



Update to the City Council
Committee on Quality of Life

Houston Zoo

Community Impact

The Houston Zoo is a leading conservation and education nonprofit providing care to thousands of animals and one of the highest attended zoos in the country. The Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums.

Houston Zoo, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) established when the City of Houston transferred operational responsibility to the new nonprofit entity in 2002. The transition from public to private management was a major turning point for the Zoo, resulting in a strong partnership between Houston Zoo, Inc. and the City that has already generated more than \$220 million in private community investment in Zoo improvements. The Zoo is governed by a 35-member Board, including seven board positions appointed by the Mayor.

MISSION

Connect communities with animals, inspiring action to save wildlife.

VISION

Be a leader in the global movement to save wildlife.

“When you talk about the transformation that’s taking place in the City of Houston, it’s taking place right here at the Houston Zoo.”

**Houston Mayor
Sylvester Turner**
May 24, 2019

Kathrine G. McGovern
Texas Wetlands
opened May 2019





2020 COVID-19 Response

In March the Zoo was forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of its staff, guests, and animals.

Closing the Zoo - March 14, 2020

Care for Animals Continued

Unyielding care for animals continued, with keeper teams alternating to maximize social distancing

Construction Projects Continued

During the final months of construction for the newest expansion, teams worked overtime to finish South America's Pantanal, using donor-restricted capital funding.

Connecting with Communities

The Zoo launched several new programs to continue to connect with the community while the Zoo was closed to the public.



2020 COVID-19

Reopening the Zoo - March 14, 2020

The Zoo developed new protocols to ensure it could open while keeping visitors and employees as safe as possible, including timed ticketing, a one-way path, limited food-service options, frequent disinfecting of high-touch areas, attendance limits that supported social distancing, online only ticket sales, touchless transactions, and mask requirements for staff and guests. The Zoo has since restored a free flow path and re-opened all restaurants.

The Zoo has looked forward and found innovative ways to do the business of running a world-class zoological organization.

Zoo Ball moved to a virtual format and broke event fundraising records with more than \$1.2 million raised for the Zoo.

South America's Pantanal opened on October 10, and was featured as part of a one-hour special on KPRC: *Saving Giants*.

Orangutan habitat was unveiled on November 19 as the final project in the Heart of the Zoo portion of the Zoo's master plan.

XU Energy presents Zoo Lights, Houston's favorite holiday tradition, welcomed thousands daily.

Through a global pandemic, hurricanes and winter storms, one thing remained consistent: the Houston Zoo created safe and fun experiences for our guests while staying true to its mission of *connecting communities with animals, inspiring action to save wildlife*.

Overview



ESTABLISHED

1922

GUESTS

2 million +
annually

ANIMALS

5k +

in our care

STAFF

384

full-time

13

part-time

25

seasonal

VOLUNTEERS

400 +

Financial Stewardship

Thanks to the commitment and confidence of the City of Houston and its leaders, the Houston Zoo receives steady support from the City based on its 50-Year Lease and Services Agreement. These funds are critical to leveraging the Zoo's ability to maintain the 100-year old City-owned facility, sustain growth and remain accessible.

Through steady increases in guest engagement, visitation, employment levels, construction and business activity, a deep-rooted culture of conservation, and great community events, the Houston Zoo has become an economic engine and cultural icon for Houston.

Capital Investment

\$240.1 million

in improvements funded privately
with earned and contributed
revenue since 2002

2019 Operating Revenue

\$55,299,029

18.3% City management fee

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$242,435,755

to the Houston area economy in 2018

Community

The Zoo is a cherished destination for Houston's diverse communities who come to experience our incredible animals and ecosystems.



GUESTS

2M+
annually

MEMBERS

52,915
households in 2019

LONE STAR CARD

150,563
guests in 2019

FREE DAYS

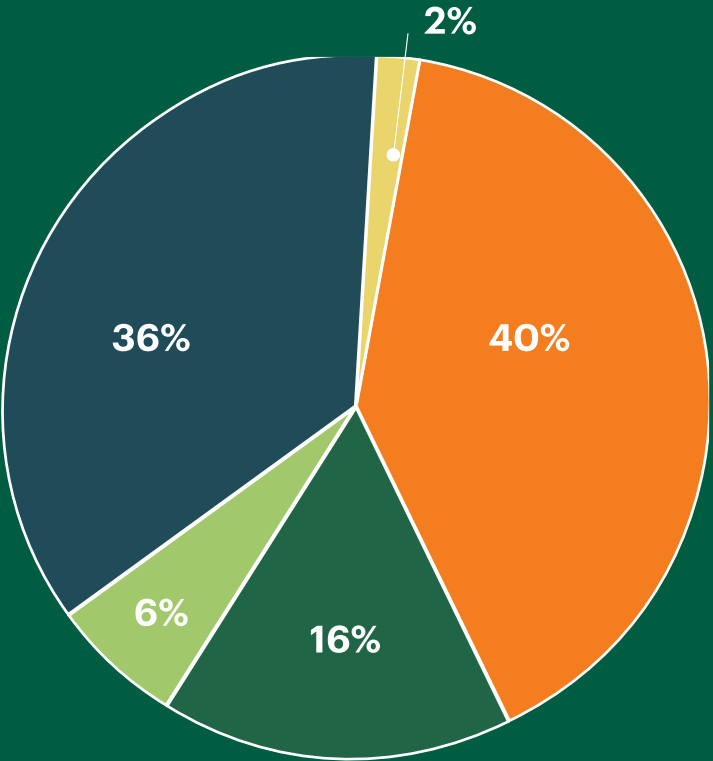
53,081
guests in 2019



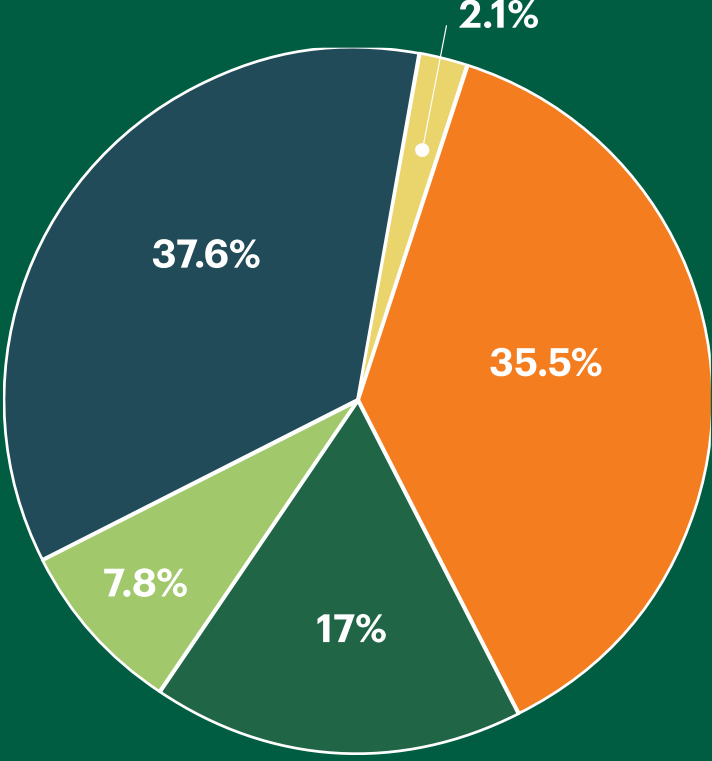
Demographics



Houston Zoo Visitor Demographics



Houston MSA Demographics*



■ HISPANIC OR LATINO ■ ASIAN ■ AFRICAN AMERICAN ■ WHITE ■ OTHER

*Source: Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey

Education

The Zoo aims to ignite in all people a passion for lifelong learning and conservation by creating connections between guests and nature. Field trips to the Zoo are free to all schools in the Houston city limits; in 2019 more than 100,000 students attended the Zoo free of charge.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

515,000
participants in 2019

FIELD TRIPS

119,118
students in 2019
(paid and free)





Animal Care

Animals at the Zoo receive the highest quality of care. Many are vulnerable, threatened or endangered in the wild. These animals serve as “ambassadors,” helping to inform guests and inspire action to save their wild counterparts.

5k+

animals
in our care

Saving Wildlife

The Zoo is dedicated to supporting wildlife conservation efforts and education programs around the world that empower local people to take action to save wildlife.

