

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The Dakota Zoo continues to improve! Thanks to more than 500 families and local businesses that participated in an all-encompassing study, providing us with invaluable feedback as we plan for new exhibits and renovations to our zoo. During the study, participants raised a variety of questions about the upcoming campaign. This document answers those questions and others concerning the Zoo 2020 Capital Campaign. If you have other questions, please contact the Dakota Zoo.

Why is the zoo conducting a capital campaign?

We want to make sure the zoo continues to evolve and improve, for the entire community's enjoyment.

The Dakota Zoo has been an anchor in the Bismarck/Mandan community for more than 50 years. Established in 1961, the zoo has grown from a 15-acre attraction with a selection of North American species to a 90-acre property that features more than 600 animals and welcomes 150,000 visitors per year. We are proud to be one of the top family attractions in North Dakota and are intent on staying that way — which is why we are focusing on our future. The Dakota Zoo leadership and board of directors feel passionate about evolving the zoo with improvements and new exhibits to ensure the continued enjoyment for its members and visitors. Based on the information from the planning study, the board of directors voted to proceed with a capital campaign immediately.

What are our goals?

Our goals are based upon fundraising expectations identified during the campaign assessment. Our priorities will be to:

- Build a new penguin, meerkat and red panda exhibit
- Renovate the admissions, concessions and gift shop areas

If funds allow, we will proceed with a new black bear exhibit, which is a part of our master plan. To accomplish a campaign for a project of this magnitude, we will rely on the support of our members and community. We plan to apply for grants from local community foundations and approach our local businesses for financial support. The rest will have to come from generous supporters who understand how much the Dakota Zoo benefits the community and local economy.

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What will be included in the new penguin, meerkat and red panda exhibit?

To aid in the development of the zoo's master plan, a survey of our community was conducted in 2013 and there was overwhelming support for the addition of penguins to our zoo. A new building will be constructed where the long horn cattle currently reside, which is a short walk from the primate center on the wilderness trail. The 6,365 square foot facility will include:

- A large temperature-controlled environment to house 10 penguins
- A fresh water pool and public window that extends below the surface of the water
- Exhibit space for 10 meerkats
- Three separate interior den rooms with 12-foot ceilings to house three or four red pandas
- A large exterior habitat which will be the main area for the red pandas (several den nests will be provided with the intention to breed)

Why do we need to renovate our concession stand, admissions area and gift shop?

As the zoo membership continues to rise, the zoo facilities will need to grow with it. We have a need to renovate the admissions area for a more efficient entrance for our guests. We also see that with this growth comes a need for additional concessions and restroom facilities for the comfort of our guests. A new, modern concession booth will be constructed near the zoo entrance. The new structure will allow for a streamlined entrance and exit area, a members' express line making it easier for our members to get into the zoo quickly, and a new area for the zoo gift shop and membership services. The new concession building will have additional food and beverage choices, including a self-serve drink area, additional indoor seating, and will house additional restrooms.

Will we be able to accomplish the black bear exhibit in this phase?

The black bear has been a major piece of history of the Dakota Zoo, and the zoo's master plan includes the welcome home of this beloved bear. If we go above and beyond the funds needed for the penguin exhibit and facility renovation, then we will be able to include the black bear exhibit in this phase. The plan is to build a new, indoor building and fenced exhibit that will be constructed to display black bears in their natural environment. This exhibit will be located adjacent to the current grizzly bear facility and will be similar in size and fence type. The exhibit would include two black bears, a water feature, rocks and logs that the bears can climb and play on, and an indoor den and feeding area.

What is the plan for staffing these new facilities?

The zoo plans to hire two additional full-time personnel to help with animal care and exhibit maintenance. The new concession stand will not require any additional staff as we plan to include a self-service component, making it faster and easier for guests to enjoy their meals while visiting the zoo.

How do we plan to pay for the maintenance on the new exhibits?

When the zoo built and opened the cat complex in September of 2008, we saw an immediate increase in attendance — up 30 percent from the 100,000 visitors the year prior. Because of this increase we were able to increase our annual operating budget to cover the increased utilities and maintenance costs. We foresee the same type of increase in attendance with the addition of our new exhibit and we plan to increase the operating budget accordingly.

Are we replacing any of the existing exhibits or buildings with this new construction?

