

# Revised Master Plan for the Lincoln County Commons

February 2019

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# Executive Summary



The Lincoln County Commons, “Home of the Lincoln County Fair,” has been an important gathering place for community events and celebrations in Lincoln County for more than 100 years. In addition to the Fair, the Commons is home to many other public and private events throughout the year. The County’s vision is for the Commons to continue its role as an important gathering place that offers a variety of venues that serve county residents and attract new activities and opportunities. The purpose of the Revised Master Plan for the Lincoln County Commons is to determine which existing facilities will be improved or removed, design a new multipurpose building and other ancillary facilities, and develop a management and operations plan that will sustain the Commons over time.

Key improvements in the Revised Master Plan include:

- New **multipurpose building** that replaces the existing Main Hall
- New, partially **covered pavilion** to replace indoor and outdoor Arena facilities
- Renovated **Floral Building** to serve as the new location for 4-H meetings and activities
- New, relocated **Livestock Barn** to continue housing animal activities
- A new **gateway** feature at the corner of 3rd Street and Harney Street to welcome visitors to the Commons
- A new **stage**, outdoor **plazas** and expansive **lawn areas** for the community to enjoy

# Introduction



Figure 1. Lincoln County Fair, 1919. Image Credit: Lincoln County Historical Society

## Background

The Lincoln County Commons, "Home of the Lincoln County Fair," has been an important gathering place for community events and celebrations in Lincoln County for more than 100 years. In addition to the Fair, the Commons is home to many other public and private events throughout the year. The Fair is the largest event at the Commons each year and celebrated its centennial in 2008.

While the Fair remains dear to the heart of the community, the event has struggled over the past decade with declining attendance and revenues. In addition, many of the facilities at the Commons have outlived their usefulness, with buildings, utilities and grounds suffering from years of deferred maintenance and neglect.

In 2009, the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners assumed control of the Commons from the Fair Board, maintaining a commitment to host the annual County Fair. As part of that commitment, the County engaged in a multi-year master planning process and developed financial resources for implementation. The initial master plan was completed in 2014.

## Lincoln County Commons "Home of the Lincoln County Fair"

### Vision and Mission Statement

Our **vision** is to see the Lincoln County Commons (formerly the Lincoln County Fairgrounds) become an important gathering place for Lincoln County.

Our **mission** is to offer a variety of venues which will make the Lincoln County Commons a preferred destination for residents and visitors.

Our **core values** are to respect traditions of the past and cast new directions for the future with a focus on youth.

Our **strategic areas of focus** for the Lincoln County Commons are the activities contemplated in the ORS 565.230: The Lincoln County Commons shall "be utilized to the fullest extent for pleasure, recreation and public benefit and for the holding of any exhibitions, shows, carnivals, circuses, dances, entertainments or public gatherings."

Our **strategic goals** are to facilitate the development of venues to realize our strategic areas of focus. Our action plans will be developed between the Fair Board, the Lincoln County Commissioners and the citizens of Lincoln County.

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After significant research and deliberation, the Commissioners determined that the current site just north of Highway 20 along Harney Street (Figure 2) will continue to serve as the location for the Commons. The County vision is for the Commons to continue its role as an important gathering place that offers a variety of venues that serve county residents and attract new activities and opportunities. To realize the vision and mission, financing has been secured through two voter-approved measures:

- In 2007, a Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) increase was approved by voters with a portion of the revenues dedicated to tourism and funding a Fairgrounds Facilities Improvement Fund. This contribution generates approximately \$328,000 per year annually for capital investments in the Commons facility.
- The 2016 TLT increase (Measure 21-165) was approved by voters to increase the County lodging tax by 1% with revenues secured for Fairgrounds redevelopment. Staff anticipates that this will generate approximately \$274,000 annually.

The County has saved \$2.75 million of TLT funds dedicated to development of the Commons over the last several years for capital costs of new development at the Commons. In addition, the County currently has about \$600,000 in dedicated Transient Lodging Tax revenues in Fiscal Year 2017-2018, an amount that is expected to grow with growth in overall TLT revenues. These funds, in addition to revenue from events at the Commons, will be used to cover capital costs of new facilities at the Commons and operational costs of running the Commons.

In addition, the City of Newport's Urban Renewal Plan identifies up to \$3 million in utility, road and off-site infrastructure upgrades.

The Revised Master Plan for the Lincoln County Commons provides a roadmap for achieving the vision and mission by determining which existing facilities will be improved or removed,

designing a new multipurpose building and other ancillary facilities, and developing a management and operations plan that will sustain the Commons over time.

## Process

The Lincoln County Commons Refined Master Plan process was designed to reach stakeholders throughout the county in a collaborative effort to capture the community's vision for the Commons. A Master Plan Visioning Committee (MPVC) was convened to guide the development of site facility alternatives and provide recommendations on key project issues and decisions. A compilation of meeting summaries and results of other public outreach efforts can be found in Appendix A.

The process began with an inventory of existing and planned facilities, and a detailed assessment of the structural and architectural conditions of Commons facilities and infrastructure. A market study identified the type and scale of revenue-generating events a new multipurpose building could potentially attract. The results of these efforts were summarized in an Existing Conditions report and presented to the MPVC in January 2018. At the same time, qualitative data about key issues and opportunities for the Commons was collected through the MPVC meeting, interviews with more than 40 stakeholders and an online survey completed by 46 community members. This information was added to the final Existing Conditions report.

Based on the results of the report and MPVC discussions, a draft site and facilities plan to achieve the community vision for the Commons was developed, including design for a new multipurpose building and covered pavilion. Concurrently, the planning team quantified expected revenues from TLT funds to pay for site and facility improvements. A comparison of the estimated cost of improvements and expected revenues showed that improvement costs would exceed revenues, and therefore, the site and facilities plan would need to be revised to align costs and revenues. This information



Figure 2. Aerial Image of the Lincoln County Commons



Figure 2. MPVC Meeting, March 2018.

was presented to the MPVC in March 2018 and at a joint meeting of the Fair Board and Board of County Commissioners in April 2018. Public comment was taken at both meetings.

The planning team revised the draft site and facilities plan by reducing the size of the multipurpose building and pavilion, resulting in a plan that could be paid for through expected TLT revenues. The MPVC reviewed and commented on the plan in June 2018 and additional public comment was taken. The planning team made revisions based on those comments and then presented the plan at a series of three public open houses convened in Yachats, Toledo and Lincoln City. In addition, a community-wide, online questionnaire was completed by 32 community members. A fourth presentation was made at a regular meeting of the Newport Urban Renewal Committee. Further refinements were made to the plan based on public comments. Concurrently, the planning team drafted a comprehensive business plan for the management and operations of the Commons. The planning team then prepared a refined draft master plan which combined the revised site plan and comprehensive business plan.

The refined draft Master Plan was presented at the fourth MPVC meeting in November 2018. MPVC members asked for an additional meeting to discuss final details of the Plan, including the location of the Pavilion and Livestock Barn. The Committee meet on January 24th and came

to a majority recommendation to recommend the Plan for adoption. The Plan was reviewed and adopted by the Fair Board and the Board of County Commissioners at a joint meeting on February 22, 2019.

