#### **MINUTES**

#### LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS & LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY LANCASTER EVENT CENTER, NEBRASKA ROOM, 4100 N. 84<sup>TH</sup> STREET THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015 7:30 P.M.

Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and emailed to the media on November 13, 2015.

Commissioners present: Roma Amundson, Chair; Larry Hudkins, Vice Chair; Bill Avery, Deb Schorr and Todd Wiltgen

Agricultural Society Board Members present: Ron Dowding, President; Jim Swanson, Vice President; Trudy Pedley, Secretary; Karen Rutt, Treasurer; Jay Wilkinson; and Kendra Ronnau

Agricultural Society Board Members absent: Eric Mitchell, Tom Messick and Keith Schomerus

Others present: Kelly Lundgren, County Clerk's Office; Alan Wood, Agricultural Society Board Legal Counsel; Amy Dickerson, Managing Director of the Lancaster Event Center; Susie Weiler, Food & Beverage Manager

The location announcement of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was given.

#### 1) CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

#### 2) **ROLL CALL**

Roll was called for both Boards.

#### 3) LANCASTER COUNTY SUPERFAIR REPORT – TRUDY PEDLEY, LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER

Trudy Pedley, Lancaster County Agricultural Society Board Secretary and Amy Dickerson, Managing Director of the Lancaster Event Center, gave an overview of the 2015 Lancaster County Superfair. Pedley stated that attendance was down the first weekend due to the weather and the State Games of America being held that same weekend. She said the Easton Corbin concert and Monster Truck show were probably not worth the expense as the Event Center just broke even on those two events. She noted that 4-H numbers were about the same as in previous years but that the carnival numbers were down. Pedley said the closing ceremonies were a big success with fireworks and reading over 300 names of 4-H and State Game participants. She invited the Commissioners to be a part of the closing ceremonies next year.

Dickerson noted that it is difficult to staff the Superfair for ten days. She said the days are slow but staffing is still required. Dickerson stated that consideration was being given to having the fair closed

on Monday, Wednesday and Friday except for 4-H open class events and opening the carnival just during the evening as an option.

#### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Dowding noted that approval of the minutes from the October 16, 2014 joint meeting was not included on the agenda (Exhibit A).

**MOTION:** Wiltgen moved and Amundson seconded to add approval of the minutes from the October 16, 2014 joint meeting to the agenda. Wiltgen, Schorr, Avery, Hudkins, Amundson, Wilkinson, Dowding, Swanson, Ronnau, Pedley and Rutt voted aye. Motion carried 11-0.

**MOTION:** Wilkinson moved and Ronnau seconded approval of the minutes. Wilkinson, Dowding, Swanson, Ronnau, Pedley, Schorr, Hudkins and Amundson voted aye. Wiltgen and Avery abstained. Motion carried 9-0 with two abstentions.

### 4) <u>LANCASTER EVENT CENTER MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT – AMY DICKERSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR</u>

Dickerson presented the "Managing Director Update -2015" that included Phase 2.5 and 3 updates (Exhibit B). She discussed the Lancaster County Event Center vision of being a leading venue for events regionally and nationally. Dickerson highlighted event "firsts" during 2015 including hosting the Shrine Circus; Pro Bull Ride; UNL Rodeo and the celebrity concert. She noted the achievements in 2015 such as the new brand launched in May; new revenues such as expanded café options; wireless internet; digital signs and banners; cost savings; working relationship and growth with the City and County; and facility staff service.

Dickerson said they are working on getting sales tax information to the Board. Hudkins said he and Amundson meet with Chris Beutler, Lincoln Mayor, monthly and continue to request that a portion of the sales tax be used toward creating a safer intersection at 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Havelock Avenue.

Alan Wood, Agricultural Society Board Legal Counsel, said they are working with their lobbyist to propose sales tax changes in the legislature. Wood said currently agricultural societies are required to pay sales tax but county fairs are not.

Dickerson added that the staff continues to focus on ways to make the Event Center a positive experience for promotors, exhibitors and visitors.

