

LANE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS REPAIR PROPOSAL

Re-Envisioning the Lane County Fairgrounds

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The Future of the Fairgrounds

The Lane County Fairgrounds covers fifty-five acres in the center of Eugene, Oregon. The site was first purchased in 1909 from Samantha Huddleston for ten dollars and in the following year hosted its first county fair. This location has now been the scene of rodeo events, 4-H exhibitions, logging conventions, home shows, holiday markets, and countless other community gatherings for three generations of Oregonians. The site continues to host the Lane County Fair and many other regular weekend events; however, revenue sources have not covered operation costs for several years and the fairgrounds has relied on County funds from the Federal Timber Subsidy to make it from one year to the next. Those funds were curtailed after the 2008 fiscal year. The Lane County Fairgrounds is currently operating at a loss and without a safety net. Moreover, the conditions of the grounds are in such a sad state that attracting convention business for the Events Center has become compromised. The future of this historic site is in jeopardy and has been for quite some time.

The Lane County Commissioners oversee operations of the fairgrounds. On March 12, 2008, the Commissioners convened a public meeting at the fairgrounds in an effort to answer the question: *What should we do with the Lane County Fairgrounds?* Two options were suggested by the commissioners that night. The first was to sell the property and build a new county fair facility on the outskirts of Eugene. This would cost an estimated \$150 million and is an expense far too great for the County at this time. The second option was to spend an estimated \$13.5 million for maintenance and repair of the site and see if operations couldn't limp along until something better could be arranged. In these difficult financial times, even funding those maintenance costs would be difficult to justify and all repairs would have to be prioritized by absolute need and be done one by one as finances allowed. In other words, the commissioners offered two options and neither was workable.

The Lane County Fairgrounds is in dire straits. Instead of simply letting the situation continue unresolved, it is time to go outside the box with something entirely new. This is essentially what the County Commissioners were asking from the 100 or so interested citizens who attended the March 12th meeting—"A vision for the next fifty or one hundred years," as Commissioner Fleenor described it that evening. This proposal is just that, a vision for the next 100 years.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this proposal is to give Lane County and the City of Eugene a way to save the Lane County Fairgrounds. The proposal describes a plan to transform the fairgrounds into a state-of-the-art, zero waste and zero net carbon, zero net energy community and agricultural resource center—a plan that will make the fairgrounds profitable, sustainable, and attractive. Should this vision be realized the Lane County Fairgrounds would become a one of a kind community asset, a gem in the crown of Oregon’s greenest city, and a destination site for visitors from all over the United States.

Overview

The world currently faces unprecedented challenges due to long-term resource mismanagement and environmental degradation. Our unrestrained use of fossil fuels, our methods of agriculture, our methods of building, our mismanagement of waste streams, and our way of life are simply not sustainable. Without wholesale revision of our culture and our relationship with the community of all living things, we jeopardize the health of the planet and the future of humankind.

Individual solutions to all the problems that we confront are available. Alternative techniques for the creation of energy, sustainable methods of cultivation, more efficient utilization of waste, green methods of construction, and new visions for the design of our socio-economic living space are being advanced and increasingly practiced every day. While these practices are yet the exception to the prevailing culture, they are our future. Individually these alternative practices are important, but combined in a holistic way they are powerful and fully sustainable. The Lane County Fairgrounds Repair Project endeavors to create a working demonstration of such a whole system design through the integration of cutting-edge green techniques and practices on the fairgrounds’ site in the center of Eugene, Oregon.

Mission Statement

The repaired Lane County Fairgrounds will be a land and agricultural center designed to optimize the full potential of the site. fifty-five acre illacts asansit for LTD a food grown in Lane County. The central economic premise of the site will be fostering local enterprise, incubating green jobs, and promoting Lane County agriculture, specifically food production. site, zero net carbon, zero net energy, and in this way be a working demonstration and educational model for the culture of the future.

Fairgrounds Repair Design Objectives

- **Relocalize Community Economics:** The Fairgrounds Repair Project’s economic strategy will emphasize local enterprise, the creation of green jobs, and the promotion and support of increased food production in Lane County. Funding for the rebuilding and restoration of the grounds will be sourced from private donations, state and federal green job and technology grants, county and/or city bond initiatives, and community-wide partnerships. Operation of the site will be supported by building

rentals, business leases, farmers market revenues, workshop and class fees, waste stream income, and lodging fees.

- **Achieve Minimal Waste:** A unified waste and recycling system will be incorporated into all fairgrounds activities. Everything that enters the fairgrounds' site will either be recycled, composted into nutrient rich soil amendments, used as a source of energy production, or leave the site exactly as it entered.
- **Achieve Near Zero Net Carbon and Zero Net Energy:** Every action will be taken to increase the efficiency of all existing buildings and energy systems at the site. Photovoltaic panels, solar water heating, wind power, and other renewable or high efficiency energy technologies will be added to each structure as applicable.
- **Utilize Ecological Landscaping and Permaculture Design:** The entire campus will be restored and landscaped in a manner that demonstrates the principles of ecology and permaculture design. The grounds will be transformed into a neighborhood park, a living native plant library, and an educational arboretum.
- **Act as an Agricultural Resource Center and Food Hub:** As part of the relocated economic plan, the repaired fairgrounds will be a critical first step in the rebuilding of our local food system, something that can both stimulate the economy and increase regional food security. The existing OSU Extension Service office building will be replaced by a Regional Agricultural Center with offices for the USDA, the OSU Extension Service, the Department of Forestry, the Lane County Farmers' Market, and other related government or non-profit organizations. An indoor year-round farmers' market, a minimum processing, food storage and distribution warehouse, and two grain silos will also be added to the site to create a full-purpose food hub and emergency food reserve in the center of Eugene.
- **Act as a Transit Node:** Jefferson Street provides direct truck and automobile access from Highway 105 to the fairgrounds. A major LTD bus line stops at the main entrance on Thirteenth Street, and a key bike path passes along the site's southern boundary. By adding an EMX route to Thirteenth Street, the fairgrounds could be easily accessed without an automobile from both ends of the metro area.
- **Act as a Community Resource Center:** The entire campus will be designed to maximize city-wide community involvement, neighborhood resource access, and educational opportunities. Energy applications, waste strategies, agricultural practices, environmental landscaping, and sustainable living will be presented as working applications, demonstrations, and workshops. Classes taught in conjunction with the Extension Service will include master gardening, composting, permaculture design, food preparation and preservation, nutrition, farmer mentoring, livestock management, and climate masters programs.
- **Become a Regional and National Destination Site:** As a unique site, demonstrating all variety of sustainable practices and activities, the fairgrounds will draw visitors from all over the region and the United States.

