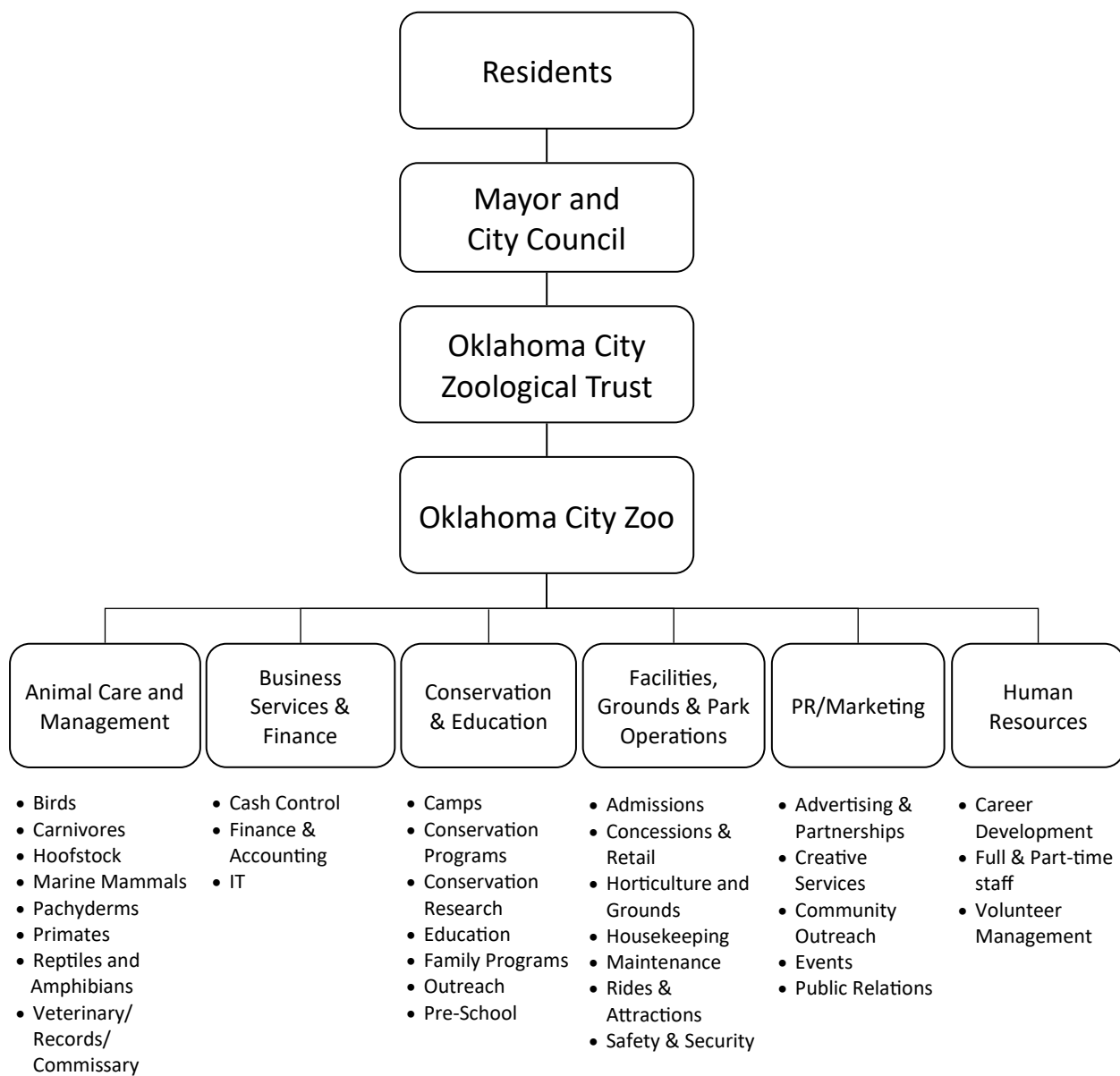


Zoo



Executive Director / CEO	Budget
Dr. Dwight Lawson	\$18,419,272

DEPARTMENT INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma City Zoo budget is managed and positions are funded through the Oklahoma City Zoological Trust.

On July 17, 1990, the Oklahoma City voters approved a one-eighth cent sales tax levy for the limited purpose of funding the Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden. The Oklahoma City Zoo Sales Tax Fund was created to collect all revenues pursuant to the Zoo tax levy. The ordinance provides that Zoo Sales Tax funds will only be used for the establishment, maintenance, replacement, and expansion of zoological parks, gardens, and entertainment facilities; the acquisition, maintenance, and replacement of real property, personal property, and buildings; the operational expenses, education research and program expenses, conservation program expenses, and all other expenses deemed necessary or advisable by the Oklahoma City Zoological Trust in connection with the operation of the Oklahoma City Zoo. The Oklahoma City Zoological Trust is a public trust of which the City of Oklahoma City is the sole beneficiary. The Trust operates the Oklahoma City Zoo under a lease and operating agreement with the City.

Department Facts

- The Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden is Oklahoma's premier cultural attraction for connecting people to wildlife and wild places to inspire conservation action. In 2024, the Oklahoma City Zoo once again earned its Association of Zoos and Aquariums certification, a continuous designation since 1981, confirming the Zoo's dedication to the highest standards of animal care and conservation. That dedication is evident with the completion of the Zoo's largest and latest habitat expansion, Expedition Africa. Presented by Inasmuch Foundation, this immersive 12-acre habitat officially opened March 2024 with new habitats, building renovations including the historic Love's Pachyderm Building, and elevated guest experiences. Located in the heart of the Zoo, Expedition Africa is home to giraffes, African lions, hyenas, wildebeest, zebras, honey badgers, and more. Plans are underway for the OKC Zoo's next expansion project, Shore to Sea, which will bring African penguins into the Zoo's animal family.
- The growing popularity of events like Breakfast with the Animals, OKC Zoo Gala, Haunt the Zoo, and SAFARI LIGHTS provide unique opportunities for guests to connect with the Zoo's wildlife, expert caretakers and conservation initiatives while new programs like Nature Explorer's Preschool provide a nature-based educational experience for children three to five years old.



EXPENDITURES

Summary of Expenditures by Funding Source	FY24 Actual	FY25 Adopted Budget	FY26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change
Zoo Sales Tax Fund	<u>\$18,252,997</u>	<u>\$18,578,026</u>	<u>\$18,419,272</u>	<u>-0.85%</u>
Fund Total	<u>\$18,252,997</u>	<u>\$18,578,026</u>	<u>\$18,419,272</u>	<u>-0.85%</u>





The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY