, and branded educational programs.

Premium Encounters:

Offerings like Giraffe Feeding, Pygmy Hippo Encounters, and Hog Brushing allow for unforgettable experiences.



<https://www.raisingarizonakids.com/2024/07/family-fun-activities-in-tucson/guests-feeding-giraffe-reid-park-zoo/>

TYING IN REGIONAL IDENTITY

Though inspired by Africa, this plan is deeply grounded in Tucson. Materials are regionally sourced, desert-adapted landscapes echo the Sonoran surroundings, and pathways are designed for comfort in the desert heat. Murals by local artists tell visual stories that connect global wildlife conservation to the city’s own artistic heartbeat. Interpretive content will spotlight not just African ecosystems, but also Reid Park Zoo’s local efforts, like the browse program and protection of native species.

In this way, the Africa Master Plan becomes more than a global journey, it becomes a mirror of Tucson’s values, creativity, and commitment to a shared, sustainable future.

Themed Food & Beverage Offerings:

Regionally inspired menus at on-site cafes or pop-up food stalls (e.g., West African stews, South African braai-style BBQ, Tanzanian teas) enhance immersion and increase revenue per guest visit.

Private Rentals & VIP Experiences:

Designated scenic overlooks or shaded plazas can double as rentable spaces for weddings, birthdays, corporate retreats, or donor events, offering a unique venue with built-in ambiance and animal views.

Expedition-Themed Camps & Educational Programs:

Week-long or single-day camps for children, teens, or adults—centered around themes like “Wildlife Tracking,” “Conservation Careers,” or “Jungle Art & Ecology”—create educational value and new revenue streams.



https://cdn.fodors.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/11/WeirdandwonderfulthingsinTucson__HERO_shutterstock_182167985.jpg







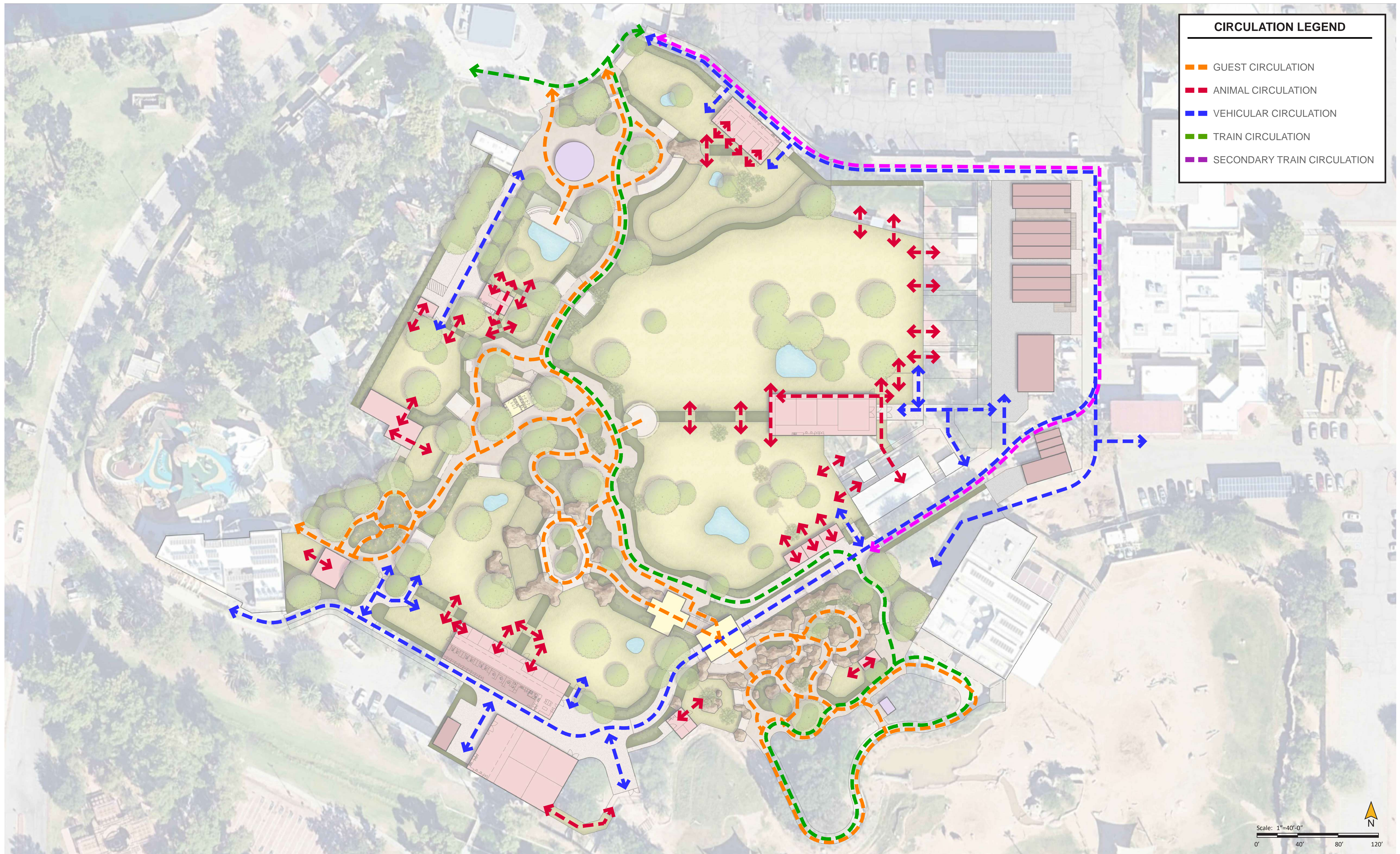
LEGEND

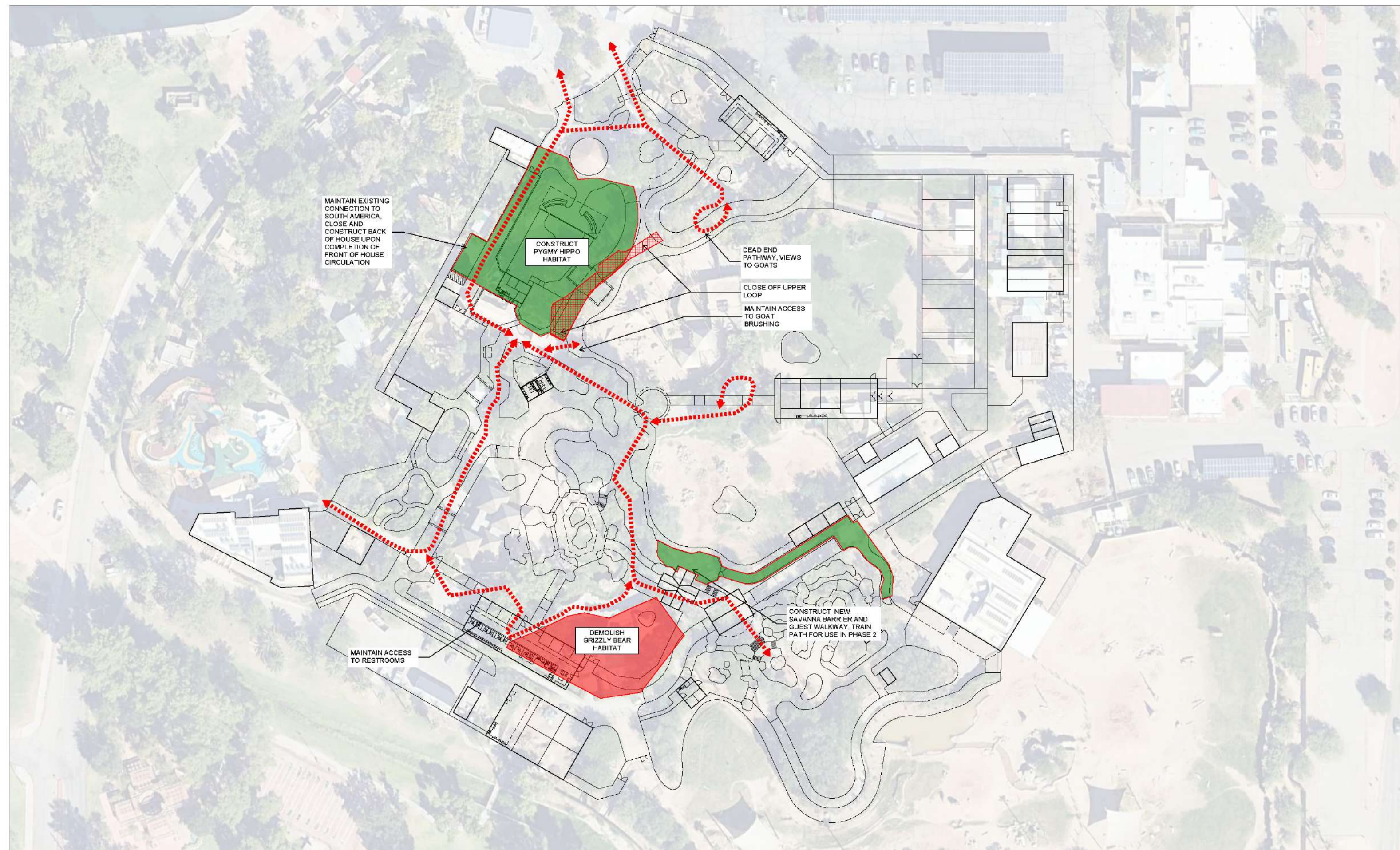
- ① ENTRY SIGNAGE
- ② AFRICAN WILD DOG YARD (5,000 SF)
- ③ AFRICAN WILD DOG HABITAT (10,000 SF)
- ④ AFRICAN WILD DOG HOLDING
- ⑤ AFRICAN ENTRY PLAZA
- ⑥ EXISTING CAROUSEL
- ⑧ SHADED VIEWING AREA
- ⑪ EXISTING GREVY'S ZEBRA & HOOFSTOCK HOLDING
- ⑫ ROTATING SAVANNA
- ⑬ SHADED VIEWING WITH GIRAFFE FEEDING
- ⑭ RETICULATED GIRAFFE HOLDING
- ⑮ RETICULATED GIRAFFE HOLDING YARD
- ⑯ EXISTING SPEKE'S GAZELLE HOLDING
- ⑰ EXISTING SOUTHERN WHITE RHINOCEROS HOLDING
- ⑱ HOOFSTALK HOLDING
- ⑲ EXISTING AFRICAN ELEPHANT HOLDING
- ⑳ RELOCATED TANZANIA KIOSK
- ㉑ ROCK HYRAX AND KLIPSPRINGER HABITAT