#### 5) PHASE 2.5 & 3 UPDATE – AMY DICKERSON & MASTER PLANNING COMMITTEE

Dickerson stated that Phase 2.5 will be remodeling and a relaunch with planned improvements in online services, parking lot lighting, storage, a new sign on 84<sup>th</sup> Street, arena equipment, multipurpose arena entrance, café seating and creating a banquet/reception area. She said they are currently working on sponsorship with local restaurants and getting the Event Center included in the City bus route. Dickerson said the final Phase 2.5 projects will include new lift station pumps, more storage inside and out, remodeling of remaining cafes and possibly campground showers.

Dickerson said a market study is currently ongoing for the master plan. She stated they are looking at building size of the new coliseum, cost of the project, gathering supporter names and researching the best time to launch a public campaign.

### 6) OPEN DISCUSSION BETWEEN LANCASTER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY AND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Amundson said that she was very impressed with the progress made in the last two years. She thanked Dickerson and the staff for their continued dedication. Amundson questioned if there is a need for an assistant director allowing Dickerson to be out in the community more.

Dickerson thanked the Ag Society Board members for their support during all the changes in the last two years.

Hudkins said he has been hearing favorable comments regarding the Event Center and its improvements. He also noted the strong relationship that has developed between 4-H, the Fair Board, and the County Extension Office.

Agricultural Society Board members discussed the possibility of opening the campground during football season to help increase revenue during a normally slower time at the Event Center. Dickerson said they have checked into the cost of putting a shower building close to the campground and think the Event Center would be an ideal spot for those fans traveling from Omaha. They also discussed the need for more sponsorships as events alone do not bring in enough revenue.

#### 7) PUBLIC COMMENT

No one appeared for public comment.

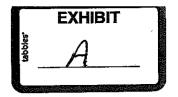
Karen Wobig, Lancaster County Extension Unit Leader and Department Head, commented that she is very happy with the connection that has formed between the Extension Unit Staff, the Event Center staff and the Ag Society. She noted the 4-H staff has strong ideas about the fair and she appreciates those entities working together to achieve those goals.

#### 8) **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Wiltgen moved and Avery seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 p.m. Avery, Wiltgen, Schorr, Hudkins, Amundson, Swanson, Ronnau, Rutt, Wilkinson, Pedley and Dowding voted aye. Motion carried 11-0.

Dan Nolte, County Clerk

## Lancaster County Agriculture Society 4100 N. 84<sup>th</sup> St Lincoln, NE 68507 MINUTES



#### Board of Directors and County Commissioners Joint Meeting Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 7:30PM

Commissioner Hudkins called the joint meeting to order at 7:30pm. Proof of due notice was given with the Nebraska Open Meeting Act posted on the wall of the Nebraska Room.

Board members present were Dowding, Swanson, Pedley, Ronnau, Wilkinson. Schomerus, and Rutt. Messick and Mitchell were absent. County Commissioners present were Hudkins, Smoyer, Amundson.

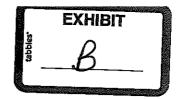
Moved by Amundson and seconded by Smoyer to amend the agenda by moving up the Managing Director's report. The motion was approved.

Lancaster Event Center Managing Director Dickenson presented a power point highlighting with updates on the County Fair and Event Center Operations. She also summarized the status of Phase 2.5, the re-launch of the Lancaster Event Center an status of completion of deferred maintenance and upgrades.

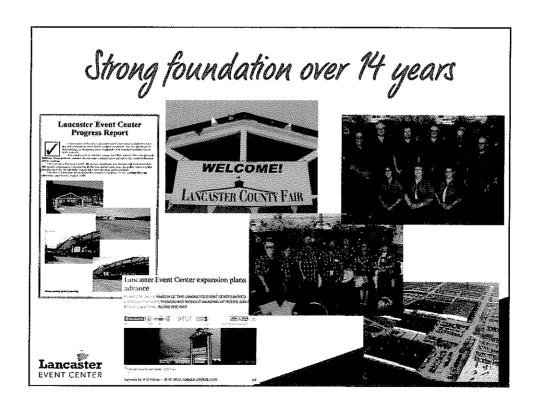
She also shared information regarding the Bond refinancing. In order to maximize those funds the Master Plan is being updated.