Our concession, gift shop and admissions area plans will include both a renovation and construction project. Our current office building will remain and the existing entrance area will become the members' express line, making it easier for our members to get into the zoo quickly. The gift shop will be renovated into a new member service area, and office space and a conference room will be added. We plan to replace our current concession building with a new and more efficient building for our food services. Our gift shop will be relocated to this new building and restrooms will be added there.



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Why should I/we consider a capital campaign commitment?

The Dakota Zoo is an independent nonprofit organization that is not supported by any tax dollars. We like to think it belongs to you, the community. As such, we will rely on the community to help make our campaign a success. It is the responsibility of the people of the Bismarck/Mandan area to ensure the Dakota Zoo can continue to serve the community well into the future. The zoo provides a family-friendly, educational, economical attraction for all residents and visitors. We all need to identify and make meaningful donations to ensure the campaign is a success.

When will I/we be asked for a pledge to the campaign?

Before asking for support we must first ensure we are prepared. We are in the process of finalizing our case statement and recruiting and training volunteers. We will kick off the formal effort in a few months.

How can I help?

Soon you will receive a packet of campaign information, including a gift request letter. Please take time to carefully review the information and consider the request. Of course volunteers are always welcomed. If you wish to join our volunteer team, please call the Dakota Zoo at 701-223-7543 for more information.

How will I/we be recognized for our commitment?

Donor recognition will be a significant feature of our campaign and we have several ideas in mind. You will, of course, receive acknowledgement from Dakota Zoo leadership in the form of a letter. During the official fundraising period, we will highlight those who gave by listing each name in our publications both online and in print. We are also working on a naming rights system for the various new exhibits and renovated buildings in this plan. Please note: those who wish to give but remain anonymous can do so, just alert the Dakota Zoo office.

There is no way we can consider a pledge of \$50,000 or \$100,000, but I can do something smaller. Will that help?

You bet! We are thankful for every gift we receive. It may sound clichéd, but it is true that no commitment is too small. For example, let's say 100 families identify their commitment as \$5,000 each. Now do the math: $\$5,000 \times 100 = \$500,000$! That is a major investment. As we move forward to ask for support we will be asking for everyone to stretch and to make a gift that is most meaningful for them.

How can I participate? Can I pledge over time?

Yes, we understand that for most, such a commitment takes time to fulfill. That's why we encourage you to consider a pledge. Once you identify your gift, determine how you wish to complete that commitment. You can make monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments. We will send the appropriate reminders.

Is my pledge legally binding? Will it be confidential?

No, a pledge is a gift, one you consider to be meaningful to you. All we ask is that you do your best to fulfill your pledge and advise us of any financial changes that may impact your commitment. All pledges will be kept as confidential as possible. Only the people responsible for maintaining the records will have access to your pledge.

How do we determine a pledge amount for each person/family?

Please understand we are not trying to embarrass anyone with our gift request. However, we are asking you to consider placing the Dakota Zoo at the top of your giving list and to think about the organization like you never have before. Our request amounts are based upon a number of factors including giving histories and campaign assessment responses. Also, please remember the campaign gift we are asking you to consider is in addition to your normal giving.

Who will be asked to support the campaign?

Zoo members, local businesses and community foundations will be asked to consider a gift to the campaign.

Why do you emphasize personal visits?

Personal, face-to-face contact remains the single, best way to ask for support. It emphasizes the personal nature of giving, allows for a thorough presentation of the campaign case, gives potential donors the opportunity to ask questions, and allows volunteers to express their own enthusiasm.

Why do you emphasize making a pledge?

Pledges allow donors to consider giving more than is possible through one-time gifts. This is important in a campaign of this magnitude.

Are pledges the only kind of gifts?

While such gifts will be the type most often made to the campaign, other types such as gifts of stock or in-kind gifts are also options.

Can trust and estate gifts be made to the campaign?

Because the needs of the campaign require immediate funding, gifts of cash and securities are generally sought. But yes, trust and estate gifts are welcomed.

To what extent is a campaign commitment tax deductible?

Gifts to the campaign are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The application of such laws varies with individual circumstances. Donors with specific questions regarding tax deductibility should contact their attorney or financial advisor.

Can I change my pledge payment time frame?

Yes, all we ask is that you notify the Dakota Zoo.