- ㉒ SHADED VIEWING AND BOH ROAD CROSSOVER
- ㉓ FENNEC FOX HABITAT AND HOLDING
- ㉔ NEW ELEPHANT HOLDING
- ㉕ MAINTENANCE BUILDING
- ㉖ TWO STORY BUILDING WITH AFRICAN PREDATOR HOLDING, OFFICE SPACE, AND AN EVENT TERRACE
- ㉗ ROTATING AFRICAN PREDATOR HABITAT
- ㉘ SHADED KOPJE VIEWING PLAZA
- ㉙ AFRICAN PREDATOR HOLDING YARD
- ㉚ EXISTING AFRICAN PRIMATE HOLDING
- ㉛ AFRICAN PRIMATE HABITAT
- ㉜ POLLINATOR GARDEN
- ㉝ SERVAL HABITAT
- ㉞ ANIMAL HOLDING FOR HABITATS 33 & 35
- ㉟ BONGO, RED RIVER HOG, FOWL, AND DUIKER OR COMMON WARTHOG, MEERKAT, & PORCUPINE
- ㊱ RESTROOMS
- ㊲ NATURE PLAY
- ㊳ PYGMY HIPPO HOLDING
- ㊴ PYGMY HIPPO YARD
- ㊵ PYGMY HIPPO HABITAT
- ㊶ PYGMY HIPPO LSS
- ㊷ BACK OF HOUSE COMPLEX



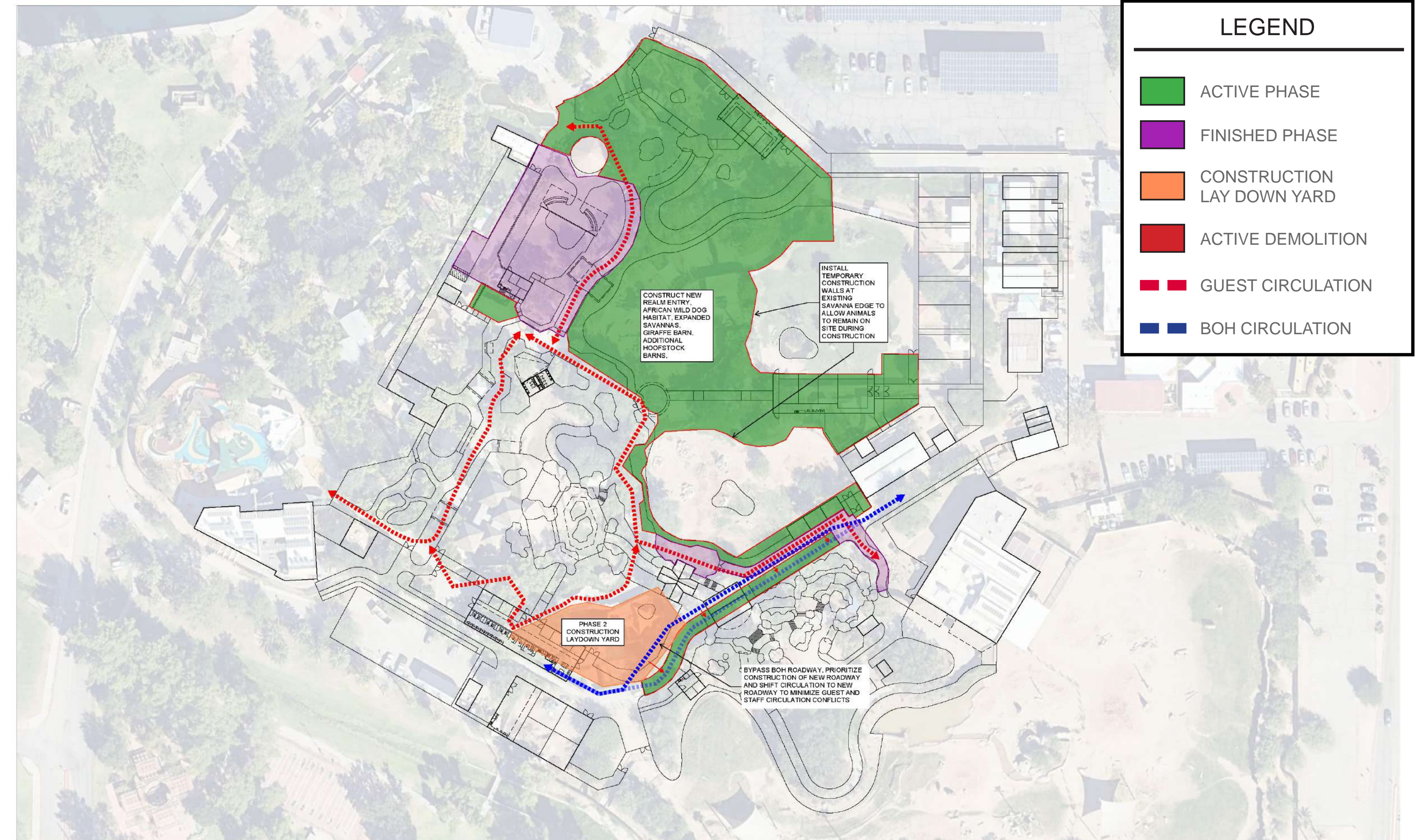
SPECIES LEGEND	
①	AFRICAN WILD DOG
②	PYGMY HIPPO
③	ROTATING* SAVANNA A: RETICULATED GIRAFFE, SCIMITAR ORYX, SECRETARY BIRD, OSTRICH, THOMSON'S GAZELLE, STEENBOK
④	ROTATING* SAVANNA B: SOUTHERN WHITE RHINOCEROS, EAST AFRICAN CROWNED CRANE, IMPALA, SPEKE'S GAZELLE, SOUTHERN GROUND HORNBILL
⑤	SERVAL
⑥	COMMON WARTHOG, CRESTED PORCUPINE, MEERKATS
⑦	RING-TAILED LEMUR & BLACK AND WHITE RUFFED LEMUR
⑧	ROTATING PREDATOR HABITATS
⑨	KLIPSPRINGER, ROCK HYRAX & ALDABRA TORTOISE
⑩	FENNEC FOX
⑪	EXISTING AFRICAN ELEPHANT

*ROTATING SAVANNAS ARE FLEXIBLE IN MIXED SPECIES PAIRINGS





PHASE 1: PYGMY HIPPO

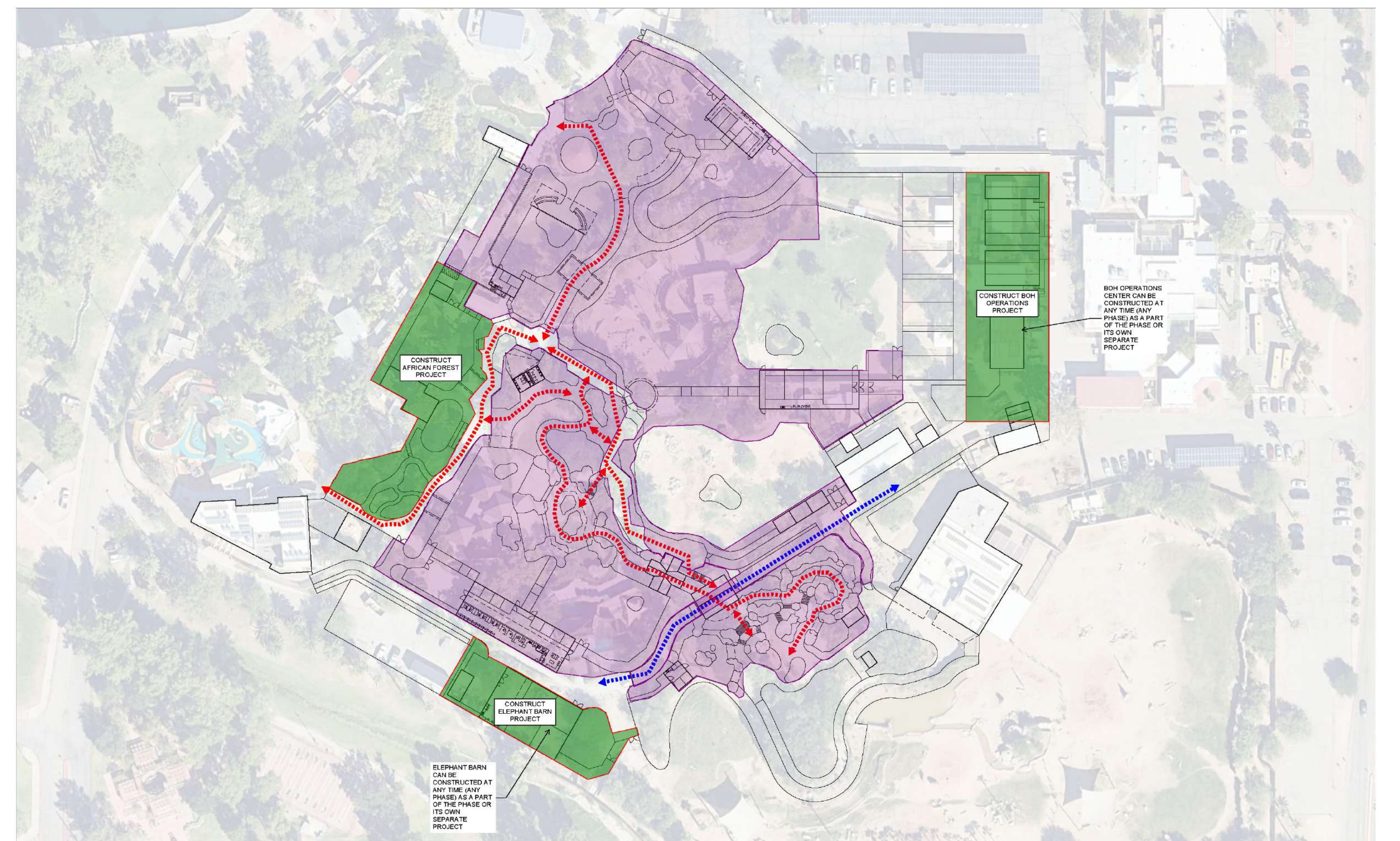


PHASE 2: SAVANNAS

LEGEND	
■	ACTIVE PHASE
■	FINISHED PHASE
■	CONSTRUCTION LAY DOWN YARD
■	ACTIVE DEMOLITION
- - -	GUEST CIRCULATION
- - -	BOH CIRCULATION



PHASE 3: PREDATOR



PHASE 4: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS

PHASED COST ESTIMATE

		PROJECT TOTAL		PHASE I		PHASE II		PHASE III		PHASE IV
FACILITY HARDCOST TOTAL		\$ 41,501,073.00	\$	4,446,856.00	\$	10,029,987.00	\$	20,575,866.00	\$	6,448,364.00
GENERAL CONTRACTORS SOFT COSTS										
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	(11.0%)	\$ 4,565,118.00	\$	489,154.00	\$	1,103,299.00	\$	2,263,345.00	\$	709,320.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS	(9.0%)	\$ 3,735,097.00	\$	400,217.00	\$	902,699.00	\$	1,851,828.00	\$	580,353.00
INSURANCE	(1.70%)	\$ 705,518.00	\$	75,597.00	\$	170,510.00	\$	349,789.73	\$	109,622.20