Relocalized Community Economics

Overview

Over the last twenty-five years, the globalization of the market place has expanded trade with a rich and diverse new array of products and product sources; however, it has been at the cost of regional economic balance and resilience, especially at the local level. In light of concerns for peaking oil production and global financial market volatility, relocalizing the regional economic system, especially in the food sector, makes a tremendous amount of sense right now.

Lane County residents will spend one billion dollars on food in 2009. Ninety percent of the proceeds will go out of state. This is radically out of balance with the natural resources available in this valley. We could be keeping as much as a third of those food dollars home. Decoupling from the global system somewhat, growing our own food, and investing in local enterprise is an effective way to achieve a measure of economic autonomy in Lane County.

One of the central goals of the Fairgrounds Repair will be to provide a community base for local enterprise and investment, facilitated by public and private partnerships. Because the project will create as many as one hundred new jobs at the fairgrounds' site, provide external revenue streams from the fairgrounds' reconstruction, and generate internal revenue streams from its operation, funds for the start-up should be viewed as a multi-dimensional stimulus for community economic development. While the operational focus will be on the promotion of regional agriculture through a year-round farmers' market and a minimum processing, food storage and distribution warehouse, the fairgrounds' campus will also provide space for local crafts shops, light industry incubation, restaurants, lodging, education, and all manner of community events and engagements.

In sum, the Fairgrounds Repair Project is a community-based effort to convert a piece of publicly owned property, which is struggling to make ends meet, into a community resource and economic generator. In these times of financial uncertainty, what could possibly be better than picking ourselves up by our own bootstraps?

Implementation

The economic plan for the repaired fairgrounds can be broken down into four main categories: financing the initial start-up and repair, integration of community sponsors and partnerships, operational income streams, and local enterprise leases.

Financing the Project Start-up

The Fairgrounds Repair Project will require approximately thirty million dollars for repair and construction costs to be spread out over a five-year period of staged start-up and development. This cost will be a challenging sum in the current economic climate; however, by making this a community project and widening the base of investment, both the costs and the returns can be shared among many players, public and private, large and small.

- It will be necessary to have the county and/or the city sponsor a revenue bond and/or federal grant application for some portion of start-up costs. The recent federal stimulus package has targeted Oregon with several million dollars for infrastructure repair, green jobs, and renewable energy opportunities. The Fairgrounds Repair Project addresses all three of these stimulus sectors and should qualify for a portion of this new federal money, while also attracting nationwide attention to Oregon for leading edge green development. In addition to the potential for Federal stimulus money, the Department of Energy, the USDA, and the Department of Homeland Security have many large ongoing grant opportunities that are applicable to the Fairgrounds Repair Project.
- Along with direct public financial support, there will be incentives from the state, county, and city to help with cutting building costs through permit fee waivers or discounts related to the incorporation of energy saving devices or achieving LEED building standards. Every effort will be made to utilize these kinds of savings in all onsite construction or repair.
- Outreach to influential individuals and/or businesses in the county or state for financial assistance will also be part of the start-up funding strategy. Because of the topical relevance of this project and a growing awareness among the more fortunate in this region for sustainability issues and food security, *people will want to be involved in this project*; there is a high likelihood that the Fairgrounds Repair Project will attract financial or material donations from wealthy citizens or businesses.
- As many of the individual projects at the site will involve applications that are sold by local businesses, contributions or discounted sales to the fairgrounds will be solicited in exchange for advertisement via onsite usage and/or demonstration.
- The completed site, as a tourist destination, will have considerable value as a marketing entity for green technology. Because of this, outreach to private individuals and businesses outside the state will also be included in the start-up financing strategy. The use and demonstration of alternative technologies at the site will have the potential to inspire contributions, financial or material, from national companies interested in using the site as a way to promote their products to a targeted audience.
- Like-minded businesses, individuals, or non-profit organizations will be solicited for material donations, volunteer labor, and fund-raising.
- Artwork sponsorship, name plates, or sponsor lists will also be part of the initial gathering of community resources, large and small, for this project.

Integrating Community Sponsors and Partnerships

Community involvement through partners and sponsors will be a central facet of operations at the repaired fairgrounds during construction and after completion. While the most obvious partnerships are with the City of Eugene and Lane County through before mentioned revenue bond initiatives or Federal grant opportunities, there are innumerable other public and private entities from businesses to schools to neighborhoods that can benefit from partnerships with the Fairgrounds Repair Project.

Operational Income Streams

The repaired fairgrounds will maintain, increase, and/or create new sources of direct and indirect income through rentals, sales, and opportunities for cost reductions.

- Current operational income streams from existing buildings will continue or be improved. Rentals fees for the usage of the Events Center will remain an important income source. Improvements to the Wheeler Pavilion, the Ice Rink, and the Auditorium will increase these buildings' use and their rental income.
- The Whole System Recycling Program will generate income through the sale of recycled materials and soil created by the composting of waste. As part of the recycling program, the fairgrounds will provide recyclable or compostable plates, cups, and eating utensils to all vendors at the campus. These utensils will be bought by the fairgrounds in large quantities at discount prices and then sold to event vendors with a modest markup and profit. The recycling program's waste program will also reduce operation costs by eliminating the need to have waste hauled away, creating and selling soil amendments, and using manure and other wet garbage from the site to generate energy through methane digestion or other bio-energetic sources.
- The addition of a fruit tree nursery, green house, and seed bank will generate income by the sale of starts, seeds, and plants to the public. These programs will be supervised by and create income for the OSU Extension Service
- Alternative technologies, including PV panels, solar water heating, wind power, passive heating and cooling design, ground source heat potentials, and the before mentioned creation of energy through waste streams, will result in a significant overall energy cost savings and possible green energy credit reimbursements.

