

AGENDA

Potter Park Zoo Advisory Board
1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue ~ Lansing, MI 48912
Telephone: 517.342.2776; Fax: 517.316.3894

The Board information packet is available on-line by going to www.potterparkzoo.org, selecting "About," clicking on "Zoo Advisory Board" and clicking "February 11, 2026"

POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

**Wednesday, February 11, 2026
6:00 PM**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of the January 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
- 3. Limited Public Comment – *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion***
- 4. Late Items/Deletions/Consent Items**
- 5. Action Items**
 - a. Resolution – Caregiver Incentive
- 6. Director's Report**
 - a. Zoo Finance Report – Cynthia Wagner
 - b. Zoological Society Finance Report – Amy Morris-Hall
 - c. Admission Report - Cynthia Wagner
 - d. Director's Report – Cynthia Wagner
- 7. New Business**
 - a. 2026 Road Construction
 - b. AZA Director's Conference Recap
 - c. Education Programming Presentation – Stephanie Pentiuk & Marie Benner
- 8. Old Business**
 - a. Feline Primate Design Project Update – Cynthia Wagner
 - b. Stormwater Infrastructure Project – Cynthia Wagner
- 9. Board Comments**
- 10. Limited Public Comment - *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion***
- 11. Upcoming Meeting**
 - a. Zoo Advisory Board Meeting March 11, 2026 at 6:00 PM
- 12. Adjournment**

Official minutes are stored and available for inspection at the address noted at the top of this agenda. Potter Park Zoo will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting for the visually impaired, for individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon five (5) working days' notice to the Zoo. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Zoo by writing to: Zoo Director, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing, MI 48912, or by calling 517.342.2776.

**MINUTES – INGHAM COUNTY
POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD**

**1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue,
Lansing, MI,
January 14, 2026**

BOARD MEMBERS

PRESENT: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Tennis, Chair Cheryl Bergman, Vice Chair Kyle Binkley, Mary Leys, Caitlin O'Rourke, Dr. Richard Snider, Samantha Harkins, Julie Pingston and Kasey Kent

ALSO PRESENT: Cynthia Wagner, Zoo Director, Amy L. Morris-Hall, Executive Director of the Zoological Society

ABSENT: Emily Linden and Dr. Jack Kottwitz

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 6:01 p.m.

MINUTES: The approval of the minutes as written from December 10, 2025 was moved by Kyle Binkley and supported by Commissioner Cahill. **Yes-9; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT

None

LATE ITEMS/DELETIONS/CONSENT ITEMS

None

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution – Geotechnical Services

Director Wagner shared the resolution was for geotechnical services that included soil borings for the stormwater improvement grant. Chair Bergman asked if the funds for this project would be paid by the zoo or through the grant. Director Wagner confirmed the geotechnical services would be paid by the zoo.

Approval of the Resolution for Geotechnical Services was moved by Julie Pingston and supported by Samantha Harkins. **Yes-9; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution – Consumers Energy Rebate Funds

Director Wagner shared the resolution was to allow the zoo to apply for and accept rebate funds from Consumers Energy for equipment that has already been purchased for the Animal Health Facility. She also shared they did not yet know the exact amount of the rebates. Kasey Kent asked if these rebate funds were budgeted for and Director Wagner answered they were not, that this would be revenue they had not planned for.

Approval of the Resolution for Consumers Energy Rebate Funds was moved by Kasey Kent and supported by Mary Leys. **Yes-9; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

Commissioner Tennis arrived, 6:15 p.m.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Director Wagner cautioned the financial reports were preliminary and that the amount reported as unrestricted in fund balance would likely be closer to \$600,000 due to expenses that were still be recorded for 2025. Director Wagner reported that earned revenue was down compared to 2024, but that the zoo would be adding to fund balance not decreasing it. She stated supervisors had worked to keep controllable expenses down since it was apparent early in the year that earned revenue would be less than 2024. She stated she budgets earned revenue conservatively, so they had met the revenue budget, but it was not where it needs to be.

