



**Alabama's Must See Attraction!**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Birmingham Zoo Board Approves a \$15 Million Capital Campaign  
for a New Arrival Experience**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL-** The Birmingham Zoo Board approved a \$15 million capital campaign, paving the way for a newly renovated front entrance, an Asian Forest and a new plaza, among other updates. According to Mayor William Bell, "The Zoo has been a distinguished attraction for the Birmingham community for nearly 60 years. The new renovations will be an exciting opportunity for the community to come together and watch this landmark grow and develop into an even greater institution." The one-time, economic impact from this \$15 million investment in the new entry and Asian Forest is projected at \$31.5 million, including direct and indirect benefits from wages, salaries, purchase of goods and services that are re-invested in the local and regional communities. "These forms of capital funds will help to ensure Birmingham's thrust as a global attraction," stated Council President Johnathan Austin. "The Zoo continues to provide numerous benefits for our city, and we are excited about what is to come." The total ongoing and annual economic benefit of attracting 550,000 visitors to the Birmingham Zoo and the Zoo's operational impact of its employees and goods and services within the local economy is \$37.2 million.

The campaign for these significant updates follows a record setting year of attendance in 2013 and the projected increases in attendance for 2014 and beyond. The Birmingham Zoo prides



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itself as a municipal asset and is also noted as a Public Private Partnership since 1999. Capital improvements since 1999 have exceeded \$30.5 million, which includes support of 32% from the public sector.

The focus of the overall capital campaign has been identified as the transformation of the “arrival experience,” the dynamic educational portal, flexible public assembly space and retail spaces. The Birmingham Zoo is excited about the new initiative program of the Kiwanis Zoo School which educates approximately 600 seventh grade Birmingham city school students annually and serves nearly 75,000 overall school children per year. Chairman of the Birmingham Zoo Board of Directors, Jesse Vogtle, Jr. stated, “The Birmingham Zoo is a wonderful place for all ages to enjoy and learn about nature and conservation. This Public/Private partnership investment certainly will increase Birmingham's ability to serve more youth through our Kiwanis Zoo School and other educational opportunities. We are very excited for the future.”

*Approximately 950 animals of 230 species call the Birmingham Zoo home, including sea lions, zebras, rhinos and endangered species from six continents. The Birmingham Zoo is open daily from 9am to 5pm. Regular admission is \$15\* for adults and \$10\* for senior citizens and children ages 2-12 (\*Price not including tax). All Birmingham Zoo Members and children under two-years-old receive free admission.*

*For more information about the Birmingham Zoo, please visit the Zoo on Facebook and Twitter or at [birminghamzoo.com](http://birminghamzoo.com).*

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