Local Enterprise Leases

In addition to event rental fees, the repaired fairgrounds will feature a variety of long-term rental and lease opportunities for local businesses.

- The year-round indoor farmers' market and minimum processing, food storage and distribution warehouse will produce income from fees for market vendor stalls, short-term food storage, and processing, plus a percentage from gross sales. The indoor market will lease space to several anchor businesses, such as a bakery, a wine bar, a farmers' diner, a juice bar, a meat market, a dairy, and a fish market.
- A Regional Agricultural Center will replace the existing OSU Extension Service office building. This new facility will be a steady source of income through office space leases and/or rental fees. These offices will be prioritized for government services or organizations related to agriculture or sustainability.
- In the latter stages of the five-year development program, and as funds allow, the Exhibit Halls along the north bank of the Amazon Creek will be replaced by a three-story walking mall, hotel, and piazza for local businesses. The first floor will include rental spaces for small shops or value-added industries. One hundred rooms for fairgrounds visitors will be incorporated into the second and third floors of the walking mall. This lodging will serve as a year-round hostel and eco-workshop hosting center and be prioritized for, but

not limited to, those attending events at the fairgrounds. All of these uses will include rental or lease fees.

Again, the Fairgrounds Repair is focused on making better use of an underused public resource. Central to this is the City and County coming together through a mutually beneficial project that can build both community and a vital regional economy.

Whole System Recycling

Overview

We have reached such an extreme in our “throw away society” that simply finding space for all the garbage we create is a dilemma of mythic proportions. Landfills, ocean dumping, garbage export, we are rapidly running out of places to put our refuse.

Waste management through source reduction and diversion are both the cheapest and the most powerful solutions. Diverting 75 to 85 percent of our waste can be achieved relatively easily simply by controlling inputs and thorough sorting and recycling. A zero waste program, that is, a one hundred percent diversion rate, is considerably more ambitious. The key to achieving zero waste at the fairgrounds is a mindset; *waste must be considered a resource*.

Currently there is no unified or coordinated system of garbage collection or sorting at the fairgrounds’ site. Waste and recycling at the fairgrounds are contracted services and part of the site’s operational costs. Collection is done piecemeal and contractors and services can change from one event to the next. One event may sort; another may not.

The purpose of the Whole System Recycling Program will be to unify and coordinate all waste and recycling at the fairgrounds, turn waste streams into income streams, and educate event vendors and fairgrounds patrons about progressive waste management practices. The operational goal for the repaired fairgrounds will be to achieve zero waste and a positive waste handling income within five years of implementation.

Implementation

The entire waste stream will be managed by a whole system recycling team. A recycling warehouse will be located east of the Events Center as a central gathering and sorting location for all dry waste on the site. There will also be three satellite recycling transfer stations strategically located around the grounds. A large composting station for wet garbage will be created along the northwest edge of the site. This will become a facility to create nutrient rich soil and amendments and to pre-sort wet wastes for renewable energy applications. Recycling, composting, and waste stations will be used for workshops and classes run in conjunction with the OSU Extension Service and other existing programs such as the Master Recyclers.

The Whole System Recycling Program’s implementation objectives are listed below:

- Apply for USDA, DEQ, Department of Energy, and Environmental Protection Agency grants to minimize cost of waste management transition
- Install waste operations manager and two part-time assistants
- Create centralized waste management sorting station and satellite transfer stations
- Coordinate waste management practices for all fair venues and events
- Establish a whole system recycling education and stewardship program for employees, event vendors, and fair patrons
- Ban the use of non-compostable, non-recyclable materials and products used by vendors, event managers, and fairgrounds staff
- Establish a for-profit service for the purchase of compostable and/or recyclable eating utensils and containers to be sold to event vendors and fairground businesses
- Implement the use of durables at events
- Create an onsite composting area for the creation of soil and nutrient rich amendments and energy stream sorting
- Create an aesthetic decentralized County transfer station and generate income through the sale of recycled materials
- Transform operational waste service costs into a positive revenue stream
- Achieve zero waste
- Integrate livestock population (initially micro-livestock, rabbits, bees, chickens, worms, ducks) waste streams into the whole system composting process

The Fairgrounds Repair Project has already entered into discussions with Lane County Fairgrounds Manager Rick Reno regarding a whole system recycling program. It has a very low start-up cost and generates almost immediate savings. Reno has already begun the initial steps of creating a permanent sorting station.

Near Zero Net Carbon and Net Energy

Overview

Concerns for peaking oil production and rising fossil fuels costs are rapidly changing the budgeting priorities for businesses of all kinds, individuals, and families. In addition to direct energy costs, the external costs of carbon emissions are also pressing heavily on the management of planet earth and its economy. Worries about climate change and air pollution underscore the need for clean, renewable, and efficient energy sources.

While a large portion of Lane County's energy comes from renewable, clean hydroelectric generation, there is still need to increase building heating and cooling efficiencies, make use of renewable energy sources, and minimize use of fossil fuels.

One exceptionally ambitious goal of the Fairgrounds Repair Project is to create a zero net carbon, net zero energy campus—with the capacity for complete off-the-grid operation—serving as both an educational demonstration and an emergency resource location.

To achieve this goal, it will be necessary to use a hybrid of renewable energy technologies and high efficiency construction methods imaginatively integrated into the entire campus operation. The site's energy objectives will also include educational applications of cutting edge alternative technologies and demonstrations of how these technologies can intersect with plant life, livestock, and waste streams in ways that are either energy positive or lead to energy conservation.

