



SF Zoo Presentation for BOS Budget & Finance Committee

May 6, 2026

San Francisco Zoological Society

Connect, Care, Conserve

History of San Francisco Zoo & Gardens

- Established in 1929, the San Francisco Zoo & Gardens is a 100-acre park.
- SF Zoo is home to nearly 1,500 exotic, endangered and rescued animals representing more than 225 species, and seven distinct gardens full of native and unusual plants.
- SFZS is comprised of 30 Board Members and 50+ Emeritus Board Members. There are approximately 180 full-time employees and ~100 docents.



Who We Are

- We are an education and conservation organization serving the San Francisco and beyond.
- Our mission is to connect all people with wildlife, inspire caring for nature and advance conservation action.
- We are proud to serve our community and we have a talented team of experts who care for our animals, visitors, gardens and habitats each day.



Access Programs

- **San Francisco Resident Free Admission** - the First Wednesday of the Month
- The **Museums for all Program** allows guest to purchase up to 4 tickets for only \$5 each just by showing their SNAP EBT card and matching ID. Since this January, 12,166 adults and 4,800 children have come to the Zoo under the program.
- The **Discover & Go program** allows guests to check out free Zoo passes from their local library. Since August of 2025 2,578 adults and 1,373 children have enjoyed the program.
- **SFUSD Schools** also get free field trips during the School Year. And Rec & Park is also given free access for their group and summer programs.
- **Non-SFUSD Schools** receive a discount for field trip admission.
- **Discounted** admission fees for SF residents and seniors.
- **Membership** 14,200 members, 46% SF households



2026 Discount Promotions

- **January – Kids Free All Month**
 - Resulted in highest January attendance on record (~63,000)
 - Admission revenue exceeded prior year by 62.5%
- **February Presidents Day Promotion and Free Student Admission**
 - Students allowed free entry during teacher's strike
- **March – Student BOGO Month**
 - Attendance exceeded prior year by 31%
- **May – Mother's Day Weekend Promotion**
 - All Admission only \$5
- **June – Kids Free on Weekdays**
 - Expecting weekend attendance levels during weekdays



Volunteer & Education Programs



Youth Jobs & Volunteers

Jobs:

The Zoo has partnered with:

- JCYC (Japanese Community Youth Council)
 - SFYouthworks
 - Enterprise for Youth
- In collaboration with these organizations the Zoo has hosted over 30 paid interns over the past three years.

Volunteers:

- Every year the Zoo averages about **60 – 70 teen volunteers** for our Leadership Fellows program.
- The Zoo is celebrating our 50th anniversary of the Nature Trail Volunteer program, which works with youth ages 12-14 to provide education to the public about a particular animal or conservation initiative.
- The Zoo also hosts volunteers and interns in other areas of the Zoo including Children's Zoo, Insect Zoo, Conservation and Wellness and the Animal Rescue and Conservation Center.



Education Programs

- Summer Camp Enrollment
 - Over 1000 registrants
 - \$500,000 in earned revenue
 - 56 scholarships awarded
- Little Learners Early Childhood Program
 - Resurrected from pre-COVID era
 - 300+ registrants
- Wild Nights Sleepover Program
 - Pilot program launched in April with 50 attendees
 - Full reboot planned for Aug 2026



Educational Programs

- Relaunched Winter & Fall Zoo Camps
- Bilingual Camps (Chinese & Spanish)
- Over 100 Docents & Adult Volunteers
- Community Outreach: tabling at street fairs, festivals, cultural celebrations, schools
- Conservation Lectures



Recent Special Events, Upcoming Exhibits and Promotions



Highlighted 2026 Special Events

- **February – Member Appreciation Month**
 - Special Public Programming (Keeper Chats)
 - Extended Morning Hours
 - Lunar New Year Celebration
- **March – Neurodiversity Celebration Week**
 - Early “Quiet Hours”
 - Rides set to “Quiet Mode”
 - Free resource kits and visit guides
 - Elevated “Sensory Alert” exhibit signage
- **April**
 - “Eggventure” Easter Community Egg Hunt & Education
 - Earth Day collaboration with 14 community organizations
 - Sustainability education and community training
- **May – Asian American & Pacific Islander Month**
 - K-POP Day – Celebrating cultural impacts through food, dance, and wildlife education (May 23)
- **June – Pride Month**
 - Zoo’s 97th Birthday Celebration – June 13 & 14
 - Pride Celebration – June 21
 - Pride Parade



Upcoming Special Exhibits

- “Dinos Rule!” Animatronic Exhibit (June 29 – September 12)
 - Attendance Projection: +52,978
- Winter Light Festival- “Zoolightful” (October 23 – January 3)
 - Attendance Projection: +124,000



Citywide Promotions

- Street Pole Banners
 - In permitting process
 - May 2026 launch (est.)