Director Wagner reported she was meeting with managers to discuss ideas on improving guest experience that could be done relatively inexpensively and quickly to help increase earned revenue. Chair Bergman asked if there was an example of what could increase earned revenue. Director Wagner responded that the easiest way is to get more guests through the gate that then spend money in the gift shop. She said they would be talking about ways to make the gift shop more inviting from the outside and make the zoo experience more fun.

Dr. Snider suggested the zoo hold more tree sapling give away days, not just on Arbor Day. Director Wagner shared the zoo was participating in Habitat Heros that included several days to distribute wildflower plants that are pollinators. Discussion ensued.

ADMISSION & PARKING REPORT

Director Wagner reported that admissions was down again in December 2025 compared to 2024 as well as year to date admissions.

ZOO DIRECTOR REPORT

Major Elements Reported by Director Wagner:

- The Horticulture and Maintenance Supervisor position has been filled, and the candidate is through the hiring process and will start soon.
- The holiday light recycling program was well received by the public and a large amount of lights were collected. Samantha Harkins mentioned she appreciated the program and had brought lights to be recycled.
- Director Morris-Hall stated Potter Park Zoo WILD School had officially begun. This program will fill the place that Big Zoo Lesson programming had previously. She stated Zoo WILD School would operate in a similar fashion, but the focus of the programming would be on conservation education and not just teacher professional development.
- Heath Thurman has returned as the Communications Specialist and that is going very well.
- The tiger on several occasions has been given access to the yard that primarily houses the lion and seems to enjoy the experience and explores for long periods of time.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissary

Maintenance staff are helping to convert the building that was previously the clinic into a commissary as well as the Blanding's turtle head starting room. The Society received a \$15,000 donation for the commissary through the Community Foundation. The cost of the changes in plumbing that are needed will be around \$15,000. The space will allow guests to view diet preparation and the Blanding's turtles.

2025 Year End Ticket Donation Report

Director Wagner stated the 2024 and 2025 reports were included that show how many and to whom passes were distributed as well as how many were used. Passes have an expiration of one year from the time they are issued. She stated around 25% of passes that are distributed for marketing purposes are redeemed. Dr. Snider asked who pays for the passes. Director Wagner explained the passes are distributed by the zoo to organizations that submit the charitable donation request for an event they are hosting that has a marketing component to it for the zoo. She shared many of the organizations are from well outside the Greater Lansing Area and that the zoo feels the cost to benefit is worthwhile. Julie Pingston noted that it is also good for the community if the passes bring in people from outside the area to spend money in the community.

Zoo Millage

Director Wagner stated the Board of Commissioners would be having a Board leadership meeting in late January to determine when County millages would be placed on the ballot in 2026 and this would include the zoo millage. Director Wagner stated there could be discussion on how many years the millage is for, but that the expectation is to pursue a renewal. Commissioner Tennis confirmed a renewal was the most likely option.

OLD BUSINESS

Feline Primate Design Project Update

Director Wagner stated that though the attorney general had ruled that the disapproval of the work project grant funds was unconstitutional, the zoo was waiting for notification from the governor's office before expending additional funds as they had not yet received reimbursement for any of the reimbursement requests that had been submitted since the end of September.

Stormwater Infrastructure Project Update

Director Wagner stated they had a long meeting with the architects today. She stated plans were nearing completion and the architect would be submitting a work plan to the EPA for the grant application and after that the next step would be the NEPA review. She stated they would not have enough funding to do as many of the components of the project that they would have liked, but that improvements would be made with priority given to the culvert in the elk yard and the farmyard. The swale behind the reptile building could be planted by volunteers and eaves troughs can be completed as funds are available and don't have to be done all at one time.

BOARD COMMENTS


Julie Pingston announced Cathy Claypool, the lead donor for the Animal Health Facility, passed away over the holiday.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

	DEPARTMENT: Potter Park Zoo
PREPARED BY: Cynthia Wagner, Zoo Director	MEETING DATE(S): March 2 and March 4, 2026
FOR COMMITTEES: <input type="checkbox"/> Law & Courts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Services <input type="checkbox"/> County Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance	
SUBJECT: Resolution to Authorize Caregiver Incentive at Potter Park Zoo	

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approval of the Resolution to provide caregivers, accompanying a paid guest receiving care, free admission to Potter Park Zoo.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Guests of all abilities visit Potter Park Zoo. In some instances, guests may require a caregiver to accompany them on their visit as they cannot navigate their visit without assistance. Potter Park Zoo is requesting to allow caregivers to enter the zoo at no cost when accompanying a paying guest that is receiving care.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

This resolution supports connecting individuals and our community with the natural world through exhibits, educational programming and staff interactions by delivering affordable, unforgettable and inspiring guest experiences.

DEPARTMENT MISSION RELATION:

This resolution supports connecting individuals and our community with the natural world through exhibits, educational programming and staff interactions by delivering affordable, unforgettable and inspiring guest experiences.

THIS ACTION RELATES TO AN ACTIVITY WHICH IS:

☐ MANDATED _____ ☒ NON-MANDATED _____

COST/FUNDING RECOMMENDATION:

Total Request/Contract Amount:

☐ Included in Current Fiscal Budget ☐ Budget Transfer ☒ Has No Financial Impact

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

☒ RECOMMENDED ☐ NOT RECOMMENDED ☐ ALTERNATIVES:

GOVERNING/ADVISORY BOARD APPROVAL DATE: ___ N/A _____

CONTROLLER'S OFFICE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Introduced by the Human Services and Finance Committees of the:

INGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CAREGIVERS INCENTIVE AT POTTER PARK ZOO

WHEREAS, guests of all abilities visit Potter Park Zoo;

WHEREAS, in some instances, guests may require a caregiver to accompany them on their visit;

WHEREAS, Potter Park Zoo is requesting to allow caregivers to enter the zoo at no cost when accompanying a paid guest that is receiving care.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Board of Commissioners authorizes caregivers to enter Potter Park Zoo at no cost when accompanying a paid guest receiving care.

**Potter Park Zoo Advisory Board
Meeting of January 14, 2026**

Motion to support a Resolution authorizing caregiver incentive at Potter Park Zoo.

MOVED BY

SUPPORTED BY

To recommend forwarding the attached resolution to the Board of Commissioners which was supported by the Potter Park Zoo Advisory Board with the passage of this motion.

**POTTER PARK ZOO
BALANCE SHEET
AS OF JANUARY 31st, 2026**

ASSETS

CASH	\$ 1,523,231
DEPOSITORY CASH	86,250
IMPREST CASH	8,000
TAXES REC - CURRENT LEVY	(1,118,023)
IFT TAX RECEIVABLE	(11,620)
TAXES REC - DELINQUENT	36,709
ESTIMATED UNCOLLECTIBLE DELINQUENT TAXES	(18,602)
ACCOUNTS REC-OTHER	80
PROPERTY TAX RECEIVABLE	-
INTEREST RECEIVABLE	4,313
DUE FROM STATE	-
DUE FROM OTHER FUNDS	-
INVENTORY	197,758
INVESTMENT YIELD ADJUSTMENT	(18,794)
PREPAID EXPENSES	-

TOTAL ASSETS

\$ 689,301

LIABILITIES

VOUCHERS PAYABLE	-
DUE TO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY	22,746
TAX LEVY LIABILITY	19,600
SALES TAX PAYABLE	12,326
REFUND NOW	-
REFUND APPLY	-
ACCRUED PAYROLL	-
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	11,565
DEFERRED REVENUE - DELINQUENT TAXES	22,737
DEFERRED REVENUE - PROPERTY TAXES	-
DEF REVENUE -POTTER PARK	17,801

TOTAL LIABILITIES

106,775

FUND BALANCE

UNSPENDABLE	197,758
UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE	384,767
	582,525

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

\$ 689,300

POTTER PARK ZOO
YEAR TO DATE BUDGET/ACTUAL REPORT
FOR 1 MONTH ENDING JANUARY 31, 2026

	JAN 2026 YTD		BUDGET		JAN 2025 YTD		% DIFF LAST
	2026 BUDGET	ACTUAL - PRELIMINARY	REMAINING	% OF BUDGET	ACTUAL	YR	
REVENUES							
PROPERTY TAX	\$ 4,954,707	\$ (1)	\$ 4,954,708	0.00%	\$ 4,733,041		-100.00%
UNALLOCATED PORTION OF TAXES (1 MONTH)	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ -	0.00%	\$ (4,338,621)		-100.00%
ADMISSIONS	\$ 785,000	\$ 2,280	\$ 782,721	0.29%	\$ 2,476		-7.92%
CONCESSIONS, GIFT SHOP, VENDING	\$ 851,000	\$ 3,407	\$ 847,593	0.40%	\$ 2,072		64.43%
PARKING FEES	\$ 180,000	\$ 198	\$ 179,802	0.11%	\$ 70		182.86%
INTERACTIVE SITES	\$ 95,000	\$ -	\$ 95,000	0.00%	\$ -		#DIV/0!
INTEREST INCOME	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	0.00%	\$ 2,268		-100.00%
OTHER REVENUES	\$ (390,839)	\$ 11,454	\$ (402,293)	-2.93%	\$ 16,986		-32.57%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 6,524,868	\$ 17,338	\$ 6,507,531	0.27%	\$ 418,292		-95.86%
EXPENDITURES							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
Salaries & Wages - Full Time	\$ 2,192,423	\$ 132,651	\$ 2,059,772	6.05%	\$ 129,758		2.23%
Salaries & Wages - Seasonal	\$ 825,284	\$ 38,412	\$ 786,872	4.65%	\$ 41,790		-8.08%
Benefits	\$ 1,197,705	\$ 86,752	\$ 1,110,953	7.24%	\$ 86,171		0.67%
Total Personnel Services	\$ 4,215,412	\$ 257,815	\$ 3,957,597	6.12%	\$ 257,719		0.04%
CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES							
Supplies	\$ 520,049	\$ 4,175	\$ 515,874	0.80%	\$ 6,000		-30.42%
Animal Care	\$ 322,000	\$ 9,905	\$ 312,095	3.08%	\$ 6,241		58.69%
Purchased Services	\$ 725,951	\$ 35,747	\$ 690,204	4.92%	\$ 31,477		13.57%
Utilities - Telephone	\$ 23,125	\$ -	\$ 23,125	0.00%	\$ -		#DIV/0!
Rentals & Leases	\$ 6,000	\$ -	\$ 6,000	0.00%	\$ -		#DIV/0!
Other Expenses	\$ 134,400	\$ 31,838	\$ 102,562	23.69%	\$ 33,660		-5.41%
Total Controllable Expenditures	\$ 1,731,525	\$ 81,666	\$ 1,649,859	4.72%	\$ 77,379		5.54%
NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES							
Utilities	\$ 250,000	\$ 28,729	\$ 221,271	11.49%	\$ 20,676		38.95%
Insurance	\$ 90,000	\$ 56,954	\$ 33,046	63.28%	\$ 56,509		0.79%
IT Support Expense	\$ 237,345	\$ 11,115	\$ 226,230	4.68%	\$ 21,116		-47.36%
Other Expenses	\$ 586	\$ 147	\$ 439	25.01%	\$ 147		0.00%
Total Non-Controllable Expenditures	\$ 577,931	\$ 96,945	\$ 480,986	16.77%	\$ 98,448		-1.53%
CAPITAL OUTLAY							
Capital Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	#DIV/0!	\$ -		#DIV/0!
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 6,524,868	\$ 436,426	\$ 6,088,442	6.69%	\$ 433,546		0.66%
TOTAL CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	\$ -	\$ (419,088)			\$ (15,254)		
FUND BALANCE AS OF 01/01/26 (preliminary)							
NON-SPENDABLE		\$ 197,758					
UNRESTRICTED		\$ 803,858					
		<u>\$ 1,001,615</u>					
FUND BALANCE AS OF 01/31/26		\$ 582,527					
FUND BALANCE AS OF 01/31/26							
UNSPENDABLE		\$ 197,758					
UNRESTRICTED		\$ 384,769					
		<u>\$ 582,527</u>					

NOTE: The Fund balance beginning balance is based on figures posted in the 2024 Ingham County Audit.