## Current Facilities and Uses

The study area focus of the Refined Master Plan study includes the primary Lincoln County Commons site and a secondary site on adjacent land on the east side of Harney Street. The Commons includes all Fairgrounds facilities, bounded by 3rd Street on the south, 7th Street on the North, Harney Street on the East and Newport High School on the West. The secondary site consists of county-owned land across Harney Street between Yaquina Heights Drive and NE 7th Street. The secondary site includes parking areas for Lincoln County Transit, the Lincoln County Animal Shelter, the Lincoln County Road Department and some vacant land.

Commons facilities are used heavily each July during the three-day Lincoln County Fair. Other than the year-round thrift shop located on-site in the Floral Building, most facilities are underutilized throughout the remainder of the year, hosting occasional 4-H activities or events, or being used for storage.

The Commons site was originally configured with a large lawn area fronting onto 3rd Street with exhibit buildings and barns arranged along the west, north and east sides and the outdoor rodeo arena farther to the north. The removal of a large central horse barn and addition of the Floral Building behind the Main Exhibit Hall has resulted in a disjointed arrangement of buildings and several pedestrian walkways that no longer seem appropriate. This is substantiated by no strong desire articulated by the County and the community to preserve any particular building in the master planning process. An assessment of the condition and location of the nine existing facilities is summarized on page 6 and illustrated in Figure 3.



- 1. STAGE
- 2. MAIN EXHIBIT HALL
- 3. HORSE BARN REMNANT/ STORAGE SHED
- 4. FLORAL BUILDING (THRIFT SHOP)
- 5. RABBIT BARN/ STORAGE SHED
- 6. RIDING ARENA
- 7. 4-H/ LIVESTOCK BARN
- 8. 4-H BUILDING AND RESTROOMS
- 9. OUTDOOR ARENA

- GOOD CONDITION
- FAIR CONDITION
- POOR CONDITION

Figure 3. Lincoln County Commons Existing Conditions

The following is a list of existing facilities at the Lincoln County Commons:

1. Stage. This structure is in fair condition. In the long term, it could be replaced or possibly relocated, but based on its location near the southwest corner, it might be maintained in its current location for the short term.
2. Main Exhibit Hall. The Exhibit Hall is in poor condition and would need significant repairs to serve as an assembly building for the long term. The internal columns limit its potential use as large event space. With a central location and large footprint, the Exhibit Hall may adversely affect future site development if renovated.
3. Horse Barn Remnant/Storage Shed. The structure appears to be in good shape. However, the Horse Barn Remnant is located near the center of the site, potentially a key location for future development.
4. Floral Building (Thrift Shop). While the facility is in good condition, it is located near the center of the site and may impact ideal site configuration.
5. Rabbit Barn/Storage Shed. With significant repairs required, limited use, and its central location, it is a prime candidate to be removed, with the rodeo power panels to be relocated.
6. Riding Arena. The Riding Arena is in poor condition and, since the initial Building Conditions report, one of the roof purlins has failed causing additional concern about the structural integrity of the building.
7. 4-H/Livestock Barn. Located on the east property line toward the southern end, it may not be in the way of planned development, and due to its fair condition, may be worth renovating for future use.
8. 4-H-Building and Restrooms. While it may not significantly impact development in more central areas of the site, it is in poor condition and unattractive as the first building visible when approaching the site.
9. Outdoor Arena. The arena is located on prime property near the middle of the site where its relatively large footprint isolates the open areas further north from the remainder of the site. Since the facility has minimal structures it is a prime candidate for relocation to the north end of the site, where the soils are not appropriate for more extensive development.

# Site and Facilities Plan

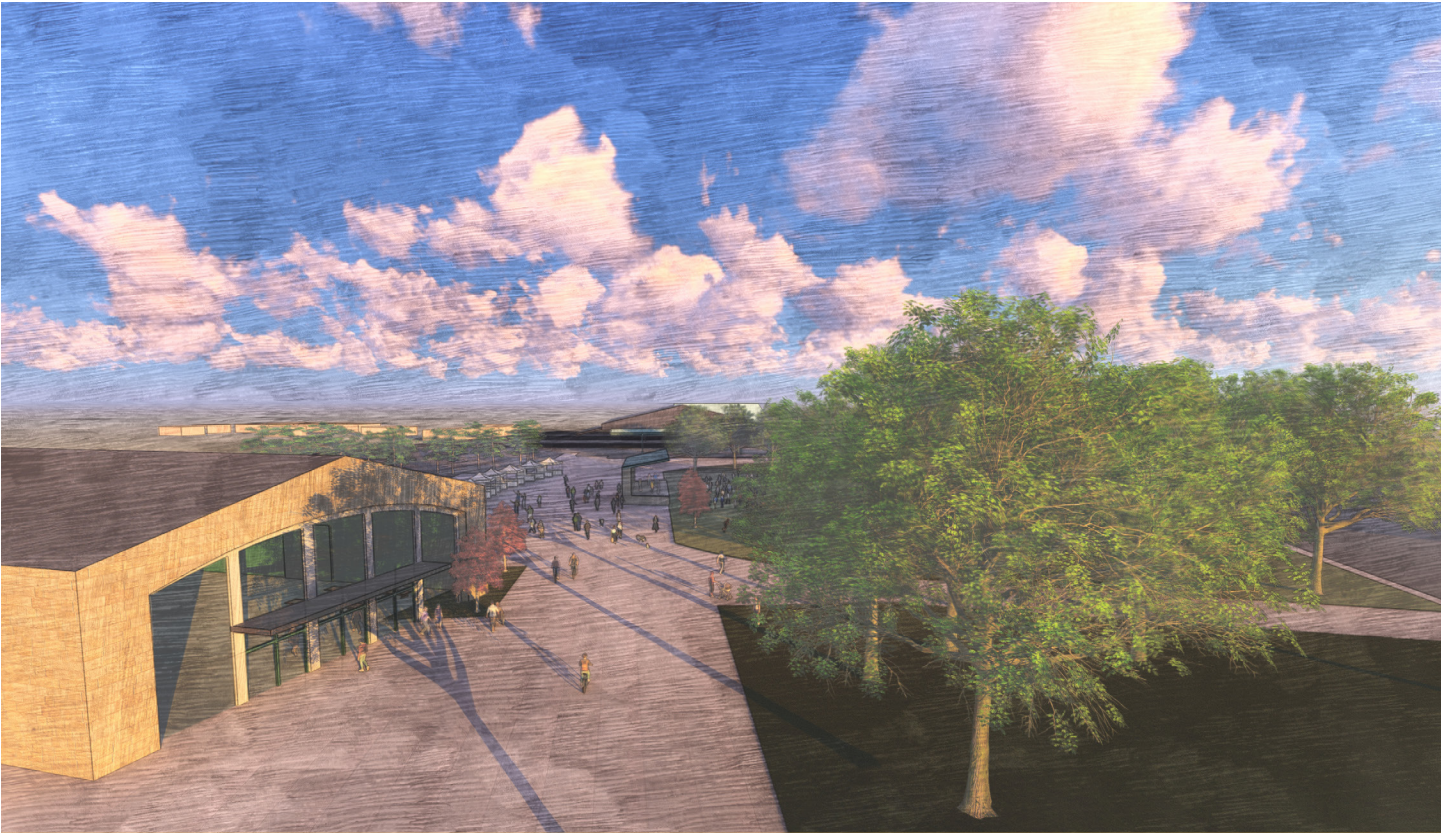


Figure 4. Commons Conceptual Diagram

The Site and Facilities Plan for redevelopment of the Lincoln County Commons is illustrated in Figure 4 and includes the key improvements described below.

## New Facilities

### Multipurpose Building

The multipurpose building, identified as a key component of the 2014 master plan, will accommodate a host of local needs and offers the potential to attract larger events associated with tourism to the county. Stakeholders expressed interest in exploring the feasibility of using the Multi-Use Building as an emergency shelter.

The 15,000 sf building will include a 10,000 sf clear-span assembly and exhibit space, meeting rooms and a business office. The building will have a commercial kitchen with hood, range, refrigeration and dishwashing station, restrooms and a storage area for tables, chairs, pipe and drape, podiums, etc. The steel frame building with masonry exterior will have a metal roof and entry canopy. Overhead doors will be used for loading and connection to outdoor spaces. The public (east) façade will include storefront glazing and an entry system. Interior floors will be polished concrete in the main hall, polished concrete resilient or tile flooring in kitchen and restrooms, and carpet in the meeting rooms and office. The facility will use acoustical ceilings throughout and a heating, cooling and fire sprinkler system.

## Pavilion Building

Community and stakeholder engagement efforts also revealed the need for a covered, open-air pavilion to accommodate animal activities and other potential outdoor activities that require shelter from the rain and wind, but do not need heated indoor space, such as motorized events and concerts.

The 20,000 sf pre-engineered steel building with metal roofing and siding will include will include 16,250 sf of clear span assembly area expandable to 26,000 sf with 18 ft eave height. Lower perimeter structures will contain restrooms, concessions and storage. The entire facility will have lighting, ventilation and a dry pipe fire sprinkler system. Restrooms and concessions will be heated.

## Livestock Barn

The current Livestock Barn will be torn down and replaced with a new livestock barn at the north end of the site, adjacent to the Pavilion.

## Renovated Facilities

### Floral Building

As the home of the Lincoln County Fair, the Lincoln County Commons hosts the County's 4-H program, funded and staffed by the Oregon State University Extension Program. The 4,725 sf Floral Building will become the new home for the 4-H program, making it available for meetings and events throughout the year as well as for small animal displays during the County Fair. Renovations will include replacing the exterior restroom structure with new single-user men's and women's restrooms inside the building. The west 'pole barn' portion of the building will be insulated, heated and ventilated, and a full HVAC system will be installed in the east portion of the building. All lighting will be replaced with LED fixtures.

## Landscaping

The landscape for Lincoln County Commons shall integrate functional uses, such as stormwater and parking lot plantings, with recreational uses, in the form of flexible open spaces, while incorporating aesthetic uniformity. In addition to greenspaces, the landscape for the site includes hardscaping and fencing which shall follow the same principals of aesthetics, function and uniformity. All site improvements are illustrated in (Figure 5).

### Stormwater

Stormwater planting will be installed at parking lots and on the edges of imperious hardscape areas. Stormwater planting shall be integrated with other plantings. Plant selection should include plants that are typical for stormwater planters but are also favorable for the coastal climate.

### Parking Lots

Trees and shrubs will be installed in the interior and exterior of parking lots. Heights of the shrubs in the interior of the parking lots shall be no taller than two to three feet for visibility and safety. Depending on the adjacent uses to the parking lot, exterior landscape may incorporate taller and denser shrubs.

### Screening

The site is surrounded by residential, schools and commercial. Landscape screening will be installed at the interfaces with the school field and where parking lots are adjacent to residential.



Figure 5. Lincoln County Commons Site Improvements

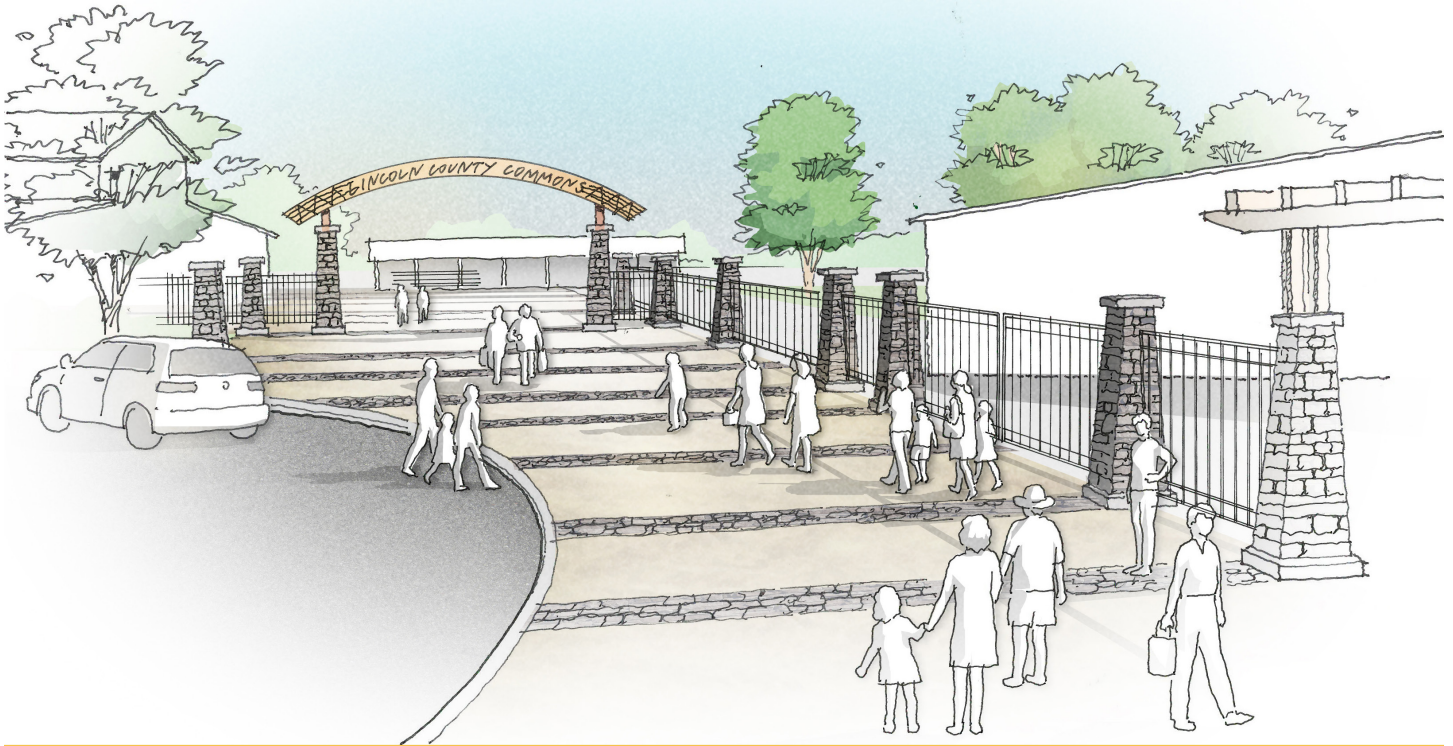


Figure 6. Commons Main Entrance

## The Main Entrance

The entrance to Lincoln County Commons shall be inviting and visually attractive. Gateway entry columns and gateway entry structure will be installed to create a pleasant experience for all user's year round. Figure 6 depicts a view looking northwest from the corner of NE 3rd Street and NE Harney Street through the entrance to the multipurpose building.

## Fencing

Permanent and removable fencing shall be used at the Commons to comply with state law and facilitate efficient and orderly operations of the site. However, common areas will be made available to the public on a daily basis when those spaces have not been reserved for events.

At the main entry, permanent fencing shall be stone or brick columns with wrought iron

gates and fences that gives a sense of arrival and grand entrance. The use of columns and fencing also would be used along NE Harney Street on the east side of the Commons Green with removal panels. Removal panel are to be left open when events are not scheduled. Permanent fencing located around the perimeter of the site, maintenance areas and other locations that is not wrought iron shall be black powder coated chain link fence.

Overall, common guidelines for planting, hardscape, fencing as well as lighting and site furnishings shall be incorporated into the Commons. Plantings shall enhance common views and entrances, while obstructing areas that are used for maintenance. The plant palate shall comprise of maintenance friendly plants that are native to the area and can resist wind and salt. Hardscape and fencing materials shall be consistent throughout the site.

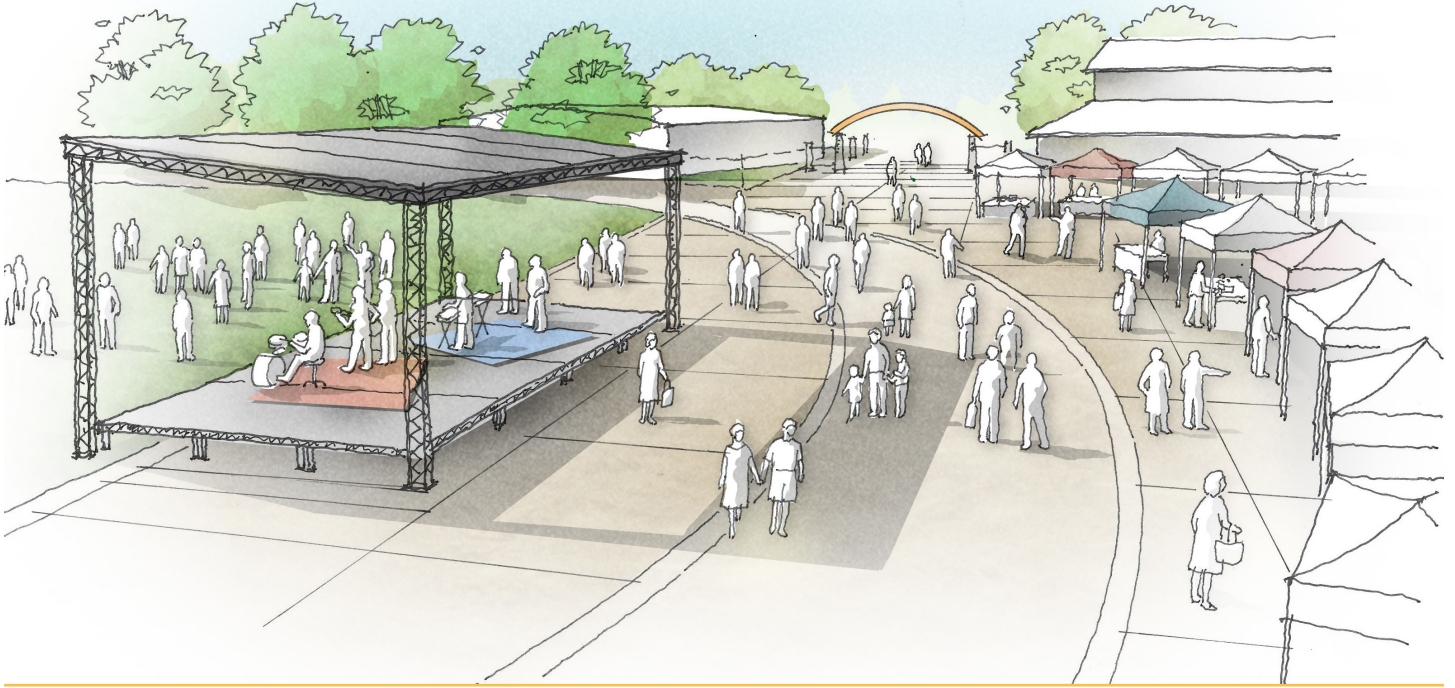


Figure 7. Commons Green and Plaza

## Flexible Green Spaces

Open lawn areas will be designed to encourage use by the community when an event is not scheduled. During events, the Commons Green space can be used for concerts, lawn games, and theatrical performances. Other flexible spaces can function as overflow parking. Lawn area shall be easy to maintain. Figure 7 is an illustration Commons Green and Commons Plaza, including a new, mobile stage that can be used in various locations on the grounds and inside the Multipurpose Building.

## Hardscape

Hardscape will be installed throughout the grounds to promote access by pedestrians and vehicles. Hardscape surfaces shall connect entrances to all buildings and the plaza. At the main entry, install hardscape bands that match the fence and gate columns, to enhance entrance. The hardscape for the plaza shall be durable for events such as markets, food carts, and gatherings. For vehicles to access the plaza and the stage near the Commons Green, install vehicle hardscape and demarcated with concrete bands. The hardscape throughout the site should have a consistent aesthetic.

## Infrastructure

To accommodate the facility renovations and a new multipurpose building and pavilion, the following infrastructure improvements are needed at the Commons. These improvements are described below and illustrated in Figure 8.

### Water

A new water main will be routed through site and generally follow the sanitary sewer routing while meeting the minimum separation requirements of the Oregon Plumbing Code. Hydrants and Fire Department Connections (FDCs) will be located appropriately for fire truck access. The following number of FDCs are proposed for each existing and planned structures:

- New multipurpose building (1)
- New Livestock Barn (1)
- Existing 4-H Building (1)
- New pavilion structure (1)

A water flow test at nearby hydrants that surround site is required to identify the existing static and residual pressure in the area.

### Sanitary Sewer

The existing sanitary sewer main that currently traverses site will be decommissioned in place or removed if applicable (i.e. building foundations). The new sanitary sewer will be conveyed towards the northwest and follow a similar alignment to the existing sewer. Two existing sanitary laterals which convey flow from the east and enter site from NE Harney will be maintained including an existing manhole located north of the Livestock Barn. Five new lateral connections are proposed for each existing and planned structures as follows:

- New multipurpose building (1)
- Existing Livestock Barn (1)
- Existing 4-H Building (1)
- New pavilion structure (2)

### Storm Drainage

The City of Newport has confirmed that the proposed development will require storm water run-off to be treated and detained utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) best management practices. Three (3) separate storm facility locations have been proposed. Site storm water run-off will be conveyed to the storm facilities where treatment will take place. Detention will occur at the surface where applicable with an option to detain below ground if necessary. A downstream analysis will be performed to determine if the existing system is suitably sized.

