

## Executive Summary

# Mesa County Fairgrounds 2012 Master Plan

# Mesa County Fairgrounds Master Plan



## **Presented by**

Crossroads Consulting Services and Populous

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## Section 1-1 | Executive Summary

### Introduction

Established in the 1940s, the Mesa County Fairgrounds has served as an important asset to the residents of Mesa County. The facility typically hosts approximately 500 activities that draw more than 100,000 attendees including both residents and visitors.

The project team of Crossroads Consulting and Populous were retained by Mesa County to assist it in developing a Master Plan for the Mesa County Fairgrounds. It is our understanding that the driving forces of the Master Plan are to continue to accommodate diverse community usage, minimize the financial operating subsidy, and maximize economic and fiscal impacts to the community. This project is one of the few that allow the local government to directly positively impact the local economy through its investment.

The following summarizes major tasks conducted by our project team that served as the basis of the Master Plan:



The detailed existing facilities assessment, market analysis, and business plan as well as a list of stakeholders contacted throughout the Master Plan process can be found in the Appendix.

The Master Plan has been organized into three geographical sections – west, east, and central. Geographical organization was selected to emphasize that specific phasing priority has not been assigned to any particular component of the Master Plan. Phasing of implementation will be determined with further review after the Master Plan is adopted. The Master Plan West primarily impacts venues and parking for outdoor recreation activities such as little league, BMX, dog show groups, and outdoor expo events. Aging site utilities such as electrical service, sanitary sewer, storm water management, and irrigation will be replaced and expanded when the new circulation road is constructed and opened to the highway 50 traffic signal. The Master Plan East expands the capacity of the livestock and equestrian venue. The Master Plan West and Master Plan East components may be constructed in part or whole without impacting functions of their respective users and activities. Neither the Master Plan West nor the Master Plan East is dependent on the construction of the Master Plan Central. The Master Plan Central represents the event core of the Fairgrounds. Currently the grandstand facility is the primary event core venue which would not be negatively affected by either Master Plan West or Master Plan East. The proposed Master Plan Central venues will enhance and expand opportunities for users and events held at the Master Plan West and Master Plan East areas. The Master Plan Central represents a convergence of the diverse activities to its east and west as indicated in the following diagram.



The Master Plan document includes the following for each geographic section:

- Proposed Master Plan description
- Proposed facilities description
- Master Plan drawing
- Aerial perspective rendering
- Fair overlay drawing
- Proposed facility drawings
- Cost estimate / program document
- Economic analysis

# Section 1-2 | Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

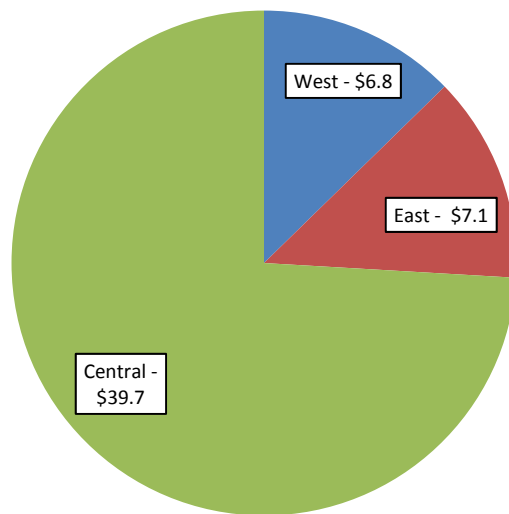
The proposed Master Plan includes a new primary circulation road connecting the two Highway 50 Fairgrounds entries. Improvements at the west end of the site include relocation and expansion of the BMX venue to a professional BMX course, relocated and enlarged Veteran’s Park, relocated Veteran’s Intermountain Memorial, and expanded paved parking. Improvements to the east end of the site include additional stall barns, a new covered arena, a permanent show office and restroom pavilion, and expanded RV sites. Improvements to the center of the site include a proposed 5,000 seat indoor event arena with attached 30,000 square foot divisible exhibition hall and expanded paved parking. The following images depict the fully developed Master Plan, more detailed information and images can be found in the Master Plan section of the report.



Conceptual cost estimates are provided for each geographical Master Plan area totaling around 100 acres of facility and infrastructure development. The cost estimates are based on conceptual order of magnitude numbers derived from recently bid Populous projects. They include estimated utilities and infrastructure, buildings, contingency, FF&E, contractors profit and overhead, and design/engineering fees. The specific scope of utility infrastructure replacement is estimated to be significant however extreme accuracy is not attainable at this level of study. The high cost of the Master Plan Central is primarily due to the cost of the indoor event center and expo hall facility. It is important to reiterate this is not an “all or nothing” planning approach. The Master Plan West and Master Plan East components may be fully implemented independent of the central event core plan.

The estimated total costs for each geographical area of the Master Plan are indicated in the following diagram.

**Estimated Project Cost (\$ in millions)**



As a point of reference, these preliminary project costs associated with the Master Plan for the 100 acre Fairgrounds are consistent with the following recent or planned projects in the community such as the Mesa County Workforce Center, which has a \$7.5 million budget, and the Fruita Recreational Center and Library which was built at a total project cost of \$13.4 million.

## Usage/Event Activity

The following table summarizes the estimated incremental usage/event activity at the Fairgrounds in a stabilized year of operations associated with the proposed Master Plan West, Master Plan East and Master Plan Complete improvements (which reflects all three Master Plans).

Master Plan	Number of Events	Total Usage Days	Total Attendee Days
Master Plan West	7 – 11	10 – 16	15,000 – 25,500
Master Plan East	17 – 20	45 – 51	24,000 – 26,600
Master Plan Complete	77 – 93	171 – 205	153,400 – 189,900

Notes: - Refer to the Market Analysis in Appendix B and the Business Plan in Appendix C for more detail regarding the above estimates.  
 - Chart indicates the impact of all three Master Plans as the “Complete” Master Plan. The Master Plan Central components are not summarized independently because their construction is contingent upon the implementation of the Master Plan West and Master Plan East.

The estimated usage/event activity shown in the table above is incremental new to the current activity occurring at the Fairgrounds which has historically averaged approximately 140 events and 100,000 attendees including the Fair.

## Impact to Financial Operations

The following table compares the estimated operating revenues and operating expenses for the Fairgrounds in a stabilized year of operations with the proposed Master Plan West, Master Plan East and Master Plan Complete improvements (which reflects all three Master Plans) to the three-year historical average. As shown in the Business Plan in Appendix C, the three-year historical operating subsidy for the Fairgrounds compares favorably to other similar complexes. Further, the average operating subsidy for the Fairgrounds represents an annual cost of approximately \$1.70 per resident in Mesa County.

Category	Three-Year Historical Average	Master Plan West	Master Plan East	Master Plan Complete
Operating Revenues	\$125,000	\$164,500	\$433,000	\$1,191,000
Operating Expenses	\$375,000	\$396,500	\$535,500	\$1,422,500
Net Operating Gain/(Loss)	(\$250,000)	(\$232,000)	(\$102,500)	(\$231,500)

Notes: - Slight differences due to rounding.  
 - Refer to the Business Plan in Appendix C for more detail regarding the above estimates.  
 - Amounts shown for Master Plan reflect the midpoint of the range.  
 - Chart indicates the impact of all three Master Plans as the “Complete” Master Plan. The Master Plan Central components are not summarized independently because their construction is contingent upon the implementation of the Master Plan West and Master Plan East.

On average, the annual operating loss for the Fairgrounds is estimated to decrease by 7% with Master Plan West which primarily involve outdoor recreation and infrastructure improvements, 59% with Master Plan East which involves equine/livestock facilities, and 7% with the complete build out of the Master Plan including the new Event Center and Expo Hall.

## Economic Impacts

The following table compares the estimated economic impacts associated with on-going operations of the Fairgrounds in a stabilized year of operations with the proposed Master Plan West, Master Plan East and Master Plan Complete improvements (which reflects all three Master Plans) to the three-year historical average.