Ingham County Budget Status Report - Feline & Primate Renovations - Project 31700

Total by Account

		2025 REVISED BUDGET Jan-26	ACTUAL Jan-26	REMAINING BUDGET	PERCENT OF BUDGET
REVENUES:					
539000	STATE GRANT REVENUE	10,000,000.00	-	(10,000,000.00)	0.0%
	Other Revenues	10,000,000.00	-	(10,000,000.00)	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUES		10,000,000.00	-	(10,000,000.00)	0.0%
EXPENSES:					
TOTAL EXPENSES BEFORE CAPITAL OUTLAY		-	-	-	#DIV/0!
BALANCE BEFORE CAPITAL OUTLAY		10,000,000.00	-	(10,000,000.00)	
Capital Outlay					
976000	BUILDING ADDITIONS/IMPROVEMENTS	10,000,000.00	-		0.0%
	Leasehold Improvements	10,000,000.00	-	-	#DIV/0!
TOTAL EXPENSES		10,000,000.00	-	-	0.0%
TOTAL CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE		-	-		

Ingham County Budget Status Report - Stormwater Infrastructure Improvement - EPA - Project 31800

Total by Account

	2025 REVISED BUDGET Jan-26	ACTUAL Jan-26	REMAINING BUDGET	PERCENT OF BUDGET
REVENUES:				
539000 FEDERAL GRANT REVENUE	959,752.00	-	(959,752.00)	0.0%
698020 RESERVED FB USED	191,950.00	-	(191,950.00)	0.0%
Other Revenues	1,151,702.00	-	(1,151,702.00)	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUES	1,151,702.00	-	(1,151,702.00)	0.0%
EXPENSES				
818000 CONTRACTUAL SVCS - PROFESSIONAL	1,151,702.00	-	(1,151,702.00)	0.0%
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,151,702.00	-	-	0.0%
TOTAL CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	-	-		



Potter Park Zoological Society Donations Report 2025

The Zoological Society made the following purchases/donations on behalf of Potter Park Zoo.

Description	Funding Source	Date	Amount
Radiology Consulting Services	Society Budget	1/9/2025	\$4,000
Replacement Spider Web Part	Society Budget	3/7/2025	\$3,429
Enter and Exit Sign	Society Budget	4/3/2025	\$169.73
Graphic Sign Panel	Society Budget	4/7/2025	\$395.85
Bond Payment #1	Donations	4/10/2025	\$416,323.75
No straws/smoking sign	Society Budget	6/27/2025	\$239.46
Flowers for Harmony Park Project	Grant	8/26/2025	\$6,060.40
MSU – Regenerative Medicine	Society Budget	9/17/2025	\$200
Bond Payment #2	Society Budget/Cap Campaign Donations	10/8/2025	\$132,625
Benches for hospital	Society Budget	10/23/2025	\$5,022.79
Donor Sign at Animal Health Facility	Society Budget	10/24/2025	\$14,019.14
Desk for Animal Health Facility	Society Budget	10/28/2025	\$1001.70
Keylock system for zookeepers	Society Budget	10/30/2025 12/5/2025	\$7528.78
Fencing	Society Budget	12/30/2025	\$879
Exterior Animal Health Facility Signs	Society Budget	12/30/2025	\$10,275.77
Restricted Donations for Enrichment, Blandings, Pallas Cat	Donations	12/30/2025	3934.33
Animal Health Facility Grand Opening	Society Budget	2025	\$2727.88
Various meals for staff and guests	Society Budget	2025	\$1325.96
Total			\$610,158.54

Additional Benefits Provided by the Society to the Zoo:

Communications Specialist position – approximately: \$40,000

**POTTER PARK ZOO
MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT
FOR MONTH AND YTD JANUARY 31, 2026**

ADMISSION TYPE	2024	2025	2026 Gate	2026 Online	2026 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2024 COUNT	2025 COUNT	2026 COUNT	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
GENERAL										
CHILD RESIDENT	84	33	21	0	21	(12)	84	33	21	(12)
CHILD NON-RESIDENT	111	67	59	1	60	(7)	111	67	60	(7)
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	41	46	27	2	29	(17)	41	46	29	(17)
ADULT RESIDENT	298	230	164	0	164	(66)	298	230	164	(66)
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	273	223	185	49	234	11	273	223	234	11
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	7	8	30	0	30	22	7	8	30	22
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	8	5	4	0	4	(1)	8	5	4	(1)
GROUPS	43	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	865	612	490	52	542	(70)	865	612	542	(70)
MEMBERSHIPS/PROGRAMS										
PPZ MEMBERS/RECIPROCAL	401	318	255	0	0	(63)	401	318	0	(63)
SOCIETY PROGRAMMING/EVENTS	221	244	153	0	0	(91)	221	244	0	(91)
MONDAY PROGRAM	48	18	36	0	0	18	48	18	0	18
ZIYN	77	38	57	0	0	19	77	38	0	19
OTHER (non-paying)	45	3	36	0	0	33	45	3	0	33
SUBTOTAL	792	621	537	0	537	(84)	792	621	537	(84)
GRAND TOTAL	1,657	1,233	1,027	52	1,079	(154)	1,657	1,233	1,079	(154)

Wild Wanderers

ADMISSION TYPE	DESCRIPTION
CHILDREN RESIDENT	Children, Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN NON-RESIDENT	Children, Out of Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	All Children, any county under age 3 (Free)
ADULT RESIDENT	Adult of Ingham County (\$7 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	Adult Out of Ingham County (\$13 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County (\$5 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County (\$11 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
PPZ MEMBERS	Visitors holding membership at PPZ - one time payment
SPECIAL EVENTS - PPZ	Admission included in event fee
SPECIAL EVENTS - COUNTY	Admission included in event fee
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS	Reciprocal Zoo memberships (Discount varies)
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS (100%)	Reciprocal Zoo Members (Free admission)
GROUPS	20 or more guests paying together (\$1 off per person)
MONDAY PROGRAM	Ingham County and City of Lansing Residents free 9-12 PM on non-holiday Mondays
OTHER (non-paying)	Any coupon related attendee



Director's Report February 11, 2026

Staff



We're gearing up for the summer season and are now hiring Seasonal Guest Service Team Members! If you know someone who is passionate about providing great guest experiences and supporting the zoo's mission, please encourage them to apply or share the opportunity.

Customer Service Attendants play a key role as the first (and often last) point of contact for our visitors, supporting areas such as admissions, parking, retail, and food & beverage service. Successful candidates

should be friendly, dependable, and committed to delivering excellent customer service.

Position Details:

- \$15/hour
- 20–40 hours/week
- Seasonal (3–9 months), with some openings available immediately and others starting in spring/summer

Interviews have started for the open full time UAW maintenance position.

The Horticulture and Maintenance Supervisor, Josh Doyle, starts February 9, 2026.

In January we were able to offer free 10-minute massages for staff once again this year, generously provided by Delta Chiropractic Center.

Public Safety

The firearms training scheduled for January was cancelled due to cold temperatures and has been rescheduled for Feb. 10 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Annual Fire Inspection Completed

Boynton Fire completed the annual smoke alarm inspection Jan. 21, 2026. One smoke alarm will need to be replaced. Staff will be notified once the replacement is scheduled and the location of the new alarm is confirmed.

Conservation Engagement

The live rattlesnake exam was a fascinating experience for our students, and the added bonus of watching the tortoise and tegu wake up from their exams truly made the visit memorable.

Being able to see the animals live—both through the windows and on the monitor—was a huge hit with students and teachers alike. Experiences like this really bring veterinary medicine and animal care to life and help deepen students' understanding of what happens behind the scenes at the zoo.



At the end of the last season, Zoo Teens completed a survey comparing their skills, knowledge, and confidence before and after the program.

Here are the results:

- Understanding the role of zoos in wildlife conservation → 20% increase
- Explaining animal needs and behaviors → 30% increase
- Knowing how human actions impact ecosystems → 16% increase
- Awareness of conservation actions that help wildlife → 18% increase
- Feeling personally connected to wildlife and nature → 7% increase
- Believing they can make a difference in protecting wildlife and the environment → 25% increase
- Confidence talking about wildlife and conservation to others → 37% increase
- Interest in animal or conservation careers → 7% increase
- Seeing themselves as conservation role models or advocates → 26% increase

We're also excited to share that the Zoo Teen program was awarded a \$7,500 grant to enhance and expand teen experiences in the upcoming season! We are looking forward to 2026!

The College Conservation Ambassador (CCA) Program is a new summer volunteer opportunity designed for college-age participants who are interested in conservation, zoos, and professional development. The program runs May through August and provides hands-on zoo experience, skill-building opportunities, and a chance to connect with peers and professionals in the field.

Zookambi registration opens February 16, 2026 for zoo members and March 1, 2026 for non-zoo members.

Homeschool Zoo Crew Is back this semester. Classes meet on Wednesdays, with a morning session beginning at 9:45 a.m. Every other week, an afternoon session will also take place, running until 4:30 p.m.

Community Outreach

Our next FALCONERS event is Saturday, Feb. 21 10 a.m - 1 p.m. The January event was canceled as it was scheduled for a day the zoo closed due to cold temperatures.

2025 Welcoming Highlights

- Introduced a Voluntary Guest Disclosure option to better support individual access needs.
- Developed an FAQ resource for Front Desk staff to enhance the guest experience (also available on our website).
- Partnered with Wheel the World and earned Accessibility Certification.
- Installed new accessibility signage at the Reptile House and the bathrooms near the penguins.
- Added musical instruments to the playground to encourage inclusive, sensory-friendly play.
- Replaced the playground communication board to improve accessibility and engagement.
- Launched the CATA Bus Program to support staff members who commute by bus.

Zoo in Your Neighborhood Fun Facts

- Our largest month of visitors using a zoo pass was August with 807 guests. Our lowest was January with 38.
- We had more visitors use zoo passes in 2025 for Boo at the Zoo and Wonderland of Lights than in 2024.
- Our partner location with the most zoo passes used: Delta Township Library with 110 passes used.
- Our partner location with the most guests visiting: Delta Township Library with 370 guests.

In December we held another fundraiser at P.F. Chang's and they were able to raise \$361.66 for the zoo! Thank you to everyone who continues to support our partnership with them!

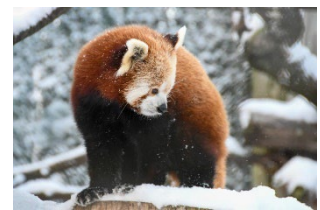
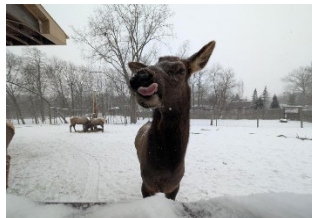
Animals