Open discussion and questions/answer session followed.

With no comments from the public, it was moved by Schomerus and seconed by Ronnau to adjourn. The motion was approved.







### Our vision

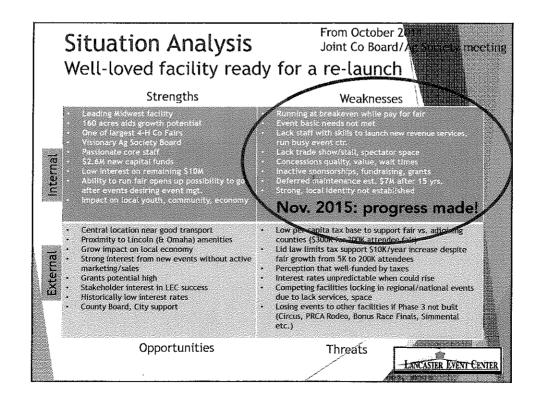
A public, non-profit event center seen as leading venue for variety of events not just in Nebraska, but regionally and nationally...

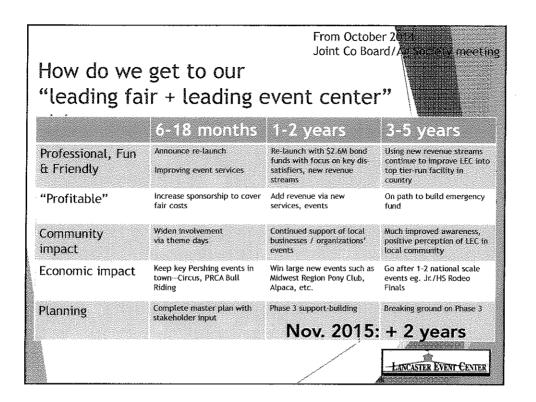
- Professional
- "Profitable"
- Friendly
- Fun

...all while celebrating the unique agricultural & natural nature of Lancaster County and being a key contributor to the county's youth, culture and economy headlined by being the home of one

of the largest, most well-respected 4-H county fairs in the USA.









## New brand launched May 1, 2015





## New brand launched May 1, 2015





Let the Good Times Grow

### 2015 top achievements

- ONE team aligning on vision, starting to look forward to change
- · Over \$2M in improvements folks are noticing
- New revenues: cafes, ticketing, wireless, sponsors, website, digital signs, banners, event growth, new events etc.
- Cost-savings: non-profit & govt' pricing, bid process, utilities
- · Facility pricing public, standardized
- · Working relationships across City, County, community
- Event service: Facility cleanliness, maintenance + Staff service
- Keeping Pershing animal spectator events in Lincoln
- · Enhanced SuperFair experience







## Challenges focused on...

- Everything takes longer than I thought! (but positive momentum)
- · Financial clarity—multi-year process
- 3-5 year cycle to **grow events**, new services
- SuperFair experience right-sized for staff + community
- Fall slower season just when have fair bills to pay
- Staffing sufficient to go after new revenues: sponsors, grants, new event proposals/sales & create new events
- · Time to get out into the community