Category	Three-Year Historical Average	Master Plan West	Master Plan East	Master Plan Complete
<b>Direct Spending</b>	\$2.4 million	\$2.9 million	\$4.4 million	\$10.1 million
<b>Indirect/Induced Spending</b>	\$1.4 million	\$1.8 million	\$2.7 million	\$6.2 million
<b>Total Spending</b>	\$3.8 million	\$4.6 million	\$7.1 million	\$16.3 million
<b>Total Earnings</b>	\$1.1 million	\$1.4 million	\$2.1 million	\$4.9 million
<b>Total Employment</b>	50	60	90	215

Notes: - Slight differences due to rounding.  
 - Refer to the Business Plan in Appendix C for more detail regarding the above estimates.  
 - Amounts shown for Master Plan reflect the midpoint of the range.  
 - One-time economic impacts associated with construction are not included in this analysis.  
 - Chart indicates the impact of all three Master Plans as the "Complete" Master Plan. The Master Plan Central components are not summarized independently because their construction is contingent upon the implementation of the Master Plan West and Master Plan East.

## Fiscal Impacts

The following table compares the estimated fiscal impacts (or tax revenues) associated with on-going operations of the Fairgrounds in a stabilized year of operations with the proposed Master Plan West, Master Plan East and Master Plan Complete improvements (which reflects all three Master Plans) to the three-year historical average.

Jurisdiction	Three-Year Historical Average	Master Plan West	Master Plan East	Master Plan Complete
<b>Mesa County</b>	\$47,000	\$55,000	\$84,000	\$182,000
<b>City of Grand Junction</b>	\$94,000	\$105,500	\$164,500	\$334,000
<b>State of Colorado</b>	\$94,000	\$111,000	\$168,500	\$374,500
<b>Grand Total</b>	\$235,000	\$271,500	\$417,000	\$890,500

Notes: - Slight differences due to rounding.  
 - Refer to the Business Plan in Appendix C for more detail regarding the above estimates.  
 - Amounts shown for Master Plan reflect the midpoint of the range.  
 - One-time fiscal impacts associated with construction are not included in this analysis.  
 - Chart indicates the impact of all three Master Plans as the "Complete" Master Plan. The Master Plan Central components are not summarized independently because their construction is contingent upon the implementation of the Master Plan West and Master Plan East.



## Overall Summary

The following outlines key benefits of each of the three geographic Master Plans.

Master Plan West	Master Plan East	Master Plan Central
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the ability to leverage private investment with BMX</li> <li>• Relocates Veterans Memorial to a more prominent place</li> <li>• Improves safety and on-site circulation with better access from Highway 50</li> <li>• Provides needed upgrades to aging irrigation and general utilities</li> <li>• Provides flood protection for much of the Orchard Mesa area</li> <li>• Improves use potential of Veteran’s Park for events (e.g., better size, shape, parking, and amenities)</li> <li>• Improves visual appeal and public perception from Highway 50</li> <li>• Improves dust mitigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds upon an existing strong niche market (i.e., equestrian)</li> <li>• Relieves pressure on existing facilities due to heavy use/no open dates for new events</li> <li>• Allows for expansion of the annual Mesa County Fair</li> <li>• Provides additional stalls and RV hookups which increases revenue generating opportunities for events</li> <li>• Provides opportunity to potentially reduce Fairgrounds’ operating subsidy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows Grand Junction to attract new types of events</li> <li>• Replaces aging grandstands facility</li> <li>• Allows growth of indoor exhibits and events</li> <li>• Expands marketability for both Master Plan West and Master Plan East facilities</li> <li>• Provides the potential for public/private partnerships in construction and management</li> <li>• Serves as an economic catalyst for Orchard Mesa area, and entire community</li> <li>• Allows for dramatic expansion of the annual Mesa County Fair</li> </ul>

The County has committed through its budgeting process \$8.0 million of the Capital Improvement Fund to be spent on Fairgrounds improvements including \$1.5 million in FY 2013, \$1.5 million in FY 2014, \$2.0 million in FY 2015, \$2.0 million in FY 2016 and \$1.0 million in FY 2017. The Capital Improvement Fund is funded using dollars from the County local sales tax. This fund was approved by Mesa County voters in 1981 and can only be used for capital/infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, utilities, and buildings.