Implementation

The creation of a zero carbon, zero net energy facility will be a challenging feat of engineering and planning, as well as a valuable learning experience in itself. Some of the most important strategies for achieving this goal are listed below:

- Every building on the campus will undergo a complete weatherization review and improvement. Weather stripping, caulking, and insulation are all low-cost and effective methods of increasing heating and cooling efficiency.
- All existing HVAC and heating systems, lighting, and building usage hours will be reviewed for basic efficiency upgrades. In large public buildings, minimum carbon dioxide level requirements and ventilation systems contribute heavily to energy draws. Vast energy savings can be achieved for low cost through high efficiency electronic carbon dioxide sensors and ventilation controls. These in conjunction with night air flushing and relief fans can save large quantities of energy. Similarly, lighting controls and building usage monitoring can save energy at low cost.
- Building heating and cooling efficiencies will be appraised for the application of environmental landscaping and passive design. The use of trees or other large plants to shelter a structure from the wind or shade it from the sun will be incorporated into the overall landscaping scheme. When applicable, existing buildings will be remodeled for passive energy advantages.
- All fairgrounds structures will be evaluated for renewable energy applications. Some of these technologies, methane digestion or renewable bio-fuel, will dovetail into the Whole System Recycling Program, where some wastes will be diverted to energy creation. Because of the amount of south facing roof space on existing and proposed structures, the use of photovoltaic panels and solar water heaters will be a significant part of creating a zero net carbon, zero net energy site. (Photovoltaic panels will be one of the largest direct costs of the project. Some portion of this expense could be shared through "panel sponsorship" or special arrangements with EWEB or panel manufactures. Expenses could be further reduced by working with students from LCC's "Solar Photovoltaic Systems Design and Installation" course and having students install the panels. During the daylight hours of summer months the fairgrounds could be a net producer of electricity and sell electricity back to EWEB or provide for the surrounding neighborhood.)
- All new buildings added to the site will be designed to enhance energy profiles, use alternative or renewable energy technology, and incorporate passive design and environmental landscaping. These new buildings will also demonstrate the most advanced green building techniques and materials.

- Greenhouses will be featured because of their value to gardening workshops and site nursery needs. Where applicable, these greenhouses will be used as solar heat collectors and functional heating devices.

Environmental Landscaping and Permaculture Design

Overview

The accumulation of carbon emissions in the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels is cited as the primary cause for global warming. Deforestation and the steady incursion of asphalt and concrete into undeveloped land also add unwanted positive feedback to the biosphere's carbon cycle. Reforestation, sustainable forest management, and a general re-greening of the planet are common sense ways to sequester carbon and can be as important as cutting fossil fuel emissions when it comes to mitigating climate change.

Currently two-thirds of the fairgrounds' site is either covered by asphalt or by the footprint of a building. Functionally, it acts as fifty-five acre heat sink—representing a microcosm of what we have done to the planet's photosynthetic respiration process as a whole. One primary objective of the repaired fairgrounds will be the re-greening of the grounds through the demonstration of ecologically sustainable forestry principles and environmental landscape design.

When complete, the repaired fairgrounds will, in effect, become a garden park, a fifty-five acre prototype for an environmentally sustainable economy and culture, demonstrating how living spaces and large structures can be integrated into green spaces in a mutually supportive manner.

Implementation

Because a large portion of the fairgrounds' site is covered with asphalt, the conversion of the current grounds into a garden park must be carried out in deliberate transitional steps over several years. The intention will be to remove as much asphalt from the site as possible and still retain adequate parking for large public events.

In general, the soil quality at the fairgrounds' site is fair at best. Thus the early stages of the fairgrounds' landscape repair will be directed at organic soil building, mitigation of existing chemical residues, and transitioning some asphalted areas to green spaces. This will be done in conjunction with the whole system recycling program, which will be diverting large portions of waste to compost and the creation of soil amendments which would then be used at the site.

At the same time, again as part of the philosophy of holistic management, water catchment systems will be part of the overall landscaping scheme. Cisterns, ponds, and run-off irrigation systems will be strategically placed to minimize site water costs, non-point pollution, and run-off in general.

As garden plots and landscaping areas come of age in terms of soil fecundity, some of the most critical plantings will be the larger trees and shrubs which need many years to mature. Because the landscaping will be intimately connected to the passive thermal design of onsite structures and the overall comfort and beauty of the entire campus, particularly in summer months, it is absolutely critical to understand that the planting scheme will be based on a long-term view—the time it takes for a multiplicity of tree and plant species to reach maturity and perform the tasks they are intended to perform.

Descriptions of some of the repaired fairgrounds' specific landscaping features are compiled in **Appendix A**. These landscape applications will create a lovely and sensational effect when spread out over fifty acres. The entire character of the fairgrounds will be changed. A broken stretch of asphalt will become a plush open park and native plant library.

The Fairgrounds Repair Project has had several long discussions with fairgrounds Manager Rick Reno about these landscaping ideas. He has shown considerable interest in the idea of beautifying the grounds and has opened the area around the Wheeler Pavilion and a portion of the site's northwest corner to the Fairgrounds Repair Project's landscaping ideas.

Regional Agricultural Center and Food Hub

Overview

Nowhere are the challenges caused by long-term resource mismanagement and environmental degradation more evident than in the realm of agriculture. Monoculture and industrial farming techniques have proven to be unsustainable. Topsoil loss, water shortages, and petrochemical dependency are now stressing global food production, creating increasingly less nutritious food, and raising the price of food worldwide. In the last five years, food security has progressed from an issue associated with developing nations to a concern for all nations, including the United States. Recent studies report that 2.5 percent of the U.S. population is undernourished. Oregon ranks among the worst ten states with 4 percent of its populace undernourished. Closer to home, one in five families in Lane County relies on *FOOD for Lane County* for emergency food assistance, and almost a third of the County's children ate from an emergency food box at least once during this last year.

Currently Lane County's supply of food is heavily dependent on the global food system. Though we live at the south end of a lush fertile valley that has the agricultural potential to provide almost all of our food needs, more than 95 percent of what we eat is imported and travels on average 1500 miles to get here. With increasing concerns for an extended economic recession, growing unemployment, peaking oil production, the uncertainties of climate change, and toxin tainted foods, rejuvenating Lane County's food system is a way to increase our self-reliance and to facilitate year-round emergency food availability. This kind of relocalization makes tremendous sense economically and can be achieved by *refocusing regional agriculture on food production and rebuilding local food system infrastructure*.

