

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
& LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
LANCASTER EVENT CENTER, LANCASTER ROOM, 4100 N. 84TH STREET
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2016
7:00 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 10, 2016.

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

Commissioner absent: Deb Schorr

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

Others present: Kelly Lundgren, County Clerk's Office; Alan Wood, Agricultural Society Board Legal Counsel and Amy Dickerson, Lancaster Event Center Managing Director

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

1) **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

Commissioner Amundson called the meeting to order at 7:06 a.m.

2) **ROLL CALL**

Roll was called for both Boards.

3) **LANCASTER COUNTY SUPER FAIR REPORT – TRUDY PEDLEY, LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER**

See Item 4.

4) **LANCASTER EVENT CENTER MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT – AMY DICKERSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Dickerson presented the "Managing Director Update and Super Fair Report - 2016" (Exhibit A). She discussed the Lancaster Event Center's 15th Anniversary celebration held May 12, 2016. Dickerson said the Event Center is looking to social media and news to increase awareness of their upcoming events. She noted the following accomplishments over the past year: installed a new sign along 84th Street, hosted over 300 shows, received more requests from national events to reserve the venue and added a new café menu. Dickerson noted if the Event Center is successful in hosting the National High School Rodeo Association Finals (NHSRA) in 2021, it could have a \$16 million economic impact on Lincoln and Lancaster County.

Dickerson said the 2016 Super Fair's attendance was 140,000 over ten days, however it is challenging with local venues booking nationally known acts during the same week.

Pedley stated the Ag Society is looking at decreasing the length of the Super Fair from ten days to six days as it is difficult to get volunteers to staff that many days. Dickerson noted preparation and clean up requires additional days and limits the availability for national shows wanting to book the Event Center. She said the committee would discuss this change for the 2018 Super Fair. Dickerson added whatever the decision, protecting the 4-H interest is their main priority.

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

Dickerson highlighted the following Phase 2.5 updates: improved signage, new lift station, roof repairs and maintenance, fire sprinklers, updated café and menu options and color-coded pavilions. She stated in 2017 they hope to install additional security cameras, increase meeting room availability and add water hook-ups to the campgrounds. Dickerson said if they are able to book the NHSRA Finals additional campgrounds would need to be constructed.

In response to Hudkins' inquiry regarding the number of additional camp sites needed, Dickerson responded that there are currently two hundred sites but with the rodeo finals that would need to be increased to as many as one thousand. She said most would require water hook-ups as well as electricity.

Dickerson stated a marketing study was recently completed. She said this provided good feedback regarding updates that will need to take place in Phase 3. Dickerson added that several studies will be involved to ensure they are making the right choices for new buildings, parking, driveways and the campgrounds as they move forward. She said careful planning, good organization and demonstrating economic impact is important for a successful bond election.

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

Hudkins commented on events scheduled at other venues in Lincoln during the Super Fair. He asked Dickerson if she had considered contracting with SMG to oversee the entertainment component of the fair. Dickerson responded it might be something to research for the future.

Wiltgen said talks continue with the Mayor regarding the Havelock and 84th Street intersection.

Ronnau stated she would like to see more information provided to Lincoln citizens regarding the positive impact the Lancaster Event Center and 4-H has on the City. She noted the number of Lancaster County youth participating in 4-H is at an all-time high.

7) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Karen Wobig, Lancaster County Extension Unit Leader and Department Head, thanked the Commissioners and the Ag Society for their support. She said the Extension Department continues to focus on 4-H and the positive impact it has on area youth.

The Ag Society presented Hudkins with a token of their appreciation for his service to the County. (Note: Hudkins chose not to run for re-election.)

8) **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Avery seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Wiltgen, Hudkins, Avery, Amundson, Swanson, Suing, Mitchell, Dowding, Wilkenson, Messick, Ronnau, Pedley and Rutt voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 13-0.

Dan Nolte

Dan Nolte, County Clerk





Lancaster
EVENT CENTER



LANCASTER COUNTY
Super Fair

Welcome!

