



NEWS RELEASE

Date: September 12, 2012

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New Report Recommends Additional Facilities at County Fairgrounds

A new business analysis provides market research, as the community moves forward with possible future plans for the campus.

New facilities and development at the [Mesa County Fairgrounds](#) could provide the community with needed amenities, as well as new jobs and tourist dollars, according to a new business analysis of the property.

Is this option what the community wants and needs? You can help answer that question this fall as Mesa County considers creating an updated Master Plan for the fairgrounds—a plan that would serve as a roadmap for phased development of the property into the future.

The newly drafted Fairgrounds Business Analysis examines local and regional market data to determine what business model would be most successful for the campus in the future. The report examines several options for future development at the fairgrounds.

“The recommendations from the study include new facilities at the fairgrounds complex, as well as expansion of existing facilities,” said Fairgrounds Manager JoCarole Haxel. “Our goal is to offer new amenities that do not duplicate or compete with existing local services.

Recommendations for new development at the Mesa County Fairgrounds include:

- A new exposition hall with approximately 25,000 square feet of exhibit space.
- A new multi-use event facility with 5,000 fixed seats.

The report also recommends expansion of the following areas:

- Existing equestrian and livestock facilities (such as stall barns and the covered arena).
- The existing BMX bike track and extreme sports facility on the property.

The business study shows significant potential to bring an additional \$12-\$14 million in spending into the local economy each year, by expanding and adding to the facilities at the fairgrounds. It also estimates that 160-190 new jobs would come into the local market with the above development.

Any future development on the property would be built in multiple phases over the course of several years. Costs will depend on upcoming community decisions about appropriate facilities and service levels. Preliminary estimated construction costs of the improvements recommended in the business analysis are:

- Expo Hall—Approximately \$4 million
- Event Facility—Approximately \$16.5 million
- Equestrian/livestock arena and facility improvements—Approximately \$2-to-4 million
- BMX expansion (open-air track)—Approximately \$840,000
- Additional infrastructure needed for expanded facilities—Approximately \$1 million
- *The above estimates are preliminary, based on similar facilities in other communities. A Master Planning process would help identify more complete and accurate cost numbers.*

This business study is the most recent step in a long-term Master Planning process for the fairgrounds. Mesa County is currently analyzing options for possible future development of the 93-acre property on Orchard Mesa. The effort began several years ago with community meetings.

“This is an effort to look forward and help us reach our potential,” added JoCarole Haxel. “We’re working with our residents and local leaders to create a vision for this campus, to clearly define how we think the fairgrounds should serve the community in the coming years.”

The local effort to create a Fairgrounds Master Plan will likely continue this fall, if the county decides to move forward based on community input. The proposed planning process would take into account the results of the market analysis and recommendations from the business study.

The process would also incorporate additional opportunities for community input, including public meetings. All of the feedback from residents and community groups can be used to help determine the future of the property.

What should the fairgrounds complex look like in 10 years? What type of amenities and facilities should the property offer our citizens? Would new development be worth the investment? You can help decide.

If you would like to be notified when the next round of open houses is scheduled, please call the [fairgrounds](#) at (970) 255-7107, or email us at fairgrounds@mesacounty.us.

Why have a Master Plan? The fairgrounds facilities serve as a bridge between Mesa County’s rich agricultural heritage and our emerging urban community. The fairgrounds campus currently hosts the annual Mesa County Fair, as well as more than 400 other activities a year—while also serving as the home campus for the 4-H Youth Program and Orchard Mesa Little League.

Several of the structures on the property are aging and outdated. In recent years, the fairgrounds has seen growing demand from user groups and the community at large. In addition, a new intersection on Highway 50 will alter vehicle access and traffic circulation on the property, changing how the parks on the fairgrounds campus are currently used.

This growth increases the importance of making strategic decisions as a community about the future use, maintenance and management of this valuable community resource.

“Mesa County—Creating a community of opportunities for all residents with a focus on the future.”