Reserved show staff parking

Helping groups get CVB grants & sponsors

Staff contact list

Parking attendants

Ticket-selling service @ reasonable cost

Take over exhibitor service order-taking

Contracts clearer

## Promoter-friendly

More LEC marketing support—print, radio,

More detailed

Public price list with standardized pricing

Facebook

work orders

Better street sign

More radios

coming soon

to contact staff

Lancaster

Managing parking between buildings

Lincoln Room gravel load zone

Parking attendants

Employee uniforms & nametags

Reserve camping, shavings online

Parking lot way-finding signs

## Exhibitor-friendly

Reserve trade show services online

Deliver catering to booth

New carpet in MPA, P4 Brighter lighting

Easy access, fast wireless

Faster vendor food service

New Guest Services check-in for animal shows

Lancaster EVENT CENTER

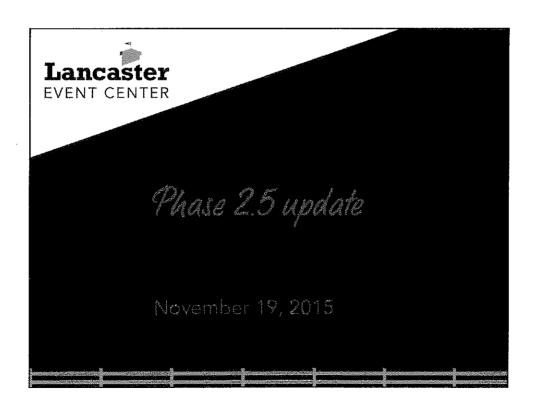
Handicapped Way-finding signage parking inside & outside Parking attendants Reserve camping, Web sites shavings online Employee uniforms & nametags Upgraded flooring Facebook updates Visitor-friendly Cleaner restrooms Buy tickets online Faster food lines Fire, crowd Reserved safety seating Less dust Brighter lighting New carpet Lancaster More food options



Kid ticket pricing Kid-friendly staff Kids on lap Volunteer as Fun at the Farm group fundraiser free Kid Zone Place to do Farm to Fork community service interactive activity No lost kids Youth-friendly at Fair! Over 2 dozen types of Be a SuperFair Tour Guide animals each year Scavenger Hunt & T-shirt Fair kid New fair Shrine Circus giveaways attractions Kids meals Wholesome Lancaster free concerts

Growing current LEC Facebook active events with visitors New LEC. Fair web sites from out of town New New high impact New events digital signs ways to market Circus, Bull Ride Ticket sales— New Theme Days @ SuperFair 30K first year Local business-triendl Community org talks Open, fair bidding on \$4M upgrades Hotels Local gas & Local New restaurant convenience stores business dining guide priority Food & sourcing Western beverage wear & supplies Lancaster EVENT CENTER

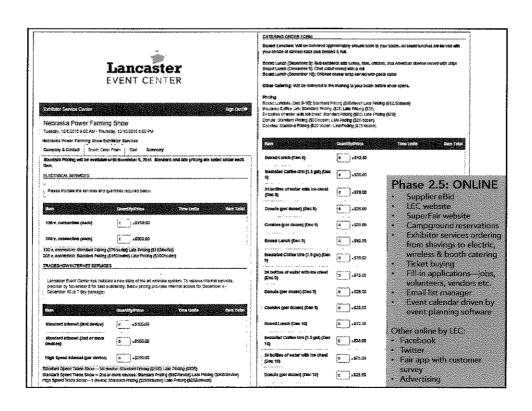
Get to see events Meet all kinds Passion for quest experience of people Competitive pay Proud to wear ONE team Professional multiple hats-Free uniforms tickets to parking Recognition to cafes to cleaning Challenge Training Team-friendly Initiative Making a difference 50% off meals Free drinks Friendly Embrace for me & family change Fun Flexible Great FT benefits, schedules Variety sick leave Looking forward to Lancaster SuperFair



## Phase 2.5 funding status

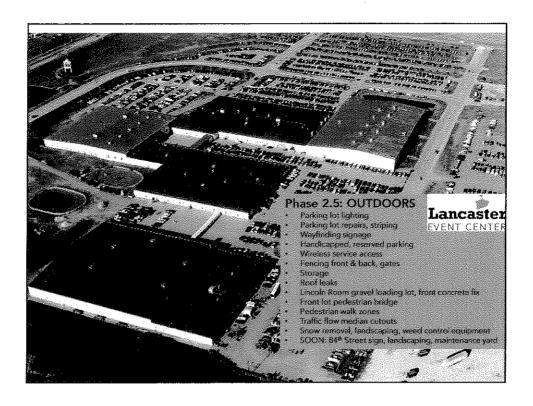
- \$2.65M from bond re-financing Oct. 2014 (after \$700K interest savings captured)
- plus ~\$400K/year over 5 years Visitors
   Improvement Fund grant (2012-2016)
- · Dozens projects completed to date
- Remaining: approx. \$700K bond +\$700K
   VIF grant through 2016