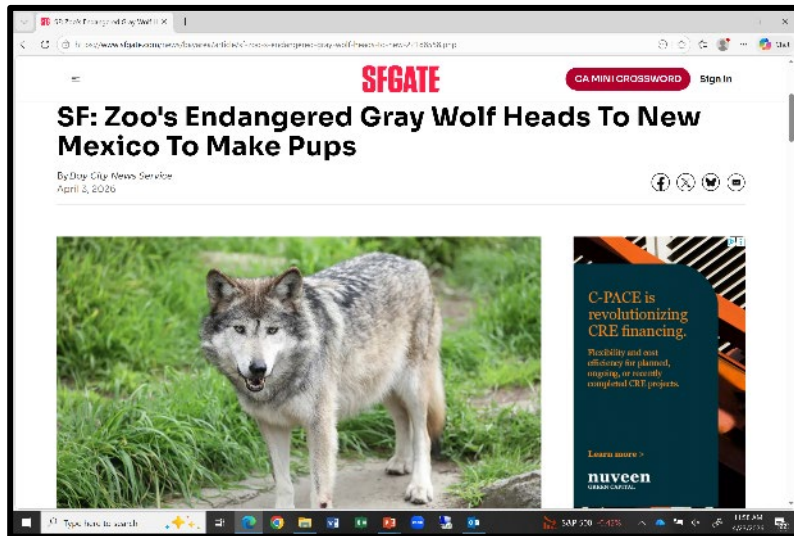
- MUNI PSA campaign
 - 1000 interior bus cards
 - 15 Princess Banners
 - May 2026 launch (est.)



Public Relations

Recent Press Coverage

- Neurodiversity Access Programs
- Mexican Gray Wolf Repopulation Efforts
- KRON4 “Exploring Animals” Monthly Segment



Social Media Presence

Incremental Growth of Followers and Engagement YOY

- 277.2% increase in interactions on Facebook (see graph below)
- Follower increase of 71,014 accounts across all platforms
- Two posts in 2026 have gone viral with over 1 million views each

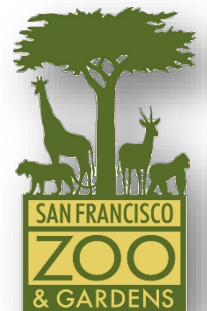


SF Zoo Mobile App Update

- Language Translations: 60+ languages
- Wayfinding without Paper Maps
- Data Collected:
 - Heat Mapping provides details on visitor flow, areas of highest interest, and public programming popularity
 - Visitor satisfaction data – 92% positive
 - Visitor demographic data
 - Native Language
 - Country and City of Residency



Board Governance and Financials



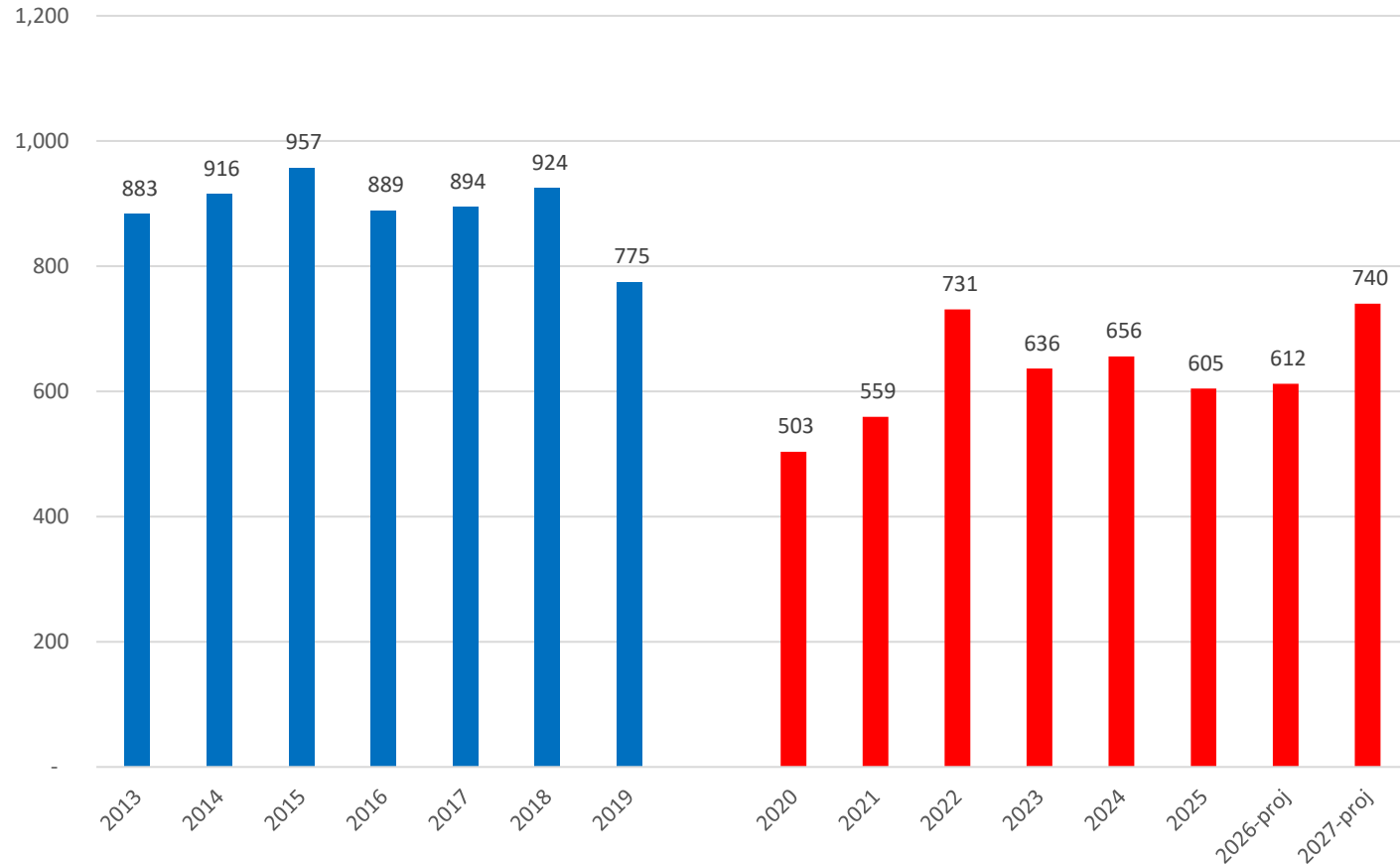
SFZS Board

- Continued growth of board membership and increased fundraising responsibility
- SFZS Board Retreat planned for 5/16-focus on strategic and business planning + governance



Historic, Current and Projected Attendance

San Francisco Zoo Attendance (thousands)

