

DATE: August 29, 2019  
TO: Allison Field, Grant County Economic Development; Mindy Winegar Grant County Fairgrounds  
FROM: Matthew Craigie and Bob Parker  
SUBJECT: GRANT COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS: SCOPE OF WORK FOR ASSESSING REVENUE ENHANCING ACTIVITIES AT THE FAIRGROUNDS

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## Project Understanding

Grant County owns and operates a fairground property that is located within the city of John Day. The fairgrounds are used for a range of events across the calendar year. The premier event is the Grant County Fair, which occurs annually in August. The fairgrounds have struggled financially in recent years and want to better integrate the fairgrounds with various economic development investments being made by the City of John Day.

In partnership with the City of John Day, Grant County is interested in exploring options to enhance the fairgrounds facilities and to stabilize fairgrounds revenues. For this project, ECONorthwest will help the City and County gain a better understanding of market economics that influence the fairground's operations and capital projects. This project will culminate into a plan of action to help the City and County achieve long-term financial stability of the fairgrounds.

## About ECONorthwest

ECONorthwest (ECO) specializes in the application of economic and financial principles and methods to the evaluation of public policies and investments. Incorporated in 1974, ECO has a staff of over 50 people; personnel have advanced degrees and decades of work experience in planning, development, economics, finance, and public policy. ECO's public facility projects span from strategy to implementation, including strategic planning, concept design, market analysis, financial and feasibility assessment, funding strategy, disposition assistance, and public/private partnerships for development.

ECONorthwest's specialization in land-use planning begins with an economic perspective: one that incorporates public input, market analysis, economic forecasting, fiscal impact analysis, and financing to produce realistic, implementation-oriented products. Dating back to 1995, ECO has provided feasibility and master planning services for fairgrounds in Oregon in regions and communities such as: Lincoln County, Clackamas County, Tillamook County, Lake County, and Klamath County.

## Work Plan

Our work plan is divided into two phases. In the first phase, we will examine the market factors that will influence fairground revenues. The second phase will focus on the creation of a business concept, site plan, and marketing plan to navigate the fairgrounds to financial

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sustainability, establish a vision for the future of the fairground's properties, and generate more visitor trips to the fairgrounds.

## **Phase 1. Preliminary Market Assessment**

The consultant team will assess information related to fairgrounds events and activities in the context of other Fairgrounds and competing facilities within the region. This includes research about competing facilities and recent Fairgrounds events and revenues. The primary focus will be on events that are desired by Grant County residents. Secondly, we will assess events that are likely to appeal to a wider audience and would likely be revenue positive.

The analysis will look at the historical and current uses of the fairground's facilities, documenting the number and type of events that occurred at the fairgrounds in the recent past. The analysis will include the following information about events (where data is available): type of event, event organizers, number of attendees, facilities used, date and duration of the event, event frequency, and historical and current Fairground revenues from the events (e.g. rent and other payment for use of Fairground and facilities). To gather this information, we will work closely with Fairgrounds staff. We may also interview community stakeholders that are familiar with local and regional events to better understand the viability of more events at the Grant County Fairgrounds.

In addition, the market assessment will look specifically at the viability of increasing revenues from both tent camping and Recreational Vehicle (RV) camping. This analysis will consider the supply of competitive camping facilities in the region. Data availability permitting, we will compare campground sizes, fees, amenities, and usage. The analysis will take into account planned investments by the city of John Day in in-city camping and the community pavilion at Oregon Pine to ensure these are complimentary and not competing investments. In short, the assessment will look at overall demand for camping in the context of existing and potential supply (including nearby campgrounds).

The outcomes of this analysis will be identification of opportunities for change in usage of existing facilities to use them more efficiently, opportunities for expanding the number and type of events at the Fairgrounds, and opportunities to increase revenues from Fairground activities. Findings from this task will be used in the next phase (Task 2.1 – Business Concept), to refine a path toward financial stability for the Fairgrounds.

### **Phase 1. Deliverables.**

- Preliminary Market Assessment Memorandum

## **Phase 2. Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan has two tasks:

- Task 2.1. Business Concept
- Task 2.2. Site Concept

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The tasks details are as follows:

**Task 2.1 - Business Concept.** Building on the preliminary market assessment (Phase 1), the business concept will focus on increasing revenues from current facilities in a way that is both feasible and financial sustainable. The business concept will consider proposed facility enhancements, including improvements to the current tent camping and RV camping area. We will identify and analyze possible funding mechanisms to pay for facility enhancements, such as federal, state, and local opportunities and potential partnerships, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each. The business concept will also consider operational issues, especially those related to changes in use of fairground facilities. Where it makes sense, the business concept will provide recommendations for new facility improvements, while maintaining a focusing on increasing overall fairgrounds revenues.

**Task 2.2 - Site Concept.** Subconsultants Walker Macy will work with us to create a high-level fairgrounds site concept plan. The site concept plan will illustrate current and enhanced facility locations, fairgrounds circulation, proposed enhancements and improvements to facilities and grounds, and how the fairgrounds properties tie into the parks and transportation networks of the community of John Day. The site concept will be developed in concert with the business concept; each working iteratively to establish a viable funding and phasing strategy for facility enhancements. Walker Macy are familiar with the site and context and will use this familiarity and existing base mapping as a foundation. They will conduct a conference call with the City and fairgrounds staff to understand existing conditions and goals for the facility. They will then prepare a preliminary draft concept plan and potential alternative concepts and travel to John Day to present and discuss this plan and verify site conditions. Walker Macy will refine the concept after the site visit, coordinating with ECONorthwest and the City of John Day on 2 subsequent conference calls. The final concept will be an illustrative, annotated site plan drawing.

## **Phase 2. Deliverables.**

- **Implementation Plan Memorandum and associated documents.** The final deliverable will be an Implementation Plan that incorporates the findings of the two Phase 2 tasks. The Implementation Plan will establish a plan of action for the City and County to guide the Fairgrounds to long-term financial sustainability.

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## Budget and Project Timeline

We propose to complete the work summarized here for \$31,000, inclusive of labor hours and project expenses. Consultant hourly rates are provided in the table below.

Consultant Name and Title	Hourly Rate
<b>ECONorthwest</b>	
Bob Parker Project Director	\$210
Matthew Craigie Project Manager	\$150
Associate	\$120
<b>Walker Macy</b>	
Mike Zilis Principal	\$270
Production Staff	\$100

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