These are both primary objectives of the Fairgrounds Repair Project and will be facilitated by using the fairgrounds' considerable space to create a regional agricultural resource center and food hub. Additionally, classes and workshops in food production, nutrition, preparation and preservation will be provided at the site in conjunction with the OSU Extension Service.

Implementation

The creation of a regional food hub at the fairgrounds involves deconstructing the current OSU Extension Service office building and replacing it with a regional agricultural center, building a year-round farmers' market, converting the Livestock Pavilion into a minimum processing, food storage and distribution warehouse, and building two dry-storage grain silos. The construction of this portion of the repaired fairgrounds will be implemented in three distinct stages over a period of three to five years.

The process will begin with the conversion of the existing Livestock Pavilion into a minimum processing, storage and distribution warehouse. The initial purpose of this building would be to facilitate the buying of locally grown products by institutional cafeterias in Lane County (as proposed by the Governor's Oregon Solutions Lane County Food Distribution Project). Substantive contracts with local school districts, the University of Oregon, Lane Community College, and area hospitals will prompt local farmers to increase food crop production for these large buyers. Along with providing minimum processing capacity, the warehouse will act as an aggregation site and central distribution hub to institutional buyers with the intent of increasing product delivery efficiency and minimizing food freight miles. After weekly or bi-weekly institutional contracts are filled, excess produce at the warehouse will be made available to the public. This would gradually include satellite farmers' markets in the area, local food markets, restaurants, and individual buyers.

Once the distribution warehouse has become a smooth running and self-sufficient enterprise, created evidence of a growing clientele of private buyers, and substantiated local food production potentials, implementation of the year-round farmers' market strategy would begin. This process would also occur in stages, starting with a temporary, exterior market space to further test the market. Once this temporary market has achieved a viable clientele, the Exhibit Halls along the north bank of the Amazon Creek could be deconstructed into a covered, open-air structure for a second stage of market testing for the winter. Should this stage show further evidence of the need for a year-round farmers' market, construction of a permanent year-round market would begin.

Construction of the Regional AG Center office building could begin at any time sufficient office space leases could be arranged to offset amortized construction costs. The grain silos would be the last pieces to be put in place.

The food hub structures will add four critical pieces of infrastructure to our regional food system. (See Appendix B.) The regional agricultural center would help coordinate agricultural activities in the region and centralize agricultural information sources and facilitators. The market would prompt local buying and provide local farmers with year-round sales

opportunities. The grain silos would be a buffer from emergency shortages. And the minimum processing food warehouse would act as a source for local institutions that participate in large-scale local food purchasing, as well as a distribution hub for satellite farmers' markets in the area and other food markets.

Transit Node

Overview

For all the convenience and driving pleasure of a car, concerns for peaking oil production and fossil fuel emissions have underscored the environmental cost of the internal combustion engine and placed new emphasis on mass transit, bicycle riding, and other alternative forms of transportation.

The Fairgrounds Repair Project will endeavor to minimize automobile traffic to the site by making the most of existing and projected mass transit systems and pedal power. The repaired fairgrounds would also include the phased implementation of a multi-tiered, multi-purpose parking structure.

Implementation

The Lane County Fairgrounds sits in the center of Eugene. Jefferson Street provides direct access from Highway 105 to the fairgrounds. A major LTD bus line stops at the main entrance on Thirteenth Street, and a key bike path passes along the site's southern boundary. By adding an EMX route to Thirteenth Street that stops at Monroe Street, the fairgrounds would become a secondary Eugene transit node and greatly facilitate getting to the site from the far east or far west of the city. This would lessen parking concerns for big events and bring more visitors to the campus during the day. The fairgrounds' overall transit program would also encourage the reduction of *vehicle miles traveled* for event vendors and patrons to help minimize fossil fuel emissions.

The repaired fairgrounds will include several non-fossil fuel transportation amenities:

- Covered bicycle parking
- Bicycle repair shop
- Free community "white" bike program
- Pedal taxi fleet based at the fairgrounds
- Solar-powered jitneys

Community Resource Center

Overview

There can be no sustainable management of the planet without worldwide human participation. All nations, all peoples in our global village must get onto the same page, in the same chapter, in the same book of planet stewardship; sustainability is ultimately a global design. This kind of unity begins at the local level and inspires outward to the entire planet.

Education is the central piece of this transformation. Some of it is relearning things we used to know, how to grow and process our own food. Some of it is learning new things, alternative technologies and lifestyle practices. And some of it is learning to live together, building community.

The fairgrounds campus will be a community gathering space that is also an institute and learning place. Each individual piece of the entire system will be a demonstration and potential workshop. The campus as a whole will similarly be a demonstration and open-air classroom—as well as a template for rejuvenation of other fairgrounds or event centers outside of Lane County.

Implementation

The Lane County Fairgrounds contains fifty acres of open space in the middle of one of Eugene's largest residential neighborhoods and is just blocks away from the downtown city center. It is an ideal community gathering place; however, it is almost entirely vacant during weekdays. The Fairgrounds Repair Project will convert this site into a vibrant community resource center.

The repaired fairgrounds will include several defined gathering places, large and small, decorated by local art and/or donated tables and benches. The site will also include play spaces for children, outside basketball and volleyball courts, and a landscaped amphitheater for music concerts or theater. Add the public draw of the farmers' market and walking mall, and instead of being a location that is vacant and targeted by vandalism, the repaired fairgrounds will be a center of activity and productive creativity.

The OSU Extension Service will play a large educational role at the repaired fairgrounds campus. The Extension Service already provides classes in gardening, farmer mentoring, composting, nutrition, food preparation and preservation, all integral parts of the repaired fairgrounds purpose. By enhancing the Extension Service's presence at the fairgrounds and creating more space for hands-on workshops, with a community garden and a plant nursery, it will be possible to increase income streams for the Extension Service, give them a larger role in the community, and perhaps make them an independent and financially viable entity.