Annual Joint Lancaster County Board /
Lancaster Co. Ag Society Board meeting

November 17, 2016





Managing Director Update--2016

Annual Joint Lancaster County Board /
Lancaster Co. Ag Society Board meeting

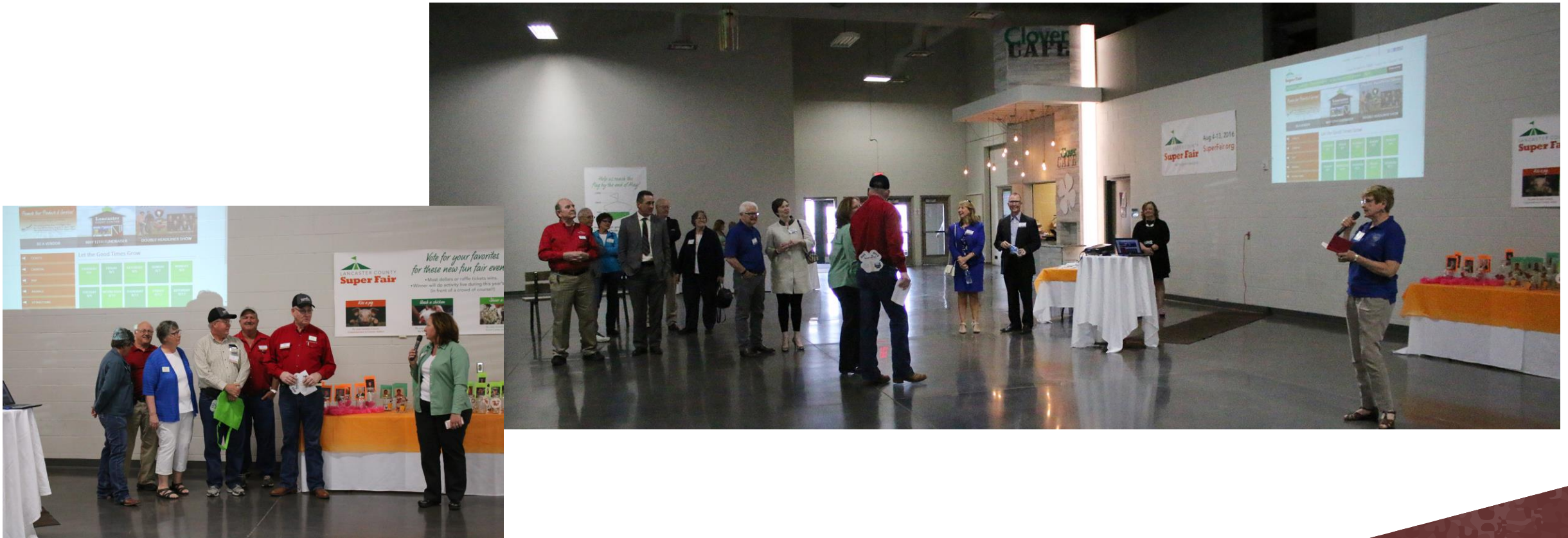
November 17, 2016



Celebrating our 15th year serving Lancaster County!!



15th anniversary party May 12th



15th anniversary party May 12th

~\$5K proceeds from silent auction & other donations



Today:
Fair & LEC
current
events



Tomorrow: Phase 3 &
other remodeling
concepts for sponsors

Yesterday:
LEC/Fair history
slide show & timeline



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.



Situation Analysis

From October 2014
Joint Co Board/Ag Society meeting

Well-loved facility in midst of successful re-launch

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading Midwest facility • 160 acres aids growth potential • One of largest 4-H Co Fairs • Visionary Ag Society Board • Passionate core staff • \$5M remodeling last 5 years • Low interest on remaining \$10M bonds • Ability to run fair opens up possibility to go after events desiring event mgt. • Impact on local youth, community, economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running at breakeven while pay for fair • Deferred maintenance est. \$7M after 15 yrs. • Lack good spectator seating in animal-friendly multi-use ag coliseum • Lack trade show/stall, spectator space; camping amenities • Inactive sponsorships, fundraising, grants • Strong, local identity not established • Event basic needs not met • Lack staff with skills to launch new revenue services, run busy event ctr. • Concessions quality, value, wait times
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central location near good transport • Proximity to Lincoln (& Omaha) amenities • Grow impact on local economy • Strong interest from new events without active marketing/sales • Grants potential high • Stakeholder interest in LEC success • Historically low interest rates—may be ending.. • County Board, City support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low per capita tax base to support fair vs. adjoining counties (\$300K for 200K attendee fair) • Lid law limits tax support \$10K/year increase despite fair growth from 5K to 200K attendees • Perception that well-funded by taxes • Interest rates unpredictable when could rise • Competing facilities locking in regional/national events due to lack services, space • Losing events to other facilities if Phase 3 not built (Circus, PRCA Rodeo, Bonus Race Finals, Simmental etc.) • Farm economy impact on Phase 3 election timing
	Opportunities	Threats

**Nov. 2016:
progress
being
noticed!!**



How do we get to our “leading fair + leading event center”

	2014-15	2015-16	2017-2019
Professional, Fun & Friendly	Announce re-launch Improving event services	Re-launch with \$2.6M bond funds with focus on key dissatisfiers, new revenue streams	Using new revenue streams continue to improve LEC into top tier-run facility in country
“Profitable”	Increase sponsorship to cover fair costs	Add revenue via new services, events	On path to build emergency fund
Community impact	Widen involvement via theme days	Continued support of local businesses / organizations’ events	Much improved awareness, positive perception of LEC in local community
Economic impact	Keep key Pershing events in town—Circus, PRCA Bull Riding	Win large new events such as Midwest Region Pony Club, Alpaca, etc.	Go after 1-2 national scale events eg. Jr./HS Rodeo Finals
Planning	Complete master plan with stakeholder input	Phase 3 support-building	Breaking ground on Phase 3

Status as of
Nov. 2016



2016 in the news



Give to Lincoln Day
May 2016



Sesostris Shrine Circus & many others
March 2016

Lancaster Event Center
Published by Tammy Sue · 7/1 · October 6 ·

Great news! It is free to ride the bus in October and November!
But even better news is that starting November they are adding a route that comes out by Lancaster Event Center! Yay!! Route 49 😊

Current/potential employees as well as citizens of Lincoln now have transportation to our 300 events including the Super Fair and many free events. Hope to see you soon!... See More

StarTran postpones route changes until November

StarTran postpones route changes until November

Bus service to
Wal*Mart
next door as of Oct.
2016

Lancaster Event Center
Published by Isamuel@lancastereventcenter.org · July 19 ·

The Lancaster Event Center Team is having fun chatting with a lot of folks at the NHSFR in Gillette, WY about the world's largest contestant rodeo making Lincoln, NE its home in 2020/21!

Pass the word to anyone you know at the event to come see Amy, Chas, and Hoyt in Energy Hall by the Rodeo Office by Wednesday!

And thanks to the Visitors Promotion Committee and Lincoln Convention & Visitors Bureau we are able to compete for this opportunity!... See More

5,377 people reached

July 2016
Gillette WY
booth

Nat'l. HS Finals Rodeo
2020/2021 finalist
(\$16M impact per
year)

These two LEC FB
posts reached 20K
people!

Lancaster Event Center
Published by Tammy Sue · 7/1 · June 30 ·

It is an incredible day at Lancaster Event Center! We want to give a huge thanks to the Visitors Promotion Committee and the Lincoln Convention & Visitors Bureau for their support, and we look forward to working together to bring the world's largest rodeo with 1,700 high school contestants to our Lincoln area in 2020/21 and beyond. #LNK #LincolnCVB #Rodeo

Committee okays \$5.1M in grants for zoo, event center expansions

A committee that oversees use of lodging tax revenue in Lancaster County voted Wednesday to provide \$5.1 million to support expansion of the Lincoln Children's...
JOURNALSTAR.COM | BY KEVIN ABOUREZK | LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR

14,391 people reached

Boost Post

Like Comment Share

66

42 shares

Chronological

Colin Perkins Great news. I know there's a lot of us Lincolnites excited and ready to see the event center expand as well as provide a better super fair in the years to come

\$3M VPC
grant



2016 top achievements

- **More manageable, still exciting SuperFair experience**
 - **Re-launch driving growth in current events**
 - **Sales tax audit, sales tax purchase exemption 10/1 (new state law)**
 - **Food & beverage re-launch kicked off**
 - **Completing 90% of \$5M in improvements over last 5 years: guests feeling it's a new place**
 - **NHSFR finalist, \$3M VPC grant support**
- National events asking us to bid: ASPC Congress (700 stalls), Largest 4-H Stock Show**

