



**Walter E. Long – Travis County Expo Center
Market & Feasibility Study Community Meeting
Travis County Expo Center, Banquet Hall
Wed, Aug 27, 2014, 6:30pm**

Community Input Notes

The following information is a summary of the community input received at the public meeting held on August 27, 2014:

Question 1: How can the Expo Center be better utilized?

- Needs a complete makeover
- Needs new facilities, like an additional multi-purpose building
- Needs better access
 - Currently just local service roads
 - Need better internal circulation roads
 - Getting around and managing traffic both concerns
 - Better public transportation
- More and larger facilities to accommodate horses (additional stalls)
- Need someone working full-time to attract and retain vendors and events
- Addition of 4-H farm/activity space
- Improved facilities for the Rodeo
 - More space for events
 - Additional/ improved facilities and arenas
 - Larger main arena
 - Equestrian shows/ other livestock shows
 - New arenas
 - More organized arenas for show staging/ improved flow of events
 - Flexible arenas that can be broken up into smaller spaces for equestrian shows or small animal (sheep, goat) shows
- Integrate Local Community
- Involve the surrounding community/neighborhoods in events to provide employment
- Can also provide an educational component for the surrounding community – in particular in agricultural areas
- Agricultural Headquarters
 - 4H, FFA headquarters
 - Need to bring back agricultural prominence to Central Texas
- Ensure the facilities allow for growth. The more revenue that comes in, the more than can go out to those in need with respect to programs/events organized by Rodeo Austin.

- Have multiple buildings that all have multiple uses. This will encourage use by more groups/events in addition to Rodeo Austin.
- Host sporting events and tournaments that draw participants from across the state.
- Consider the traffic impact, safety, access, and sidewalks in combination with new facilities and event options. Create pedestrian overpasses to give individuals to safely access property from across surrounding roadways.
- Address the lack of medical facilities available in the vicinity.
- Ensure infrastructure is adequate to support multiple uses.
- Add an amphitheater.
- Address parking by using multi-story garages to better utilize space. Also design first floor of garages to be capable of events.
- Host science fairs to encourage youth to see/use the space.
- Add more seating to facilities to draw bigger name events and entertainers so the ticket price can remain affordable.
- Make sure the surrounding community is still able to access the area and services (particularly public safety) when large events are taking place.
- Make the facilities attractive to professional sports teams.
- Build a new multi-purpose arena for:
 - Trade shows
 - Conventions
 - Build-on recreational facilities for camping, ball fields, outdoor open events – concerts, park development
 - Diversity events
 - Hike & Bike – equestrian trails
- Renovate what is here/covered arena
- Better internal road system for Decker Lake – 290/FM 969
- Renovate existing & add new event center
- Existing HVAC system needs to be updated
- New convention center with a hotel
- New commercial areas can stimulate economic development for area neighborhoods
- New facility needs to stimulate new hotel & eating facilities
- Renovation of Luedcke Arena (enlargement – look at Bryan & College Station)
- Attract large horse – world class-at State Capitol
- Attract local youth to Expo grounds
- Hospital facilities

Question 2: How can the parkland be better utilized?

- Reinvent the park as a “Zilker Park East” with similar amenities
- Program more events
- New gun range
- Skate park addition
- More children’s outdoor activities
- Amphitheater
- Equestrian trails
- Fields and facilities for more sports; track meets, dog areas, soccer, etc.
- Expand/relocate/improve R/V park
- Public gardens and/or city arboretum
- Water features, interactive fountains
- Firework events
- Museum or library facility (appropriate for location- Texas heritage, horses, etc.)
- Add an amphitheater

- Incorporate medical facilities
- Add a hotel to support events
- Expand RV and overnight facilities
- Add playground equipment
- Host regional fairs/carnivals/circus (mobile entertainment)
- Build facilities to attract youth.
- Draw Erwin Center type crowds
- Add hike/bike trails and paved trails that make the park/event facilities accessible for individuals in surrounding area.
- Mirror the Zilker Park atmosphere... include aspects to allow for plays, music venues, kids activities, etc.
- Amenities for the local community
- Sports Fields – Soccer, Football, Baseball
- Facilities associated with an Agricultural headquarters
- Trails – Equestrian, Hiking, Biking, Cross-Country
- Staging Area – Space for vehicle/equipment/ trailer staging for rodeo, equestrian or other events
- Relaxation/Breakout Area – An area for rodeo, equestrian or other event participants or visitors to picnic, relax, quiet time
- RV Camping
 - General camping
 - A place to bring a horse for an overnight stay and trail riding
 - A place for event participants to stage, be housed during events
- Terraces stage – for entertainment events
- Attract new events from downtown

Question 3: What do you have concerns about?

- ROT Rally and similar events that produce lots of noise (unless noise can be mitigated)
- Nuclear facilities or similar nuisance uses
- Do not privatize park and facilities that would limit access
- Need an economic anchor for the area
- Respect the HUD Sustainable Communities process
- Incorporate surrounding communities into the new uses
 - Traffic
 - With large events there are typically numerous accidents.
 - Traffic management needs improvement
- Conflicting Events – Don't schedule events that are not compatible – example: Horse Show versus Monster Truck Show
- Conflicting Dates – Improve scheduling, ensure no conflicting dates for events
- Non-family oriented events – would like the facility to be used for family oriented events only
- Transportation/traffic concerns
- Need outreach to local neighborhoods for the youth – more activities & employment
- Higher taxes?
- Income levels – rental vs. ownership around the Expo Center.
- Sufficient Resources to maintain
- Who would run it/manage new facility?
- Funding
- How about the small stakeholders? Will they get priced out of the market?

Question 4: Who else should be here that is not?

- More neighborhood representation, more associations
- All current Expo Center users/vendors
- Former Expo Center users/vendors
- Commercial uses impacted by activity at the site
- ROT Rally representatives
- Lone Star Car show
- PARD staff members responsible for Zilker and Auditorium Shores oversight
- PARD Special Events Manager
- Zilker users - Vendors and citizens/visitors
- Area Landholders – adjacent large tract land owners
- School Districts
- 4H, FFA
- Additional Horse Groups
- Travis County Youth Show
- Other Facility users – all groups that have used the facility in the past
- Running Clubs
- Bluebonnet Society/Humane Society
- Agave, Colony Park, Trinity Meadows, Woodlands, Imperial Drive, new communities on 973.
- ROT Rally
- Running Organizations
- Central Texas Dressage Association
- FFA
- ACTHA – Competitive Horse Organization
- Hilton
- Lance Armstrong Organization/Live Strong Organization

Other notes on site needs:

- Should provide more jobs for the neighborhood, particularly the youth
- Should consider joint parking (park and Expo Center)
- Should address any safety issues
 - Develop an Advisory Board as the project moves forward
 - Assist in design, prioritizing changes, fund raising