Education will not be limited to classes provided by the Extension Service. Space and opportunity will be available to local educational institutions and community groups to hold classes and workshops, particularly those relating to agriculture, environmental landscaping, gardening, waste management, sustainability, cottage industry incubation, and community building. The site will also be open to educational groups visiting from other regions that want to take advantage of the onsite sustainability demonstrations and applications.

Regional and National Destination Site

The repaired fairgrounds will be a one-of-a-kind, cutting edge, zero waste, zero net carbon, zero net energy prototype for sustainable applications and living. At this time, there is nothing in the world to compare to what it can be. It will attract regional and national attention for its applications, educational opportunities, and relocalized community economics. Along with the site's focus on economic stimulus for local enterprise and regional agriculture, the repaired fairgrounds will become a destination for visitors and a popular site for conventions, adding significantly to Eugene's green reputation and its tourism economy.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ecological Landscaping

Below are several of the landscaping strategies planned for the repaired Fairgrounds:

- **The Restoration of the Amazon Creek** will be a central part of the repaired fairgrounds landscaping scheme. A half-mile, east-west stretch of the Amazon Creek bisects the site. Currently this waterway is more a slough for city run-off than a creek. The Metro Waterways Project in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers is already planning to restore the entire length of the Amazon Creek. It is the intention of the Fairgrounds Repair Project to partner with the Metro Waterways Project and provide a detailed planting schedule for the portion of the Amazon Creek that is on fairgrounds. The completed landscaping will create an attractive and economically demonstrative riparian corridor and wetlands.
- **An Eco-Orchard** will be planted on south side of the Amazon Creek in the southwestern corner of the fairgrounds campus. The eco-orchard will mimic a woodland garden with an over-story of tree crops and an understory of shrubs, flowers, and herbs. The trees will be traditionally adapted fruits trees mixed with more exotic fruits like olives, pawpaws, and persimmons. Little known shrub crops like gooseberry and Chinese dogwood will be along the southern portion of the eco-orchard to avoid shading from the larger trees. The understory will consist primarily of herbaceous perennials, selected for their ability to provide fertility, so that the eco-orchard will not need fertilization inputs. In some cases, these understory plants will be edible for humans and/or provide other economic values. The eco-orchard will also include beehives, ducks, and chickens as part of the eco-management system.
- **A Forest Woodland** will be situated in the southeast corner of the fairgrounds' site on both sides of the Amazon Creek. On the south bank, an oak savannah will be created

with a meadow that will transition into a mixed forest system that links into the riparian restoration. The purpose of this project is fundamentally educational. Most of our second growth forests are in sad shape and tree mortality has more than doubled in the last two decades. Pests and disease vectors are becoming epidemic and catastrophic forest fires are increasingly common. There are, however, ways to restore health, old growth characteristics, complexity, diversity, carbon sequestration, and ecological service to our second growth forests. It is these techniques and strategies the forest woodland will address. This forest woodland demonstration will also honor the history of the original inhabitants of this portion of Oregon, mimicking their eco-management of the forest and accenting the non-lumber products that are not currently utilized as part of the forest economy.

- **An Economic Arboretum-Park** will be created as a series of green islands in what is now the Lane County Fairgrounds' central parking lot. This central expanse of asphalt is a huge heat sink and creates a major problem for visitors during the summer months. Breaking up this mass of asphalt with small green displays and arbors will lend to both the beauty and the comfort of the location. The primary purpose of this arboretum park, however, will be the demonstration of new economic opportunities available from plants that can be grown in this region. Our garden climate is friendly to many little known plants of economic significance. Several of these can be grown on marginal non-agricultural lands. Plants for rubber, cork, insulation, fiber, oil, medicine, adhesives, and dyes all have potential as locally grown resources for small industries; thus the wider purpose of the arboretum-park is to provide education for eco-entrepreneurs to launch new green enterprises.
- **A Plant Nursery** will be created in the northwest corner of the fairgrounds. The goal of this nursery will be to produce perennial flowers, herbs, shrubs, vines, and trees, both native and exotic, which are edible or useful economically and ecologically. This will be a specialty nursery that can fill a niche that is largely vacant in Lane County. Its purpose will be to make plants available that are useful rather than simply attractive. This nursery will provide plants both for the grounds and for sale to the public.
- **A Community Garden** will be set back from the riparian zone on the south side of the Amazon Creek between the eco-orchard and the forest woodland. This community garden will be both a public gardening space and a location for gardening classes and workshops. A children's garden, youth garden, and ADA accessible garden will be developed in the northwestern region of the campus as well. Fees for plots in the community garden can offset overhead.
- **A Seed Bank** will be functioning part of the overall landscaping plan. A small seed collection facility will be built near the plant nursery for long-term seed storage and sales. With the help of county agricultural organizations, a seed bank of vegetable varieties with assets suited to our climate can be established—with an accent on year-round and drought tolerant varieties. Since most garden seeds remain viable for only one to five years, the seed bank's long-term storage needs will require vacuum

packing and freezing systems. From a dollars and cents point of view, a seed bank is a real bank. Our Lane County farmers and gardeners will be the beneficiaries of inexpensive high quality seeds and will have a repository to rely on if an unseen calamity should strike.