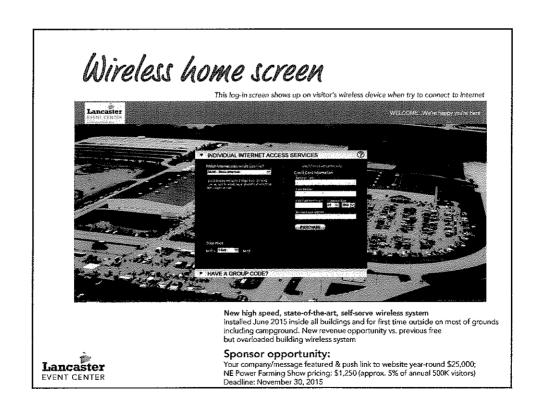


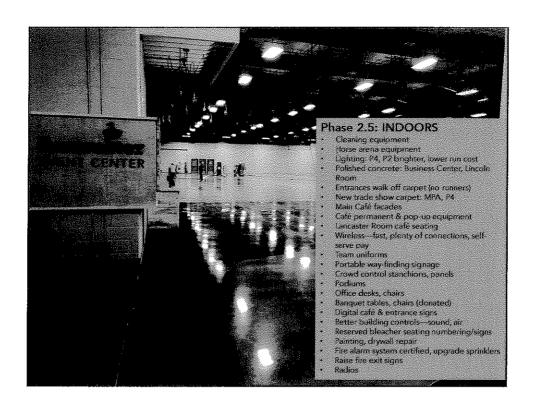


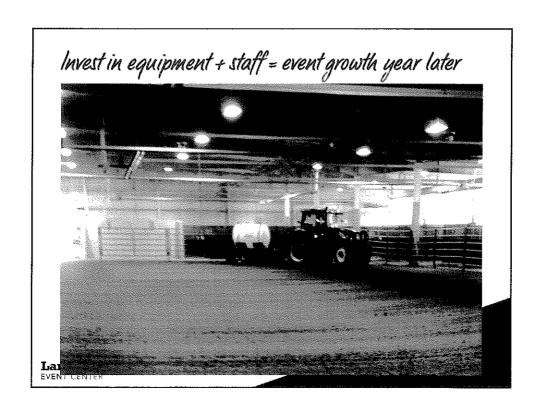












# Main entrances & connectors all feature new digital signage

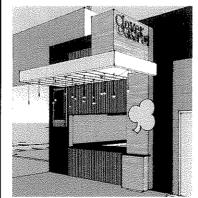
#### **Business Center lobby**

- main connector b/w Pavilions 1 & 4
  - Remodeled July 2015
- now with 80" digital screen, story wall, donor wall

Lancaster EVENT CENTER

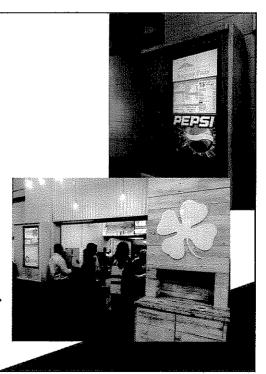


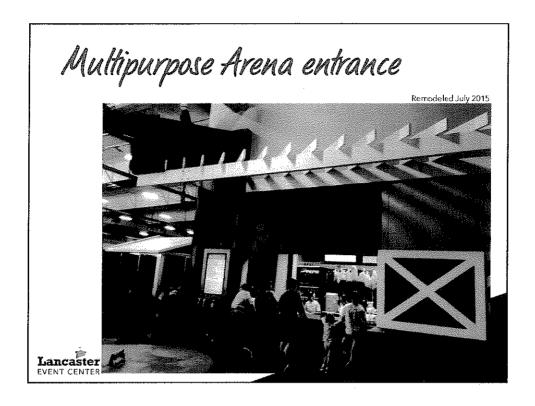
#### Lincoln Room main entrance



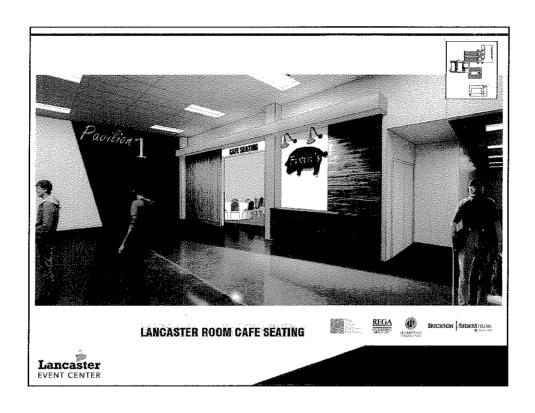
Example: Lincoln Room concessions at entrance → now Clover Café remodeled as of July 2015