33

wildlife
conservation
projects

17

countries



New at the Zoo



Centennial Master Plan

The Houston Zoo announced its Centennial Master Plan campaign in 2018, looking forward to 2022 and the celebration of its 100-year anniversary. In celebration of this milestone, the Zoo is creating a series of transformative exhibits, new public amenities, and enhanced public spaces.

South America's Pantanal

Opened October 2020

South America's Pantanal allows guests to explore the tropical wetlands of Brazil.

Orangutan Habitat

Opened November 2020

This renovated space provides enhanced climbing structures and enrichment opportunities.

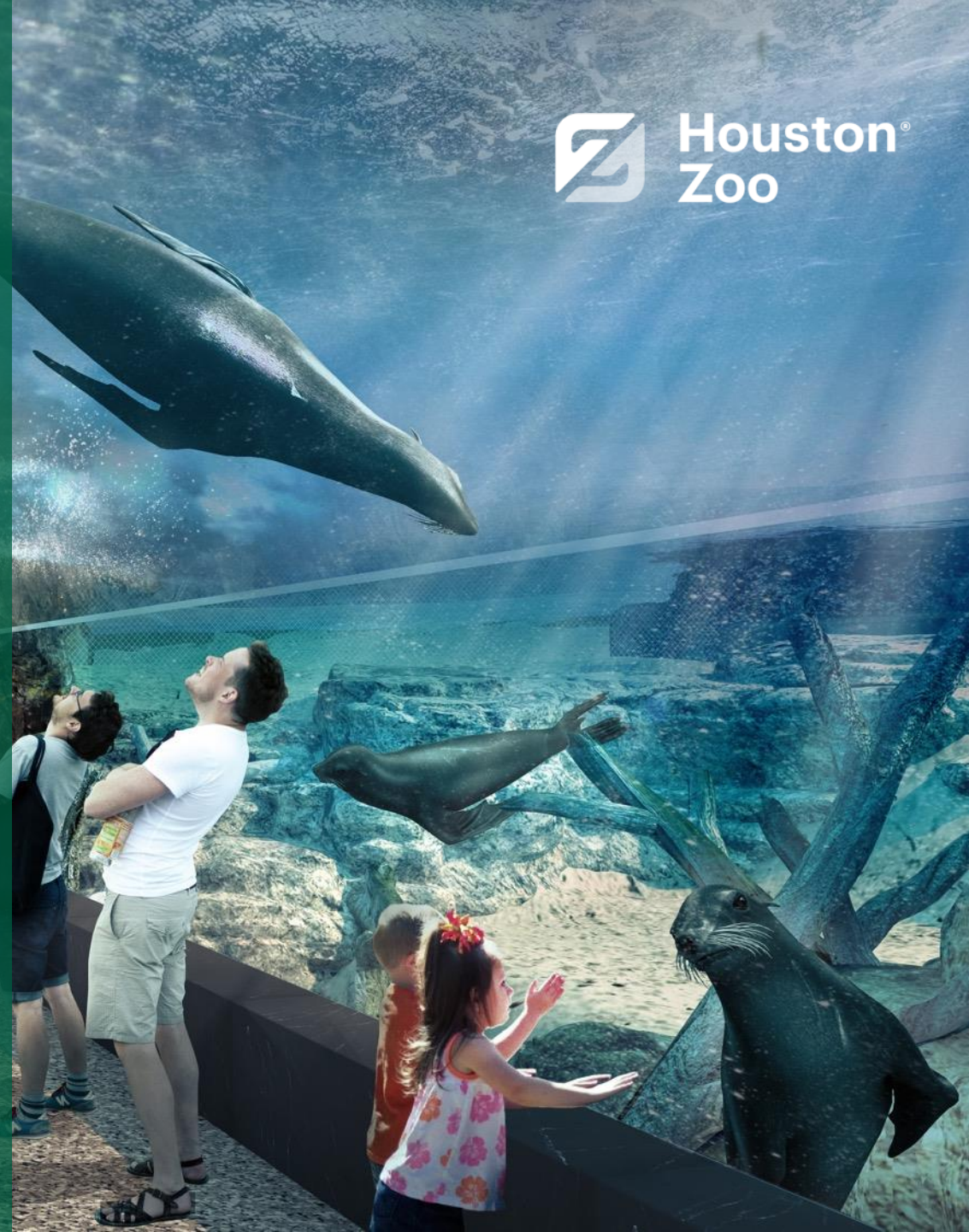
McGovern Plaza and Renovated Entrance

Opened January 2021

Galápagos Islands

Opens Fall 2022

The first exhibit of its kind to showcase the unique wildlife of this legendary island chain.