Appendix B: Individual Buildings

All of the existing buildings will be appraised for energy system efficiency, renewable energy applications, passive design remodeling, and environmental landscaping. (See map page 22.) Below are possible scenarios for the existing buildings and several new ones:

- **The Regional Agricultural Center Office Building** will be built just south of the current Extension Service location. The two-story building will have 15,000 sq. ft. footprint (30,000 sq. ft. of floor space) and will provide offices for the OSU Extension Service, the Lane County Farmers' Market, the Farm Service Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Oregon Department of Agriculture—Weeds and Insect Divisions, the Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, WIC, LCHAY, the School Garden Program, the Nutritional Education Program, and the Forestry Department. The rent paid by these government services and non-profit organizations will be matched to a 20-year construction cost repayment schedule. Because the Extension Service will be playing a significant role in the operation of the repaired fairgrounds, the building will be designed with special emphasis on the classes and workshops that they will provide. The building will include a large auditorium (capacity 200), classrooms, two meeting rooms, twelve office spaces, and an attached greenhouse that will function as both a research facility and a passive source of heat during the cooler months of the year. The current Extension Service office building will be deconstructed to maximize recycling possibilities.
- **The Indoor Year-round Farmers Market** will be located just west of the Regional Agricultural Center and positioned to facilitate easy movement of items between the market and the distribution warehouse. The building will have a 16,000 sq. ft. ground floor and a 6,000 sq. ft. second story with a combined space for 80 vendor stalls and a variety of anchor businesses—such as a fish market, a meat market, a wine bar, a dairy outlet, a bakery, a beanery, a juice bar, a farmers' diner, and perhaps another restaurant or café. Marketplace amenities will include a consignment office, a meeting room, bathroom and shower facilities, a small certified commercial kitchen, a walk-in refrigerator, skylights, and large sliding glass doors that can be opened during times of clement weather to create an open-air feel. Complementing the indoor portion of the market will be an adjacent exterior walking plaza with the capacity to accommodate 20-40 vendor stalls for use during the busy harvest season or when the weather allows. The overall layout would also include street-level loading docks and easy access to electricity and water. Like the financing of the Regional Agricultural Center, the farmers'

market construction cost will be paid off over 20 years by anchor business leases, vendor stall rentals, and a small percentage of gross sales.

- The existing Livestock Pavilion will be remodeled into a **Minimum Processing, Food Storage and Distribution Warehouse**. The Livestock Pavilion is used less than 90 days of the year and is operating at a deficit and screaming for year-round use. Remodeling this space for minimum food processing (sorting, cleaning, sizing, and boxing) and short-term produce storage and distribution is a relatively inexpensive project. It will need a full concrete floor (inside and outside), loading docks, several large refrigerated spaces, and a commercial kitchen.. The warehouse can be a public or leased service facility that can generate income through space rental.
- **A Long-term Grain Storage Facility**, featuring two mid-size grain silos, will be added to the site just north of the minimum processing, storage warehouse. These silos would give Lane County a substantial food reserve. Other than small on-farm silos and Grain Millers’ operation in Eugene, there are very few food quality dry-storage facilities in the south Willamette Valley. This would be considered a public facility sponsored by the city and/or the county.
- **The Lane County Events Center** (approximately 125,000 sq. ft.) will remain one of the most used and financially viable buildings on the site. Aside from landscaping changes for passive heating and cooling, there will be little remodeling to this structure. The HVAC system will be evaluated for increased ventilation efficiency and changes will be made to the Atrium to alleviate excessive heat buildup in the summer months. PV panels and solar hot water heating will be external additions.
- **The Exhibit Halls** along the north bank of the Amazon Creek, east of the Events Center and west of the Ice Rink, are in the worse shape of any structures on the site. These building will be deconstructed and the material recycled. This would take place in stages. One option is to make the Exhibit Halls open air and use them for a temporary covered area for the farmers’ market as it is tested for financial return. With time, and as money allows and the site evolves, a **Walking Mall and Lodge** with a 45,000 sq. ft. footprint will be built on the Exhibit Halls footprint. The new structure will be a three-story building with a natural mud adobe exterior and hanging gardens, designed to showcase various aspects of the emerging “eco-city” paradigm. There will be a first floor boardwalk along the south side of the building. This boardwalk will face the Amazon Creek and will feature storefronts and a café, looking out across the riparian corridor into the eco-orchard. The north face of the building will include a partially covered piazza and walking arcade lined on either side by craft shops or small cottage industries. The second and third floors of this building will be lodging, including 80-100 rooms for visitors to the campus or convention gatherings.
- **The Wheeler Pavilion** (approximately 12,000 sq. ft.) will be upgraded with solar hot water heating, PV panels, a new HVAC system, and ecological landscaping. The immediate grounds will become an example of permaculture design, including a

bamboo grove for sheltered gathering spaces and water catchment devices to create a decorative pond and stream that provide passive cooling.

Appendix C: Year-Round Farmers Market Enhancement Strategies

Essential to the overall operation of the repaired fairgrounds will be creating innovative strategies for linking the commercial success of the farmers' market to the dynamic growth of the local food economy and conceptualizing a thematically consistent mix of culture, services, and commerce to associate with, and draw business to the farmers' market specifically and the site in general. Several such strategies follow:

1. Provide maximum incentives to shop at the market.

The success of the year-round market will depend almost entirely upon the volume of sales it can generate. This, in turn, will depend on a diversity of factors, some of which are listed below:

- Transportation and parking convenience
- Appeal of the cultural setting
- Competitive pricing
- Sales, incentives, bonuses, coupons, free services, etc.
- Balanced diversity of products—meeting as many food needs as possible
- Availability of unique and valued food products
- Sense of community commitment to “buying local”
- Comfort and attractiveness of market facilities
- Having direct personal relationships with farmers and producers
- Special events and ambient culture (street musicians, etc)
- Availability of public spaces that facilitate community connectedness

2. Create a dynamic balance in the uses of the farmers' market.

The farmers' market should not be used for just the sale of local produce, but should have a balanced synergy of uses. The more the uses, and the more these uses fit together to create a coherent whole, the more vibrant the market and its use. The Pike Place Market in Seattle is an example of a vibrant, multi-purpose market space having a farmers' market at its core.