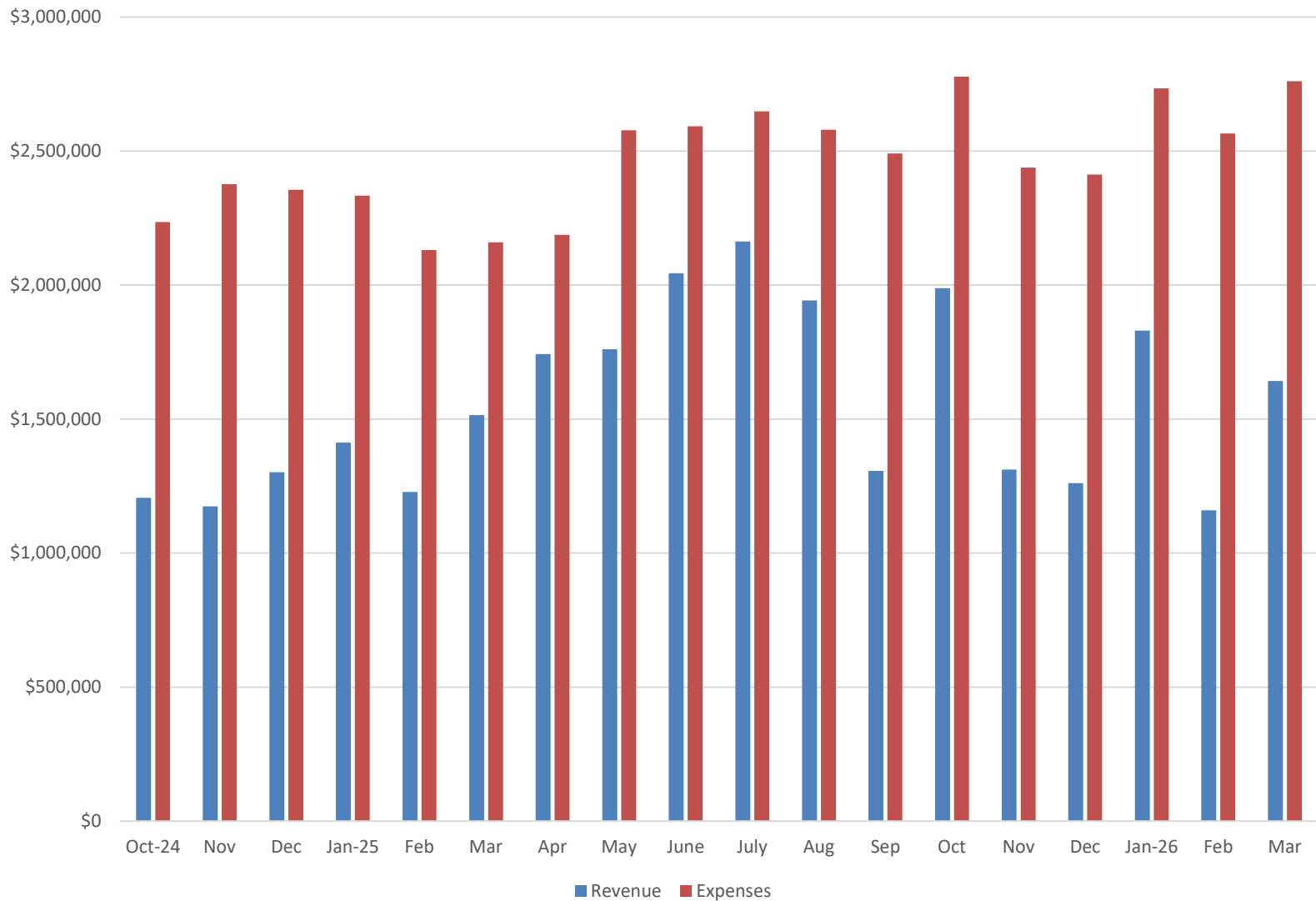


Significant Cost Increases FY 20/21 to FY 25/26

	<u>5-Year Increase</u>	
• Utilities	83%	\$960K
• Health Benefits	34%	\$920K
• Supplies	97%	\$340K
• Security	38%	\$270K
• Animal Food	40%	\$230K
• Insurance	47%	\$160K
• Workers Compensation	82%	\$150K
• <u>TOTAL SIGNIFICANT COST INCREASES</u>		<u>\$3.03M</u>