Fun at the Farm pic



Over 300 shows per year

LEC Show Attendance				
	Event Days	Total Attendance	Estimated % attendees outside Lincoln	# visitors bring to Lincoln
Trade Shows				
Nebraska Power Farming (3 days)	3	18,000	80%	14,400
Nebraska Home Builders' Show (3 days)	3	17,000	25%	4,250
Lawn and Leisure Show (3 days)	3	12,000	10%	1,200
Boat, Sport & Travel Show (3 days)	3	12,000	20%	2,400
Other Trade Shows	63	99,000	15%	14,850
Mother of All Garage Sales	1	4,000	5%	200
Spectator Events				
Sesostris Shrine Circus (5 days, 10 shows)	10	22,000	5%	1,100
Extreme Bull Ride (2 days)	2	5,000	20%	1,000
UNL Rodeo (2 days)	2	5,000	20%	1,000
Tractor Pull (3 days)	3	7,500	20%	1,500
Motorsports Events				
ABATE Motorcycle Show (3 days)	3	6,000	20%	1,200
Car Swap Meet (1 day)	1	18,000	50%	9,000
Animal Events				
Bonus Race Finals	4	2,500	98%	2,450
All Other Horse Shows	129	58,000	90%	52,200
County Fair	10	140,000	15%	21,000
Misc. Other Shows (youth, community, sporting, receptions)	279	74,000	10%	7,400
TOTAL	519	500,000		135,150
Estimate based on event surveys as of 2015				

Current LEC shows growing

- Existing shows are growing/maxed out on capacity
 - Super Fair
 - now at 140K attendees over 10 days
 - 1st Saturday this year biggest day ever
 - NE Power Farming Show
 - 80-100 exhibitors on waiting list without trying
 - Regional horse shows
 - growing 25-50%/year due to better arena footing, service, cleanliness
 - Trade Shows 2016
 - several grew attendance 25% e.g. Boat, Sport & Travel, Women's Expo, etc.



Relaunch driving growth: more regional & national shows

- Finalist for National High School Finals Rodeo
 - \$16M economic impact
 - 1650 contestants from 43 states, 5 Canadian provinces, and Australia
 - 2 of every 6 years, working for multiple rotations
- Proposal: Large Stock Show starting 2017
 - \$10M economic impact
 - 1000 exhibitors from multiple states
- ASPC (American Shetland Pony Club) Congress
 - National show seeking new permanent home
 - 700 stalls



Food & beverage relaunch

TEX MEX
BUILD YOUR OWN

**NACHOS
TACOS
RICE BOWL
SALAD**

\$10
INCLUDES 20oz
POP OR WATER



New Pop-up Stand Options



New Café Menu



Banquet speed & quality



SCCA Banquets: 2500 people/3 dinners/1 week



Economic impact

TODAY

500K visitors/year

400K local

100K out of town

Est. \$50/person
= \$20M impact

Est. \$125/person
= \$12.5M impact

27K hotel nights

Est. \$245/person
= \$6.6M impact

*Conservative estimate
by LEC based on past
event surveys, economic
impact study, market
study, VPC formula.*

IN WORKS

New Regional/National shows with 90% attendees to bring more visitors from outside NE to Lincoln such as:

NHSFR Proposal 2020/2021 & every 2 of 6 years

\$16M impact/show

Stock Show Proposal 2017/annually

\$10M impact/show

Local tax impact

Sales Tax Collected and Paid by LEC				
	2015/16 Total Sales Taxes	Est. local Lincoln/Lancaster Co portion	City	County
Sales & Use Tax on purchases, LEC-run event ticket sales including Fair (5.5% State, 1.75% City)	\$115,562	\$28,891	\$28,891	
5% Lodging Tax from LEC campsite sales (1% State, 4% County)	\$3,303	\$2,642		\$2,642
2% City Occupation Tax (on prepared food) (City)	\$15,625	\$15,625	\$15,625	
SUB TOTAL PAID BY LEC	\$134,490	\$47,158	\$44,516	\$2,642
Sales Tax Driven by Sales on LEC grounds				
Show ticket sales (5.5% State, 1.75% City)				
Fair carnival & motorsports	\$8,410	\$2,103	\$2,103	
Est. shows' ticket sales	\$58,170	\$14,543	\$14,543	
Show exhibitor sales				
Boat Sport & Travel Show (200 RVs, 100 boats)	\$2,537,500	\$634,375	\$634,375	
Spa sales at various shows (est. 200)	\$72,500	\$18,125	\$18,125	
Ritchie Bros auction	\$104,000	\$26,000	\$26,000	
Numerous other shows & exhibitors would have to be surveyed (conservative estimate)	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	
Est. Lodging Tax driven by LEC visitors (1% State, 4% County) on estimated 27,000 hotel rooms nights annually	\$136,750	\$109,400		\$109,400
SUB TOTAL PAID BY SHOWS	\$3,917,330	\$1,054,545	\$945,145	\$109,400
TOTAL SALES/LODGING/OCCUPATION TAXES ESTIMATED IMPACT	\$4,051,821	\$1,101,703	\$989,661	\$112,042

Challenges focused on...

- Everything **takes longer** than I thought! (but positive momentum)
- **Financial clarity & strength**—multi-year process as complex organization & ID how to self-fund ongoing maintenance/upgrades
- 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**
- **Farm economy impact**: current attendance/revenues, timing Phase 3 bond election





Super Fair update

November 17, 2016



2016 Fair-favorites still popular!



Mutton Busting
Presented by 96KX



Watermelon Feed
Hosted by Lancaster Co. Ag
Society & Lancaster Co.
Commissioners



**Pedal Tractor Pull & Big
Wheel Races**
Sponsored by Lancaster Co.
Farm Bureau



2nd Annual Equipment Rodeo
led by County Engineer Pam Dingman
& County Shop Mgr. Ron Bohaty



2016-popular new fair events



2nd Annual Fun at the Farm sponsored by NE Farm Bureau



Attraction Zone:
Bud Light Experience



Mud Drags



Pages White Tigers



Bob Bohm's Family Shows



Blackhawk & The Outlaws
Celebrity Concert



Great Inflatible Race

Super Fair



Highlights

- Conservative budget with reduced major costs—volunteers, security, celebrity concert
- Carnival contributed \$17K more in down year state wide
- Fun at the Farm a hit!!
- Farm Bureau & other great repeat/new sponsors
- Support from County Board, County Engineer
- 4-H/Extension: smoothest ever
- Great weather/attendance on 8 days

Challenges

- Storms both Thurs. pm hurt attendance/revenue to cover fair costs (as well as farm economy impacted spend on rides, etc.)
- Lots competing events, esp. concerts (Pinewood Bowl 5 of 10 nights)
- Some attendees disappointed in no animals all 10 days, and in Mon-Wed shut daytime
- Sponsorships down (farm economy)
- Ten days continues to be strain on volunteer Board & LEC staff
- National events asking for dates close to fair

Phase 2.5 update

November 17, 2016



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. \$275K bond +\$190K
VIF grant through 2017

Phase 2.5 2016 projects

Funded by VPC grant:

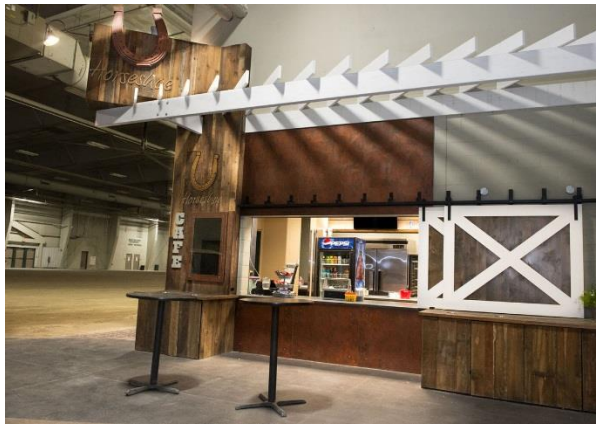
- Street sign remodel (portion)
- Parking lot improvements

Funded by JPA bond funds:

- Lift station pump
- Roof maintenance catchup
- Fire sprinkler upgrade
- Trade show carpet, tables
- Master planning updates
- Café remodels: Good Times Grill, Horseshoe & Clover Cafes
- New General Store