Examples of complimentary functions that might find space at the year-round farmers' market or at other locations on the repaired fairgrounds' site include the following:

- Retail sales of fresh produce, dairy, mushrooms, honey, seafood, etc.
- Wholesale food sales to institutional buyers, restaurants, or other markets
- Sales of locally processed foods
- Sales of nursery plants and vegetable starts
- Spaces for music and street performance
- Spaces for local culture creative art and sculpture

- Gathering spaces for meetings, forums, food demonstrations, etc.
- Garden and home craft sales
- Small restaurants/food stands
- Office space for agriculture/sustainability oriented organizations
- Tea shops, herbal shops, fair trade food import shops, etc.
- Green products shops
- Kiosk space for posters and notices
- Space for publications sales

3. Eliminate vendor fees—support market with public revenue.

The value of money is in its use. The more money is put into use in a local community, the greater it facilitates economic activity. The more the local economic activity, the greater the tax base.

Active development of a local food system hub, connected with related initiatives to build a local food economy, could stimulate greater economic growth—per dollar of public incentives—than any other sector of economic activity. With this in mind, there is compelling rationale for providing public funding for the fairgrounds agricultural hub—this funding coming from the steadily increasing tax base created by the growing local agricultural economy.

One way to direct this public funding, so as to gain maximum advantage from such expenditures, would include the following elements:

- Vendor fees would be subsidized by the County. This would serve to lower market food prices, thereby increasing sales volume, and further increasing the County’s tax revenue base.
- Some of the County subsidies would be given in the form of payments to the OSU Extension Service. This would insure a steady revenue base for the Extension Service and maximize the incentive for the Extension Service to aggressively support and help develop the Lane agricultural economy.

4. Insure easy and frequent use of food stamps.

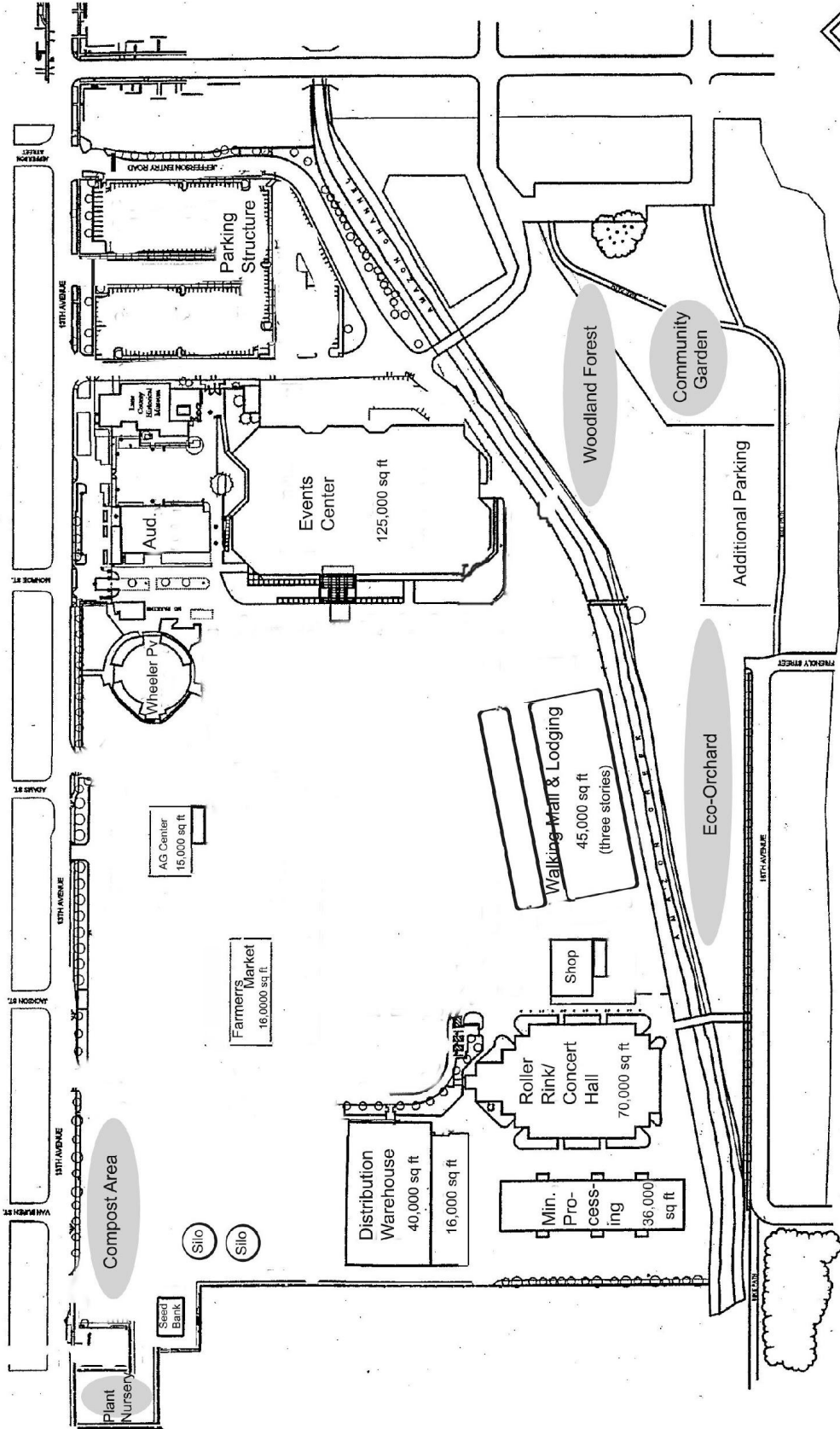
More economic stimulus results from public funds allocated for food stamps use than any other stimulus measure. If food stamps are used to purchase locally grown and/or processed foods, their stimulus value becomes far greater due to the “local economic multiplier” effect.

Acceptance of Oregon Trail Card purchases can be difficult to accommodate for individual farmers, CSAs, and satellite markets, as they may not have capacity to handle credit card type purchases. The year-round farmers’ market will arrange checkout payment in a way that makes Oregon Trail Card purchases easy and convenient. There will also be a developed mix of incentives and conveniences to attract food stamps users to shop frequently at the farmers’ market.

Appendix D: Proposed Site Plan

The site plan on the page which follows offers a vision of how major elements of the Fairgrounds Repair Project proposal could be situated.

Lane County Fairgrounds Repair Project



Rough Scale: length of farmers market = 200 ft