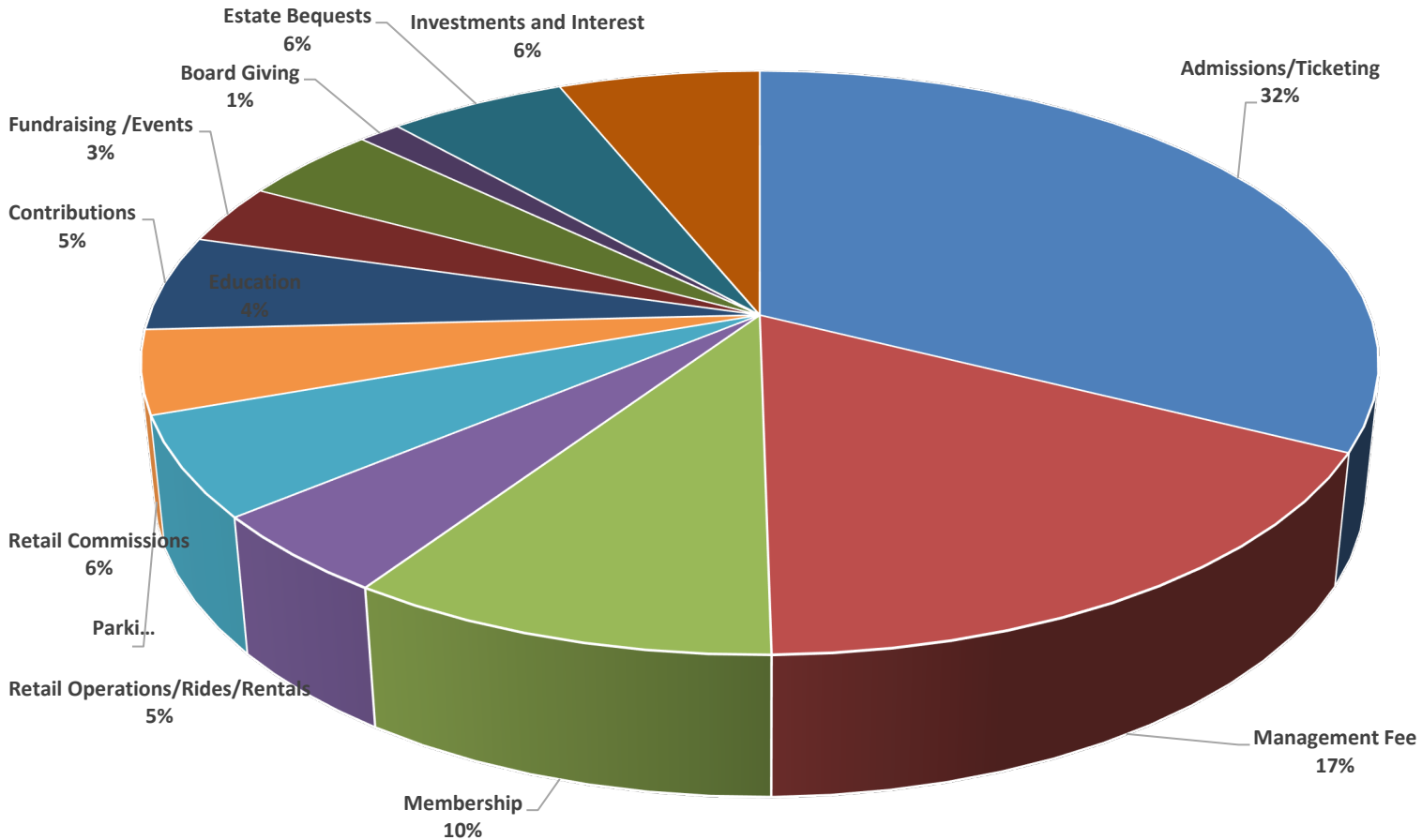
Note: These \$3.03M increases are 15% of ALL expenses in FY20/21

Zoo Revenues and Expenses October-24 to March-26 Excluding Investments, Bequests, and In-Kind