Announcement of Centennial Master Plan Campaign



Heart of the Zoo



Kathrine G. McGovern Texas Wetlands

CYPRESS CIRCLE CAFE



Cypress Circle Cafe



Kathrine G. McGovern Texas Wetlands



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



South America's Pantanal



Orangutan Habitat



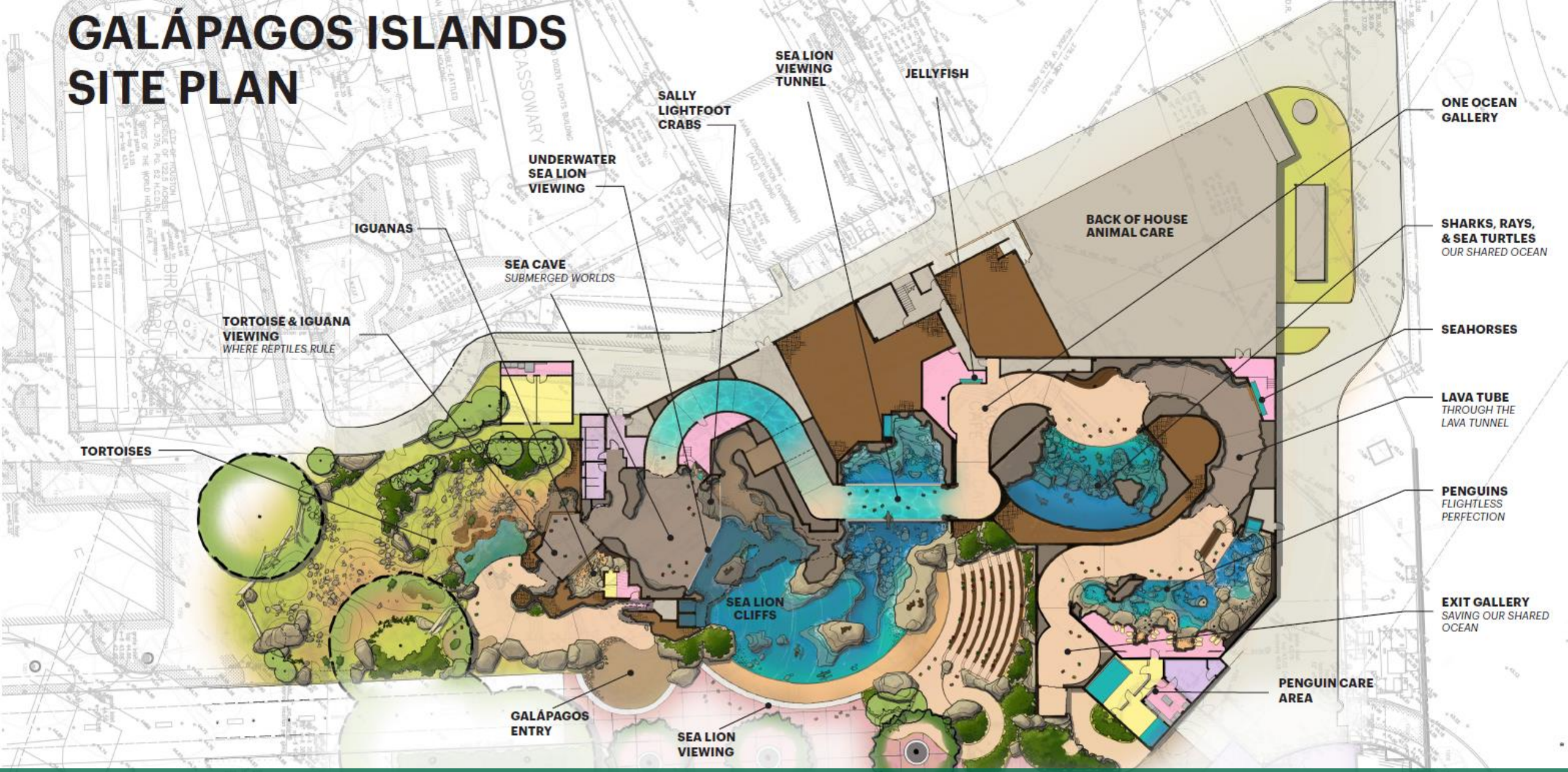
Houston Zoo

See them. Save them.



