



## COMO PARK ZOO & CONSERVATORY

### COMO PARK ZOO AND CONSERVATORY ASSET PRESERVATION

\$22 million is requested for design and construction for Como Park Zoo and Conservatory's Big Cat Habitat.

Como's mission is to inspire the public to value the presence of living things in our lives. As one of the State's most visited cultural destinations, providing access for all Minnesotans FREE of charge, this project serves our residents.

Como Park Zoo and Conservatory's Campus Framework plan addresses critical habitat updates, energy efficiency asset preservation and ADA issues. The Big Cat Habitat has been identified as a major priority. A recent structural survey has found the structural integrity of the bridges need repair, and because of this the bridges have been closed since July 2022 restricting visitor access to the cats. While a short-term solution has been identified and underway, a long-term look of this space needs to be addressed, or Como may have to close this habitat - representing 1/6th of the Como Campus exhibits and decommission the collection. ADA issues with the building with stairs on one side and long slopes are an issue. Upgrading the HVAC systems for energy efficiency is a long-term sustainability goal.

The Big Cat Habitat project includes designing new habitats for lions, tigers, cougars, snow leopards and wolves. The habitats will feature public spaces to provide nose-to-nose views that Como guests have known for generations and will provide world-class housing needs for the residents in regard to animal welfare and wellness. Opportunities for operant conditioning training, natural enrichment, off-exhibit spaces, and veterinarian care will be included for animal welfare and wellness.

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