### Power

A long-term power plan will be developed in coordination with the Central Lincoln People's Utility District (PUD). A central point on-site must be identified for a distribution substation to be sized to convey electricity to all locations on-site with future development in-mind. All overhead power lines will be removed and put underground.

- Create long-term power plan
- Install site substation and transformers
- Remove overhead power lines; install underground conduit system

### Gas

A gas connection is proposed for the new multipurpose building to support HVAC and kitchen requirements.

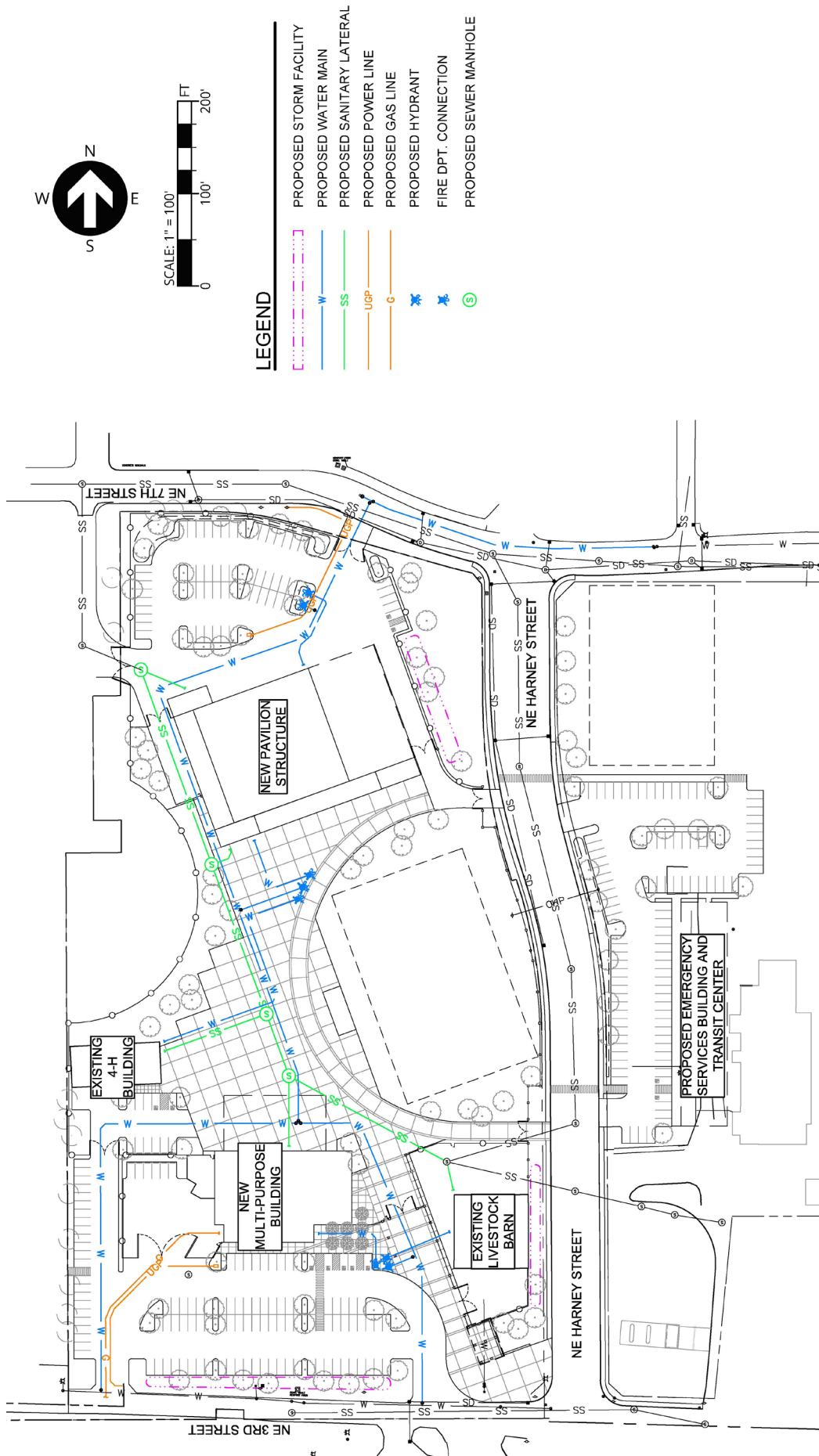


Figure 8. Commons Preliminary Utility Plan

## Parking

### Refined Master Plan Parking Layout

A new parking lot will be constructed on the south portion of the site near the new multipurpose building and existing 4-H building and include 131 parking spaces. A more informal parking lot will be constructed on the north portion of the site near the new pavilion and include 54 parking spaces. These will serve as the primary parking areas during events at either the multipurpose building or at the pavilion. Events that occupy both facilities at capacity simultaneously will require use of the overflow parking areas on the Commons Plaza.

Future development on the east side of NE Harney Street may include paved parking for approximately 104 vehicles. This lot would be used daily by the surrounding County facilities and as overflow parking during special events. The open space on the east side of NE Harney Street south of NE 7th Street also may be used as overflow parking and could include up to 60 spaces. On-street parking is also available around the site on NE 7th Street and NE Harney Street, totaling approximately 50 spaces.

## Traffic Circulation

### Traffic Circulation To/From the Site

The preferred route for general public traffic circulation to/from the site is via the US20/Harney Street intersection. General use of this intersection will limit traffic on the residential streets west and south of the site. There is currently “Fairground” wayfinding signage at the US20/Harney Street intersection and the US101/NE 6th Street intersection; both are signalized. NE 6th Street serves the residential area between the site and US101, and also as a primary route to the High School. NE 6th Street is also a designated bike route between the High School and NW Coast Street along the beach frontage. Wayfinding signage for the “Fairgrounds” should be moved to the US101/US20 signalized intersection. Alternatively, local residents may

use the local street grid network south, west and north of the site.

### Traffic Circulation Around the Site

The Refined Master Plan site design includes two driveways to the southerly parking area from NE 3rd Street, and three driveways to the northerly parking area from NE 7th Street, from NE Grant Street, and from NE Harney Street. The City may want to limit use of the driveway on NE Grant Street, a residential street serving two homes.

Traffic circulation around the site will depend on where an event is located (multipurpose building or pavilion) and the number of attendees. Signage should be provided informing attendees both parking lots are available, particularly if an event is expected to fill the parking lot closest to it. Attendees are likely to first circulate the parking area closest to the event, prior to circulating back to NE Harney Street and the parking lot on the opposite side of the site.

The driveways and parking lots have been designed to accommodate truck access (WB-62 design vehicle) to the loading areas at the multipurpose building and at the pavilion (Appendix B).

### Yearly Fair Special Event Circulation and Parking

The Fair Board should discuss and plan how the master plan site layout would best serve the yearly Fair. Of particular interest to event circulation and parking is the closure of NE Harney Street during the Fair. Planning for the Fair Event should prioritize keeping most or all Fair activities and facilities on the main site, and to keep NE Harney Street open to traffic circulation. NE Harney Street is the primary route to/from the highway and should remain open to allow circulation to areas north of the site for street parking and parking at the Middle School. If NE Harney Street closure is needed during the Fair, traffic should be directed to use NE Eads Street via Highway 20 as NE Eads Street provides more direct access to the public parking areas noted below.



Figure 9. Tents at the Lincoln County Commons.

Public Works and Transit parking should continue to be temporarily relocated to off-site locations during Fair Week, to maintain the parking area on the east side of NE Harney Street for Fair needs.

The high school parking area should continue to be the primary, close-proximity public parking area during Fair Week. Continued use of the Middle School parking area and Newport Prep Academy parking area should be continued with shuttle service provided. Circulation of the local neighborhood and on-street parking during peak Fair hours will likely continue, as folks will seek parking as close to the Fair as possible. Large public parking areas and shuttle service should be prominently displayed with wayfinding signage to inform attendees of these options.

In addition, walking and bicycling to the Fair should be encouraged. The Fair should be

active informing the general public of quality pedestrian and bicycle routes to/from the Fair and areas north, south and west of town. The Fair Board should consider financial incentive to attendees who walk or bike (i.e. Free snow cone). Also, free public transit service to the Fair during Fair Week should be considered.

## Noise Impact

The sources of potential noise in the Refined Master Plan include:

1. Events in the covered pavilion
2. Open space, common green and picnic areas activities
3. Open area events on gravel multi-use areas
4. The multipurpose building and HVAC associated with the multipurpose building

The covered pavilion hosts equestrian, motocross, livestock, music, shows, and other large public events. This is likely the loudest location on the site and requires the most careful planning to mitigate noise. Location of this pavilion is key to successful noise control. The pavilion should be oriented and designed to reduce sound levels in certain directions, particularly west and north. This can be accomplished by careful layout of walls or other construction which reduce direct sound to the closest receivers. The bleachers, for instance, can be designed to have a solid back, blocking the noise toward the West.

The pavilion public address system should be designed to control sound leakage. Orienting all event speakers away from sensitive listeners (i.e. pointing east) and providing speakers which are tuned and designed to minimize off-axis energy are the keys to this design. Another element which should be in place is high quality acoustical absorption under the roof of the pavilion, exposed to the event area. Sound will be controlled by the large surface area of the ceiling, which will reduce noise at the source.

Open areas have a wide variety of noise sources, from fans cheering, to live music playing at a fair, to PA announcements at events. The open areas are calculated to be a potential noise problem in the worst-case scenario with live music, but are likely relatively quiet during typical fair events, and louder events can be mitigated by rules and regulations. Since there is effectively no barrier between the open areas and sensitive

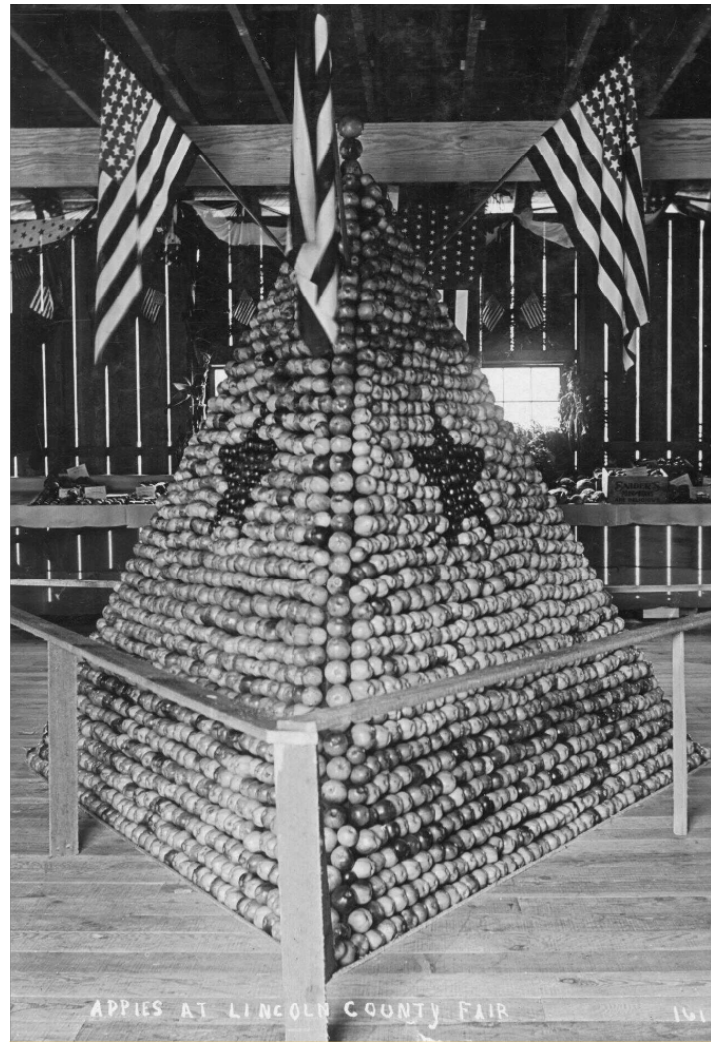


Figure 10. Apples at the Lincoln County Fair

areas nearby, the rules and regulations for use must be strictly enforced, or variances should be obtained. Acoustical barriers around open areas can reduce sound levels significantly but may be undesirable in terms of openness and site lines.

The multipurpose building is enclosed, and as long as the doors remain closed, any interior sound can be mitigated by the exterior walls, etc. HVAC noise comes from rooftop or ground mounted large fan units and condensing units/coolers used to control the climate within enclosed buildings. The HVAC noise from the multipurpose roof will be reduced in level by being placed away from the south side of the roof, and by employing rooftop barriers, if deemed necessary.

A detailed Noise Impact Report can be found in Appendix C.

# Implementation

**Table 1. Cost Estimates for Lincoln County Commons Improvements**

Project	Cost
Construction Costs	\$8,300,000
<i>Multipurpose building</i>	\$3,375,000
<i>Pavilion</i>	\$2,400,000
<i>Band shell/stage/dressing</i>	\$75,000
<i>Remodel floral building</i>	\$100,000
<i>New 4-H barn</i>	\$650,000
<i>Paved parking and loading</i>	\$350,000
<i>Plaza and sidewalks</i>	\$350,000
<i>Site utilities, lighting, signage, landscape</i>	\$1,000,000
A&E and Permit Fees (15%)	\$1,245,000
Contingency (8%)	\$664,000
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$10,209,000</b>

## Capital Improvement Projects

This section itemizes capital projects and costs for improvements needed to realize the Site and Facilities Plan Vision. The proposed plan for new facilities has an estimated cost of about \$10.2 million (Table 1).

In addition to the basic program above, MPVC members asked for several “add-ons” should funds become available or as a second phase of development. The potential use of a fabric roof for the Pavilion is one cost savings opportunity the MPVC would like the County to explore.

Desired “add-ons” include:

- A fully-covered Pavilion versus partially covered as proposed
- A building dedicated to storage of equipment that may not fit in existing or planned storage areas (e.g. tractor)
- Multipurpose facility expansion
- Children’s play structure

In addition to on-site improvements, other capital projects may include road and infrastructure improvements that benefit both the site and the surrounding areas. A list of Transportation System Plan projects would to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities between US20 and US101 and the site are included as Appendix D. Implementation of these projects would make bicycle and pedestrian trips to/from the site more attractive.

# Operational Plan

Throughout development of the Refined Master Plan, facility design, use, management and funding have been explored simultaneously and iteratively. The County does not want a facility that it cannot afford or that gets low use. What is desired in the Commons facilities is important, but it ultimately must be brought into line with available resources.

This section presents the business plan and management plan collectively as the operational plan, which addresses (1) management models for both governing bodies (referred to as the governance structure) and the executive branch (referred to as the management structure), (2) capital and operational needs and costs, and (3) revenue sources. The complete Lincoln County Commons Management and Business Plan is included as Appendix E.

## Opportunities and Constraints

The opportunities and constraints for the new facilities at the Commons consider the public purpose of the Commons, the expected uses of the facilities, the potential for revenue generation from rental of the facilities, funding opportunities, and operational considerations.

At the broadest level, the Commons provides public space opportunities for events in Lincoln County that are available and accessible to people and businesses across the entire County. These opportunities include: continuation of the Lincoln County Fair event; a public event space in the geographic center of Lincoln County at a location with easy access to the ocean; continuation of existing events at the Commons; providing a space for new “homegrown” events of interest to people living in the County; and providing a low- or no-cost facility for youth events. As noted in the introduction, redevelopment of the Commons is supported by the community through existing funding from

### Public Purpose of the New Facilities at the Lincoln County Commons

The decision by the County Commissioners and the Fair Board to support redevelopment of the Commons was based on assumptions about the potential public benefits redevelopment would provide, such as:

- Serve as an event space and gathering space for people living in Lincoln County
- Grow some local events into regional or statewide events
- Support youth events
- Support tourism
- Provide a connection to the County's traditions and history

the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) and operational efficiencies from associations with the County. The Commons also provides a potential location for a natural-hazard shelter.

Challenges related to the Commons include (1) attracting events to the Commons and (2) funding. Constraints include: difficulty attracting events because of the relative isolation of the County, the challenging weather at the Coast, and constraints on rental fees to stay cost-competitive with other rental facilities and fairgrounds. Funding the capital and operational costs is challenging given these constraints, but the County has identified a solution to these funding issues, with allocation of TLT revenues to support the Commons.



Figure 11. Fresh produce for sale at the Lincoln County Commons.

## Operations

The operational plan considers issues related to business, governance and management collectively. The operational plan must respond to the final facilities design and the types of events it can accommodate.

The primary purpose of the Lincoln Commons, as expressed by the County Commissioners and the Fair Board, is to serve the local community. The County's purpose of serving local users is consistent with a "home grown" approach to events. The facilities, pricing and management support for that kind of market are different from the convention and trade show market in important ways. Small local groups cannot afford to pay the full operational costs of their events, much less cover some of the debt service incurred to build the facilities. The facilities and operations must be adjusted to respond to that reality.

Focusing on these groups is at the heart of the public purpose. It provides value to many

groups and community members in Lincoln County. Moreover, it can eventually open up new opportunities for events and activities. With some support, some of these local group activities can grow over time into larger regional events, which would provide additional benefits to community businesses and government. Increasing tourism leads to more room nights which leads to more revenue from TLT funds.

The Refined Master Plan shows the Commons designed, equipped and managed to support that public purpose and business model. The facility design proposed in the Refined Master Plan is very flexible. It is not a conventional, flat-floor convention facility. It is not maximized for the annual County Fair or agricultural events. It is designed to be multipurpose, and to serve the kinds of events that the agreed-upon purpose suggests and that this business plan tries to attract and support.

## Governance

In this section, “governance” refers to the structure of the elected or appointed body that has final authority to make policy decisions about the purposes, policies, facilities and operations of the Commons.

The mission of the Commons and predisposition of the County and its Fair Board have implications for the governance arrangements for the Commons. The Refined Master Plan recommends a governing structure in which the organization that puts on the annual Fair is under a contract for the Fair Event, which is separate from the management of The Commons. That structure gives the annual Fair a place in the mission of the Commons and would identify it as the key supported activity.

Under that structure, the Board of Commissioners might hire a facilities manager (Commons CEO) and administrative and operational support staff, all as County employees. The Fair Board could contract with those employees to help with the planning and operation of the County Fair, or it might contract with an independent event-management group.

Stated in other words, the Commons should be treated as if it were a special district whose mission is to energize the cultural, recreational and community events, just as a port authority would work to increase the value of publicly-owned economic assets.

## Management

Management of the Commons should report to and support the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners in discharging those obligations. All other user groups, or related boards and commissions (e.g. Fair Board), should be advisory to the Board of Commissioners and have no direct authorities for the management and or programming of the facilities.

Given this structure, recommendations for how the executive (manager and staff) operate are divided into the following six sections:

1. Management Philosophy. Management systems should be designed to optimize the desired use as described in the public purpose statements. That will require a full-service event program to encourage use by local social groups, crafts groups, sports leagues, not-for-profits and other related groups. By “full-service” we mean a program that helps local groups as they try to develop and expand their events.

The County has started down this philosophical path by designating TLT funds to help pay for capital and operational costs of the Commons. If it is building facilities to go after the locally-oriented market described in this report, then its rental pricing must support that market, which the County recognizes means that fees (prices) cannot cover full operational costs.

2. Relationship of the Governing Body to the Executive. Management should be charged with the responsibility of contracting, budgeting, operating and staffing of the facilities, including capital construction and maintenance of the facilities. Management should, within the policy guidance of the Board of Commissioners, develop and expand possible community activities that will further the potential increasing public benefits for which the Commons was created.

Management decisions must be consistent with the policy guidelines of the Board of Commissioners. Policy guidelines will give different levels of priority to the competing public purposes for which the Commons have been designed. The management should aim to optimize public use, public benefit and public cost in light of those guidelines.

3. Considerations for Facility Design and the Business Model. The facility design has implications for operations. In particular, the more money spent up-front on more and better structures and equipment, the

lower the annual operating costs will be for a given level of use. In continuing to refine the redevelopment at the Commons, the County should consider: sufficient infrastructure for expected uses (such as electrical, communications, sewer and water services); sufficient bathrooms and amenities to increase functionality of the facilities; potential use of portable gym floors for sporting events; and RV facilities to supplement events, but not as an activity itself.

4. Staffing and Activities. The Commons could, in theory, be operated at different levels of use, which would have different staffing requirements. It seems very likely that the early years of operation will have fewer events and less demand for staff time. It is possible and potentially efficient to start light on staffing because it may take five to 10 years to get to the desired level of full operation. We believe the minimum requirements at start-up would be:

- A full-time manager/CEO. A county employee; experienced with fairgrounds or similar multipurpose facilities; manages the Commons.
- A half-time administrative assistant. Does almost everything administrative: phones, scheduling, communication with people, event calendar and scheduling, coordination with maintenance, recruit and train volunteers, open up facilities, brief team prior to events, etc.
- Maintenance/security personnel contracted with the County. It could be a budgeted amount that is used to internally purchase services as needed from the County facilities and maintenance division.