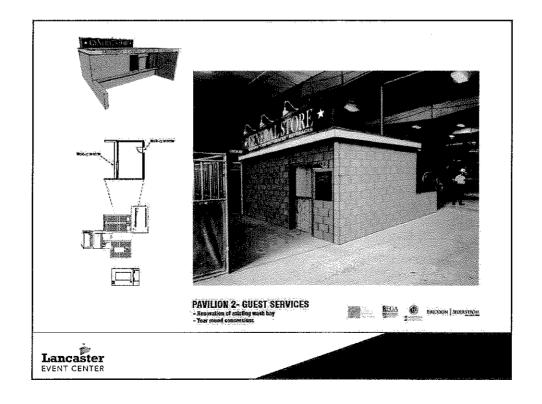
Lancaster EVENT CENTER

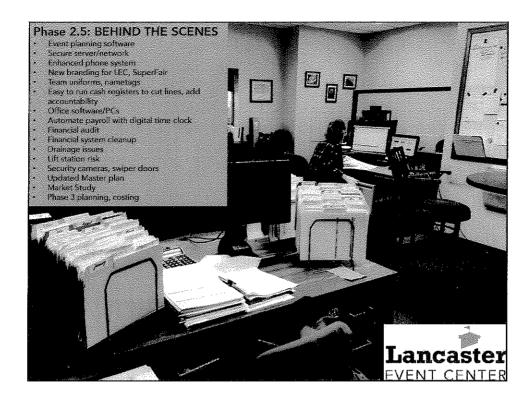












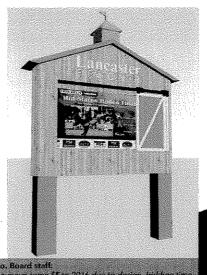
### Final Phase 2.5 bond funds projects

- Street sign remodel (portion)
- · Lift station pumps
- Phase 3 concepts, costing
- Storage inside & secure outside
- Key security cameras, swiper doors
- Digital signs in remaining cafes
- · Key bathrooms—Lincoln Room, Good Times Grill
- Remaining cafes—3 perm. + popup
- · Campground showers?



## CVB grant projects 2015

Pojar	Algrano
	Africa
Parking lot lights	\$110K
Fencing	\$75K
Parking lot	\$48K
maintenance (gravel,	
asphalt patch)	
Add 2 site entrance	\$12K
metal gates	
Lincoln Room floor	\$71K
refinish	
Street sign remodel,	\$115K
new screens (portion)	
TOTAL	\$422, 549
🎉	Dec



Lancaster

Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Co. Board staff. Request to move some \$\$ to 2016 due to design, bidding time.

## CVB grant projects 2016

Project	Apprex. Amount
Renovate Pavilion 1 parking lots	\$65K
Landscaping	\$25K
Paver system for N of P1 grass park	ing lots \$50K
Indoor/outdoor way-finding signag	e system \$271K
TOTAL	\$411,324

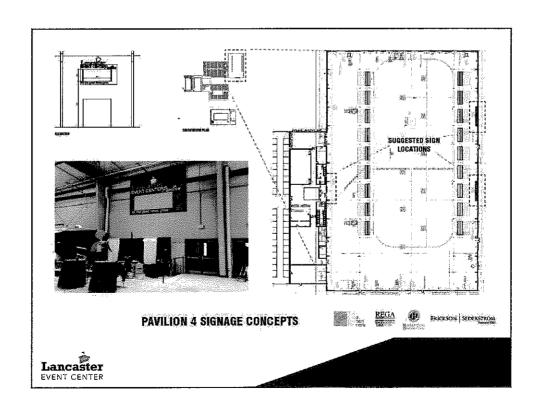
Projects yet to be finally designed, estimated or bid so above budgets may be adjusted accordingly across projects.