BONDING	(2.65%)	\$ 1,099,778.00	\$	117,842.00	\$	265,795.00	\$	545,260.46	\$	170,881.66
GC OVERHEAD & PROFIT	(3.00%)	\$ 1,245,032.00	\$	133,406.00	\$	300,900.00	\$	617,275.00	\$	193,450.93
TOTAL		\$ 11,350,543.00	\$	1,216,215.00	\$	2,743,201.00	\$	5,627,499.00	\$	1,763,628.00
OWNER'S SOFT COSTS										
DESIGN	(8.0%)	\$ 4,228,129.00	\$	453,046.00	\$	1,021,855.00	\$	2,096,269.00	\$	656,959.00
LABOR	(4.5%)	\$ 2,378,322.00	\$	254,838.00	\$	574,794.00	\$	1,179,151.00	\$	369,540.00
MISC.	(3.2%)	\$ 1,638,400.00	\$	175,554.00	\$	395,969.00	\$	812,304.00	\$	254,572.00
OWNER'S CONTINGENCY	(20.0%)	\$ 10,570,323.00	\$	1,132,614.00	\$	2,554,638.00	\$	5,240,673.00	\$	1,642,398.00
PHASE I ESCALATION	(4.25% PER YEAR)	\$ 691,906.00	\$	67,626.00	\$	225,141.00	\$	311,169.00	\$	87,970.00
OVERALL PROJECT TOTAL COST		\$ 72,358,698.00	\$	7,746,750.00	\$	17,545,584.00	\$	35,842,933.00	\$	11,223,431.00

*SEE DOCUMENT 20250424 REID PARK ZOO ESTIMATE FOR DETAILS