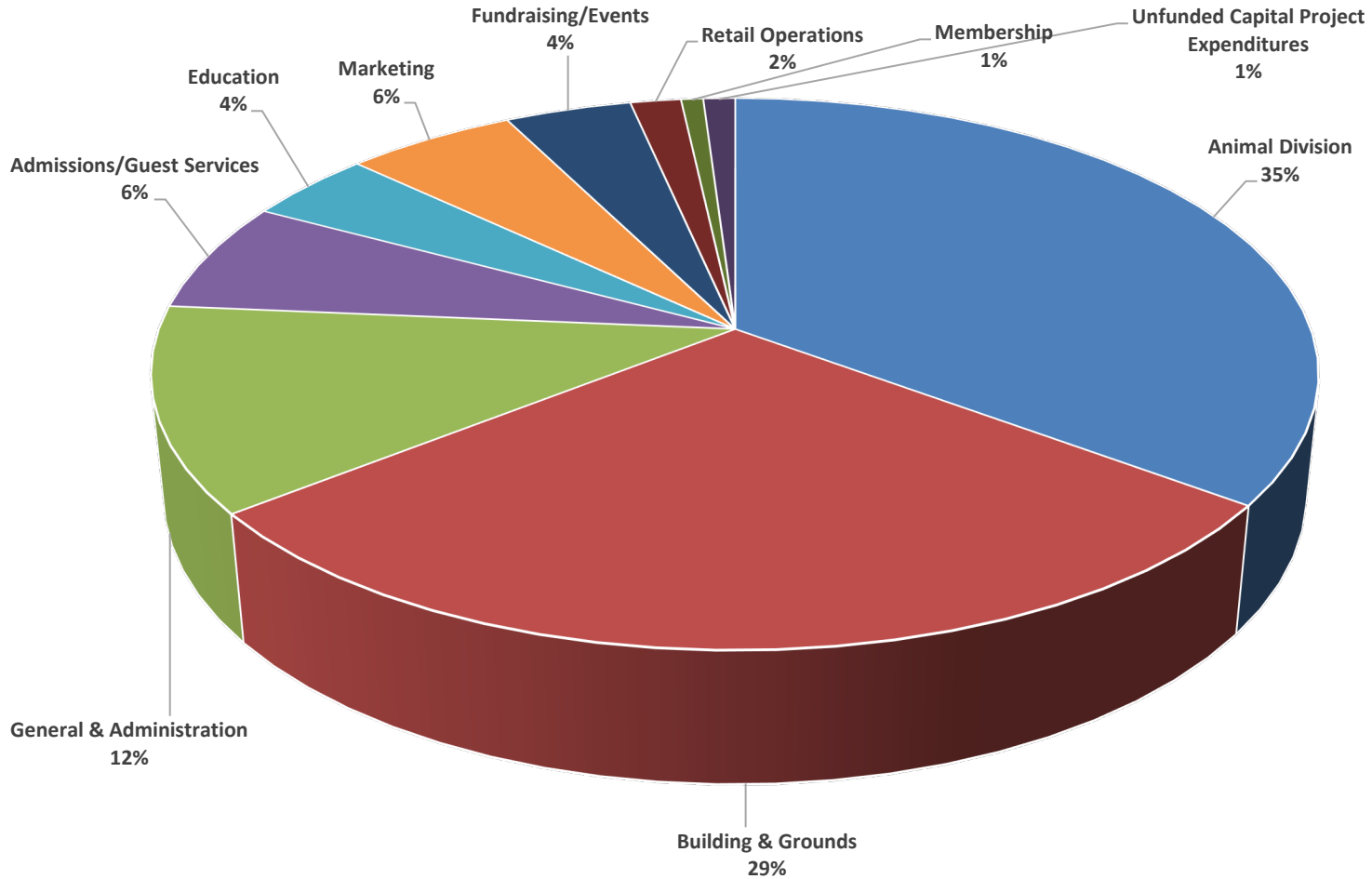
SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

PROJECTED REVENUES FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 - \$23.1M



SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

PROJECTED EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 - \$31.5M



Proposed Loan from the City to the San Francisco Zoological Society



Proposed Loan will allow SF Zoo to Continue Operations

- Continue operations without major damaging disruption
- Fundraising and sponsorships for future exhibits and events
- Capital Campaign
- Business, strategic and master plan work to set the stage for the future of SF Zoo and inspire investment
- Facilities Conditions Assessment
- AZA Accreditation, detailed application submission, inspection, and required maintenance work



What is AZA Accreditation?

- Association of Zoos & Aquariums' accreditation is the gold standard for animal care, awarded only to top-tier institutions meeting rigorous performance-based standards for animal welfare, veterinary care, conservation and education.
- AZA accreditation is vitally important as it enables zoos to work cooperatively with other professionally-accredited AZA institutions, such as participating in Species Survival Plans (breeding programs), AZA SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction), field conservation and scientific research.
- AZA renews accreditation every 5 years via an extensive written submission and a vigorous three-day on-site visit with expert AZA inspectors.
- SF Zoo has been continuously accredited since program started in 1979.
- Only 254 of the more than 9,000 USDA licensed animal facilities are accredited by AZA.



Thank you! Questions?