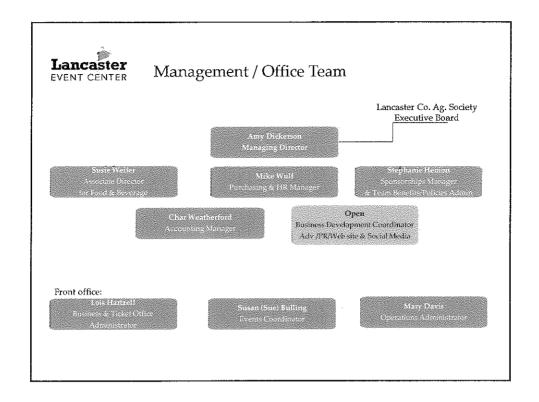
Lancaster EVENT CENTER Would like to build proposal for 2017-2020

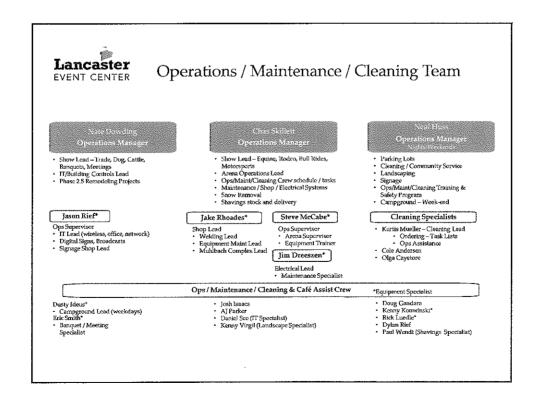
## Wish list-seeking sponsors, grants

- Remodel Nebraska & Lancaster meeting rooms (naming rights)
- Pavilion 4 digital signage for event, sponsor & LEC messages
- Naming rights for buildings—starting with Pavilion 4
- Landscaping
- Trash/recycle cans
- Other TBD









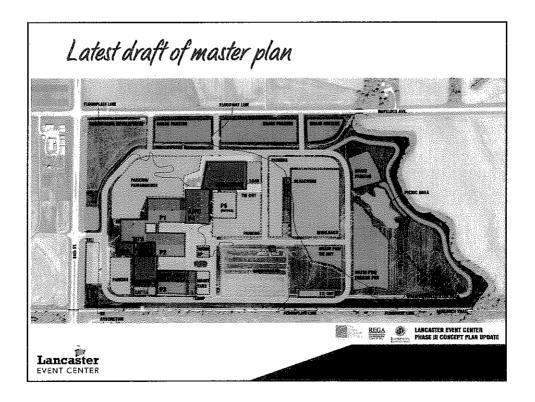
## Master planning process

- 1. Input from customers, community, staff
- 2. Master Planning Committee
- 3. Key studies in process
  - Soil testing, elevation planning
  - Utility locating
  - Traffic study
  - Market study
  - Programming the buildings, finalizing Phase 3 plan
  - Financial analysis
- 4. Coordinating with City/County, other key entities
- 5. Public campaign for approval

#### What's in motion now:

- Market Study → final building sizes/design / cost project → financial business model/case
- Researching best timing/way to do public campaign
- Gathering supporter names for Phase 3 campaign committee





## Phase 3 planning in early stages...

- · Input from customers, community, staff
- · Updating Master Plan team
  - Clark Enersen, REGA Engineering, Hampton Construction, Erickson |
     Sederstrom, Lancaster Co. Ag. Society
- · Key studies in process
  - Soil testing, elevation planning
  - Utility locating
  - Traffic study
  - Market study
  - Programming the buildings, finalizing Phase 3 plan
  - Financial analysis
- · Coordinating with City/County, other key entities
- Campaign committee will need community support & \$\$
- · Public election for approval—timing TBD



## Thank you!!!

Where we need your ongoing support, ideas, contacts:

- sponsors: LEC year-round, Fair
- naming rights: big & small starting with P4
- grants
- Phase 3 timing input
- community forums, leaders
- 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary ideas—\$15K challenge per person??