Renovated Entrance

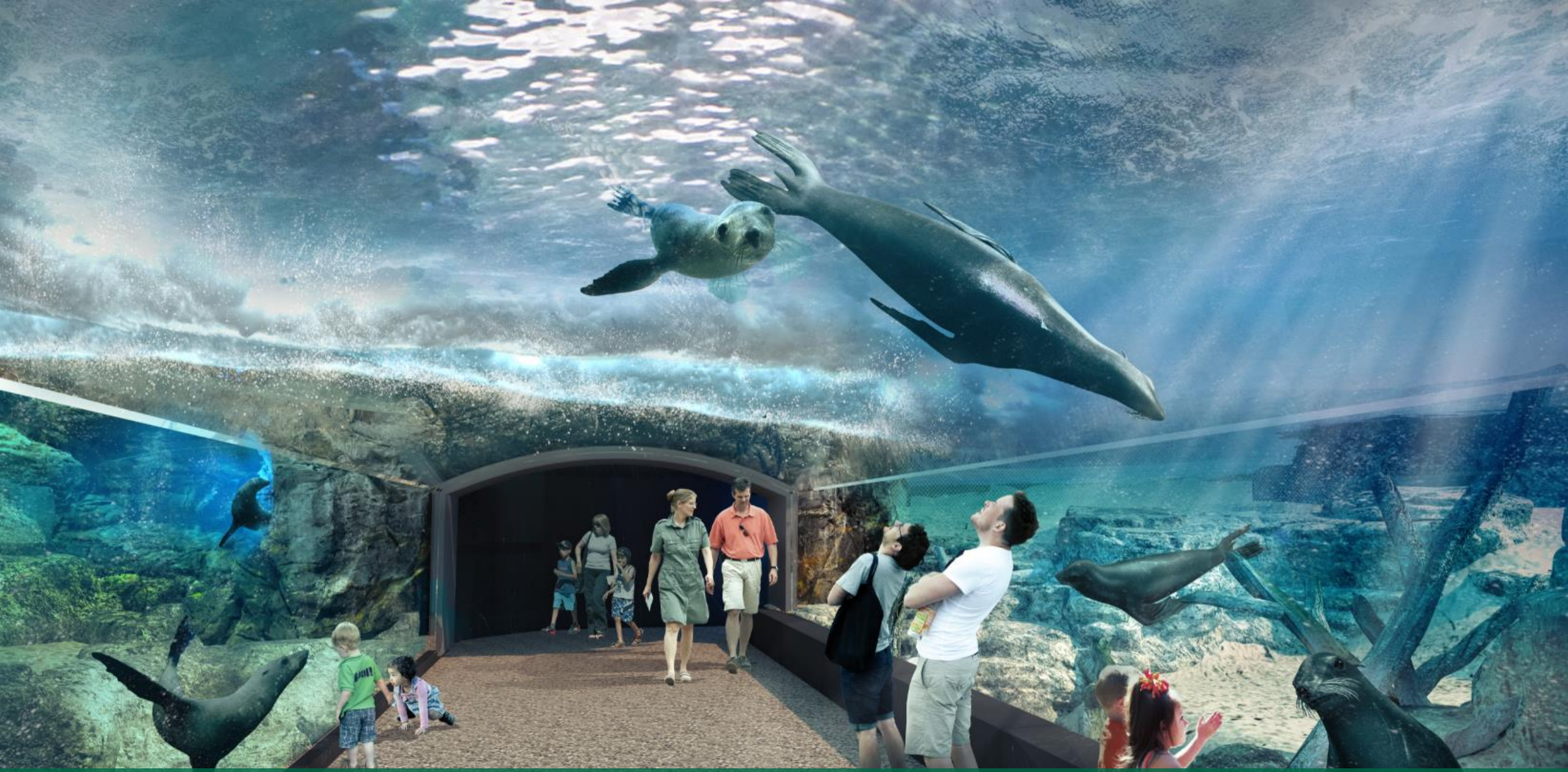
GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS SITE PLAN



2022: Galápagos



2022: Galápagos



2022: Galápagos

See them.
Save them.