Although each potential development alternative results in varying levels of an operating deficit, there are several potential opportunities that may assist in mitigating either the construction costs or the on-going operating subsidy including, but not limited to, naming rights, concessionaire rights, pouring rights, long-term advertising/sponsorship sales, the sale/lease of retail parcels, grants, etc. which are discussed in more detail in the Business Plan found in Appendix C.

## **Next Steps**

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, a series of grant applications will be developed with the objective of obtaining State or federal funds to help plan and construct some portions of the Master Plan. Design engineering will begin for the new entrance road and associated infrastructure, including design of a new irrigation system for the property. The first steps of implementation would include portions of the Master Plan West. As funding partners are secured, design and construction of additional elements will be pursued.

This section summarizes key findings outlined in the report. Because the information presented in the executive summary is extracted from the more detailed analysis, it is important for the reader to review the report in its entirety in order to gain a better understanding of the research, methodology and assumptions used.

Section 2-3 | Proposed Master Plan West

Proposed Master Plan Drawing



- 1 LED MARQUEE BOARD
- 2 PARK ENTRANCE SIGN
- 3 LION'S PARK
- 4 HORSESHOE PITS
- 5 BMX TRACK
- 6 ORCHARD MESA LITTLE LEAGUE BALLPARK
- 7 PROPOSED BALLPARK PARKING I (62 spaces)
- 8 PROPOSED BALLPARK PARKING II (94 spaces)
- 9 CSU EXTENSION & ARBORETUM
- 10 IRRIGATION POND
- 11 PROPOSED MAINTENANCE YARD
- 12 FENCED DOG PARK
- 13 EXISTING PARKING (599 spaces)
- 14 PROPOSED PARKING (220 spaces)
- 15 PROPOSED PARKING (281 spaces)
- 16 VETERAN'S INTERMOUNTAIN MEMORIAL
- 17 VETERAN'S PARK/MULTI-USE FESTIVAL GROUND
- 18 PROPOSED STAGE
- 19 POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL PARCEL A (2.16 ac.)
- 20 POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL PARCEL B (2.18 ac.)
- 21 PROPOSED EVENT CENTER DROP OFF
- 22 EVENT CENTER
- 23 EVENT CENTER PARKING (84 spaces)
- 24 PROPOSED PARKING (276 spaces)
- 25 TRAILER PARKING
- 26 LOAD/UNLOAD LANE
- 27 EXISTING BARN (75 stalls)
- 28 PROPOSED BARN I (90 stalls)
- 29 PROPOSED BARN II (90 stalls)
- 30 PROPOSED SHOW OFFICE
- 31 PROPOSED BARN III (90 stalls)
- 32 PROPOSED BARN IV (90 stalls)
- 33 EXISTING COVERED ARENA (120' x 265')
- 34 PROPOSED COVERED ARENA (120' x 265')
- 35 PROPOSED STORAGE BUILDING
- 36 EXISTING OUTDOOR WARM-UP ARENA
- 37 EXISTING LIVESTOCK PAVILION
- 38 EXISTING COMMUNITY BUILDING
- 39 PROPOSED RV SPACES (78 spaces)



Section 3-3 | Proposed Master Plan East

Proposed Master Plan Drawing



- 1 LED MARQUEE BOARD
- 2 PARK ENTRANCE SIGN
- 3 LION'S PARK
- 4 HORSESHOE PITS
- 5 BMX TRACK
- 6 ORCHARD MESA LITTLE LEAGUE BALLPARK
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MASTER PLAN // PHASE EAST

**MESA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS** 11.19.2012

**POPULOUS**

Section 4-3 | Proposed Master Plan Central

Proposed Master Plan Drawing



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