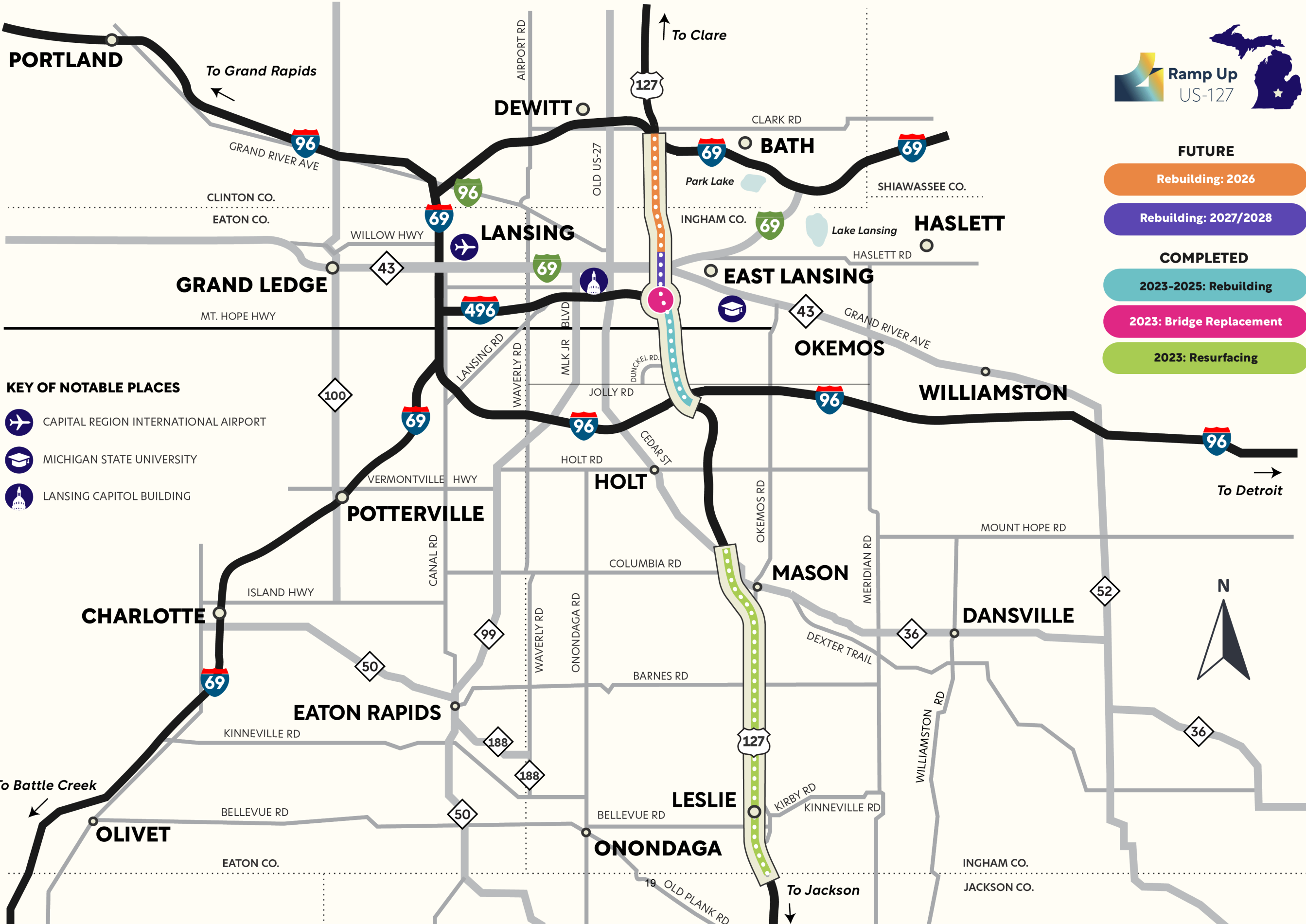
We are monitoring the female otter. She is showing more signs of potential pregnancy.

Two miniature donkeys are arriving in February. They will be on exhibit in the farmyard in 2026.

We are continuing to wait to receive a recommendation for a breeding female black rhino.

A huge thank you to our incredible Animal Care team for going above and beyond to keep our animals safe, comfortable, and well cared for during this stretch of extremely cold weather. All of the birds of prey were moved to indoor locations for up to two weeks and are now back on exhibit. The new holding spaces in the animal health facility were invaluable.





- FUTURE**
- Rebuilding: 2026
 - Rebuilding: 2027/2028
- COMPLETED**
- 2023-2025: Rebuilding
 - 2023: Bridge Replacement
 - 2023: Resurfacing

- KEY OF NOTABLE PLACES**
- CAPITAL REGION INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
 - MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
 - LANSING CAPITOL BUILDING