

ZA00N
Miscellaneous Grant Programs

***Maryland Zoo in Baltimore Infrastructure Improvements
(Baltimore City)***

General Obligation Bonds \$5,000,000

Summary of Recommended Bond Actions

1. Maryland Zoo in Baltimore Infrastructure Improvements

Approve the \$5 million general obligation bond authorization to support design, construction, and equipping of the African Penguin Exhibit and for infrastructure and life safety improvements.

Bill Text: Provide a grant to the Directors of the Maryland Zoological Society, Inc. for the design, construction, and equipping of the African Penguin Exhibit and various infrastructure improvements or life safety projects.

Program Description: The current request includes \$5 million in general obligation (GO) bonds to construct Phase II of the African Penguin Exhibit and for various emergency infrastructure/life safety improvements at the zoo (e.g., the correction of life safety deficiencies and animal welfare deficiencies).

Project Analysis

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is a 136-year-old institution situated on 135 acres of land. Over the years, the zoo has expanded and now occupies 45 acres of the 135-acre parcel. In order to address facilities needs, the zoo hired a consultant to assess the zoo in 2007. The consultant developed a comprehensive list of needed improvements that were grouped into three categories: basic infrastructure, strategic services, and exhibit/attraction improvements. Basic infrastructure improvements include projects that address life safety issues for the animals, as well as the zoo visitors. Strategic service improvements include projects such as the renovation of food service areas and improvements to lighting, signage, and restrooms. Exhibit/attraction improvements include the construction and renovation of animal enclosures and displays in an effort to enhance the visitor experience. The zoo anticipates addressing improvements in each of the aforementioned categories over the next several years.

For further information contact: Rachel N. Silberman

Phone: (410) 946-5530

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In fiscal 2012, the zoo received \$2.5 million in GO bonds. Of this amount, \$1.5 million was used to begin initial construction of the African Penguin Exhibit, and an additional \$1.0 million supported various infrastructure and life safety improvements at the zoo. In fiscal 2012, architectural design and project management was contracted for the African Penguin Exhibit. The fiscal 2013 request includes \$5.0 million in GO bonds for construction of the African Penguin Exhibit (\$4.0 million) and for various infrastructure and life safety improvements (\$1.0 million). According to the zoo, the new penguin exhibit is projected to cost a total of \$7.0 million. The new exhibit, which will house up to 100 penguins, will include a water feature with a life support system, underwater viewing for zoo patrons, and energy efficient improvements. Design began during the summer of 2011, and construction will begin in November 2012 and will conclude by the end of October 2013. The current five-year *Capital Improvement Program* includes \$5.0 million in annual GO bond support planned through fiscal 2017. **The zoo should comment on what projects will be supported with the planned \$5.0 million annual authorizations through fiscal 2017.**

Fiscal 2013 infrastructure and life safety improvements will include replacing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning and animal doors in the Chimpanzee Forest building, renovating the Maryland Wilderness exhibit, replacing the life support system in the otter exhibit, replacing climbing structures in the chimp day room, and creating enclosed winter housing for the zoo's ostriches. Two infrastructure and life safety improvement projects originally planned for fiscal 2012, an otter/fox off-exhibit holding cage replacement and a giraffe building interior lighting project, are currently on hold. The zoo reports that costs associated with the planned otter/fox exhibit are larger than initially anticipated. The project will be completed with unencumbered funds once a project scope and associated costs are finalized. A giraffe building interior lighting project will be partially supported with private funds, with remaining costs covered by unencumbered funds. The project is tentatively scheduled to begin construction in April 2012. Remaining unencumbered funds were used to support a variety of other infrastructure improvements not included in the original fiscal 2012 funding plan, such as fencing, sidewalk, penguin pool, and Rhino and Giraffe House repairs. **The zoo should discuss how it prioritizes infrastructure and life safety improvements, and what fund sources other than GO bonds are used to support such projects.**

Project Status Update

For years, the zoo was unable to access capital authorizations provided to improve the zoo's facilities because its low revenue generation made meeting the matching fund requirements difficult. During the 2009 legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly addressed this issue by amending two prior authorizations to remove the matching fund requirement, which made approximately \$8.3 million in capital funds available to the zoo. In addition to this funding, \$5.0 million was authorized in the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan (MCCBL) of 2010 for capital at the zoo, and \$2.5 million was authorized in the MCCBL of 2011. As of February 15, 2012, approximately \$3.8 million in State funds that have been received since fiscal 2001 remain unencumbered (excluding funds appropriated for the African Penguin Exhibit) and, therefore, available for contract issuance, down from \$7.7 million in March 2011. The zoo reports that the existing \$3.8 million unencumbered balance will be fully encumbered by October 31, 2013, to complete ongoing and planned infrastructure and life safety improvements.

Prior Authorization and Capital Improvement Program

**Authorization Uses
(\$ in Millions)**

<i>Fund Uses</i>	<i>Prior Authorization</i>	<i>2013 Request</i>	<i>2014 Estimate</i>	<i>2015 Estimate</i>	<i>2016 Estimate</i>	<i>2017 Estimate</i>
Acquisition	\$1.045	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000
Planning	0.000	0.550	0.550	0.550	0.550	0.550
Construction	8.170	4.300	4.300	4.300	4.300	4.300
Equipment	0.285	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150
Total	\$9.500	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000

**Authorization Sources
(\$ in Millions)**

<i>Fund Sources</i>	<i>Prior Authorization</i>	<i>2013 Request</i>	<i>2014 Estimate</i>	<i>2015 Estimate</i>	<i>2016 Estimate</i>	<i>2017 Estimate</i>
GO Bonds	\$9.500	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000	\$5.000
Total	\$9.500	\$5.000	\$10.000	\$10.000	\$10.000	\$5.000

GO Bond Recommended Actions

1. Approve the \$5 million general obligation bond authorization to support design, construction, and equipping of the African Penguin Exhibit and for infrastructure and life safety improvements.