5. Funding and Budget. The County must fund the capital (facility) and operational (events) costs of the Commons.

- Capital costs. The proposed plan for new facilities has an estimated cost of about \$10.2 million. Assuming that the County uses the \$2.75 million in reserves to pay for capital costs for building the new facilities and finances \$7,500,000 to cover the remaining capital costs, the Commons will have annual payments of about \$432,000 for capital costs, assuming a 4% interest rate over a 30-year period. With these terms, the cost of interest will be a total of about \$5.5 million. The revenue stream for the TLT will fund the capital construction costs.
- Maintenance. An important part of a capitalized revenue system is the development of a repair and replacement program for each piece of capitalized equipment and building. Income for capital repair and maintenance can come from many sources but needs to be treated differently than operating income. The County could set aside a portion of the bond levy that purchased the asset for future repair and maintenance. Another source of income could be included in the use fees associated with an asset, such as charges for renting a commercial kitchen.
- Operations. One of the main operating costs is for staffing. At the minimum level of staffing (described above), the Commons would have \$140,000 in staffing costs. Assuming more events and increases in staffing, the Commons would have \$240,000 per year in staffing costs. Given that the Commons will have costs of goods and services beyond its labor costs, we would expect annual operating costs in years 1–5 to be in the range of \$225,000 to \$300,000.

Part of the operational costs will be covered by revenues from events at the Commons. The first year may have few events beyond existing events, such as the winter Farmer's Market, Christmas Tree sales, private parties or usage of facilities, and a few small- and mid-sized events. Beyond the first year, events are likely to generate between \$80,000 and \$190,000 in revenue from fees, leases, shared gates, taxes, sale of goods and services, and food and beverage sales.

The County is also planning to use some of its TLT revenues to cover operational costs. The County currently has about \$600,000 in dedicated TLT revenues in Fiscal Year 2017-2018. TLT revenues have been growing as a result of an increase in the tax rate in 2016 and an increase in overnight stays in rooms charging the TLT.

If TLT revenues continue to grow at 2% per year through Fiscal Year 2027-2028, the County would receive \$730,000 in TLT revenues per year. If TLT grew by 1% per year after, by 2048, the County would receive \$892,000 in TLT revenues per year. While it is possible that TLT revenues may have short periods where they do not grow or even decrease, it is reasonable to assume that the revenues will generally continue to increase.

With TLT revenues of \$600,000 and a fixed bond amount of \$431,702 for the proposed improvements at the Commons, the County will have \$168,298 left from TLT revenues for operational costs. If TLT revenues grow as described above (and the cost of the bond will remain fixed at \$431,702), by 2028 the County would have \$298,000 for operational costs at the Commons. By 2048, the County would have \$460,000 for operational costs at the Commons.

Our conclusion is that, between expected revenues and available TLT revenues, the projected operating costs are lower than available revenues after year one of operations of the new facility.

6. Critical Operational Steps. After it completes its master plan for the Commons, the County and the management of the Commons have to do the following to operate the facilities: develop a marketing strategy, create or update a tentative schedule of users for the facilities, develop or revise standards and policies for use of the facilities, develop a pricing structure, create or update an equipment inventory and use allocation, and build a budget based on the forecast of operations for the first year of operation. Planning for operations can be occurring at the same time as construction. Once the facility is operational, this type of planning will become part of an annual cycle.

# Next Steps

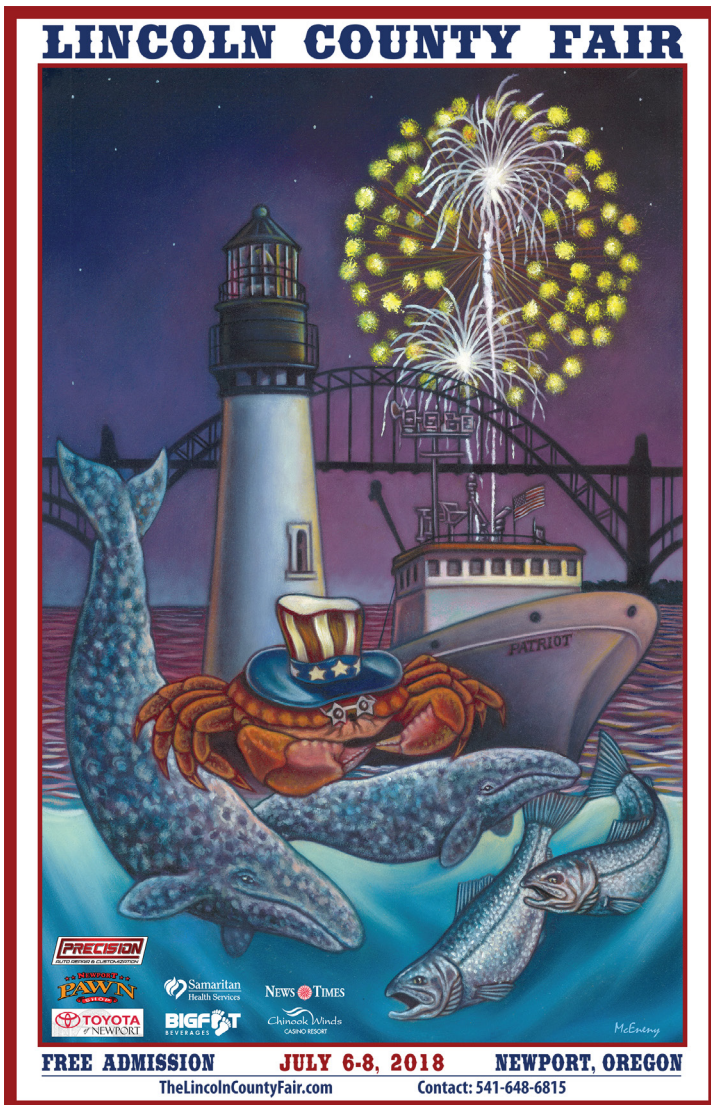


Figure 12. A poster for the Lincoln County Fair

Once the Refined Master Plan is approved, the City will begin the steps necessary for implementation, which include:

- **Financing.** With existing a long-term funding source in place, the County will explore the variety of possible ways to finance implementation of the Master Plan vision and identify the best and most cost-effective way to use dedicated funds.

- **Coordinate with the City of Newport.** The County will need to coordinate with the City of Newport on several initiatives in preparation for site improvements. The County will further analyze potential development of the property in light of available Newport Urban Renewal funds. The County will coordinate with the City to understand the City's priorities for the Commons site and the broader Newport Northside Urban Renewal Area. The County will work with the City to determine how improvements to the Commons area align with improvements identified through an update to the City's Transportation System Plan. The City also will participate as the permitting agency for potential site improvements.
- **Facility Design and Construction.** The County will initiate a process to design the proposed facilities, other site improvements and needed equipment. The process will include further opportunities for public participation.
- **Nearby Development Coordination.** Monitor and coordinate with development efforts taking place in the immediate vicinity of the Commons. This may include the Lincoln County Animal Shelter relocation/redevelopment, possible emergency services and transit center building development, and parking and circulation plans for the area.
- **Commons Management.** Identify and hire or contract with staff to oversee the design and construction process and, eventually, to manage the Commons site.