2016 Phase 2.5 remodeling



Phase 2.5 2017 projects

Funded by VPC grant:

(if not used on NHSFR project, will know in Jan. 2017 & pending County Board approval)

- Lighting Pavilion 1, Lincoln Room
- Nebraska Room, Meeting Rooms A & B remodel
- Key bathrooms—Lincoln Room, Good Times Grill
- Campground TBD—temp showers/toilets, water added to front spots, more gravel

Funded by JPA bond funds:

- Key security cameras
- Final Phase 3 studies: financial, parking, hydrology etc.
- Phase 3 concepts, costing to prepare for bond election

Wish list—seeking sponsors, grants

- Remodel Nebraska & Lancaster & A/B meeting rooms (naming rights available)
- Pavilion 4 digital signage
- Naming rights for buildings—starting with Pavilion 4
- Landscaping
- Trash/recycle cans
- Other TBD

Phase 3 update

November 17, 2016



Master planning process

1. Input from customers, community, staff
2. Master Planning Committee
3. Key studies to be completed
 - 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



Next steps:

- Decide final building sizes/needs
 - cost project
 - financial business model/case
- Researching best timing/way to do public campaign
- Gathering supporter names for "Friends of LEC" campaign committee

Market study key findings

Current & potential customer feedback: asking for Phase 2.5, 3 improvements

Input from Existing & Potential Users Focused on Identifying Future Demand Opportunities

- Strengths of LEC include:
 - Quality of staff – professional, flexible, responsive to needs
 - Flexibility of facilities' layout
 - Support elements for equine events (e.g., warm-up arena, stalls, RV/campground)
 - Proximity of parking
 - Cost/value of space for events
 - Regional accessibility via highways and airports

Input from Existing & Potential Users Focused on Identifying Future Demand Opportunities (cont'd)

- Challenges of the LEC include:
 - Overall condition of facilities including modernizations and technology
 - Lack of cohesiveness to create a high-quality equine competition facility with focus on participant / attendee needs including permanent stalls, spectator seating, covered warm-up arena, larger floor space, staging area, full-service RV hookups, showers, quality footing, solid fencing, vendor space, staging area
 - Lack of high-quality lighting, sound system and scoreboard replay system
 - Lack of updated restrooms
 - Lack of wayfinding signage
 - Current condition of concession stands – *although management has recently made improvements in this area*
 - Wi-Fi connectivity site-wide for event promoters, participants, and attendees

Already addressed in Phase 2.5

Market study key findings

demand high for LEC to serve ag/animal/motorsports/trade shows: original Phase 3 vision on track

Summary of Market Potential by Major Demand Segment

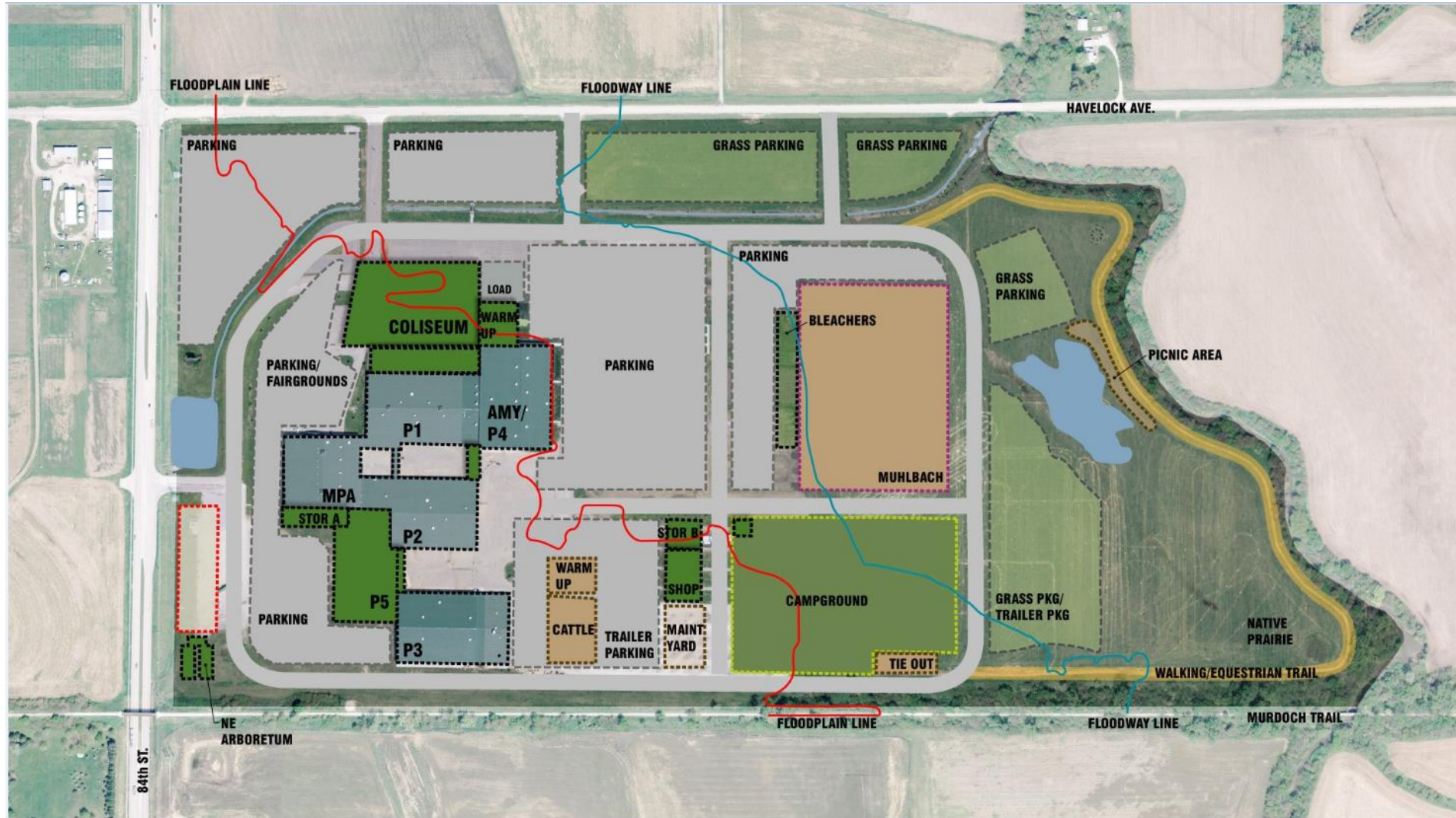
Market Segment	Relative Demand Potential
State/Regional/National Multi-Day Equine Events	High
Rodeos	High
Motorsports	High
Agricultural Events	Moderate
Consumer/Trade/Expo Shows	Moderate
Entertainment	Low
Family Shows	Low

Market Research and Recommendations by Clark Enersen Partners Suggest the Follow Building Program Elements

- Arena floor with minimum dimensions of 150' x 300', recommended by Clark Enersen to be concrete
- A minimum of 4,000 to 6,000 fixed seats which can be supplemented with floor seating as required
- Lobby and pre-function space that can accommodate simultaneous events, pre and post-event functions, and access to spectator amenities such as restrooms, food and beverage, etc.
- Technology that supports both event production and patron expectations including quality lighting, sound systems, scoreboard technology, and Wi-Fi
- Adequate back-of-house area including production offices, dressing rooms, building storage for all department and promoter needs, and related support space
- Premium spaces that can accommodate sponsor and VIP event needs
- Adjacent warm-up ring
- On-site, permanent stalls
- Temporary pens for livestock
- Additional on-site parking to appropriately support coliseum activity independent of other LEC events
- Kitchen facilities and concession operations to support event food/beverage operations and the Super Fair

Latest draft of master plan

Updated Spring 2016 after consulting with Fairgrounds/Ag/Animal facility architect (Populous)



LANCASTER EVENTS CENTER: MASTER PLAN UPDATE:
PHASE III CONCEPT PLAN PROGRESS
April 13, 2016

Your thoughts on Phase 3

- Timing
- How garner public support
- Community leaders to engage & help fund campaign

Thank you!!!!

Where we need your ongoing support, ideas, contacts:

- Sponsors: LEC year-round, Fair
 - Who would be interested in naming rights?? big & small opportunities starting with P4, meeting rooms
- Grant ideas
- Phase 3 ideas
- What community forums, leaders we should engage with





*Thanks for the partnership to
"grow the good times" together for
Lancaster County!*

