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# EVALUATION & SITE IMPROVEMENT STUDY

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Presented to:  
Mayor's Office of the City of Nashville  
Metropolitan Board of Fair Commissioners



August 2016

Prepared By:

*COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT GROUP, INC*

*TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY*  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

August 2016

Mr. Ned Horton, Chair - The Metropolitan Board of Fair Commissioners  
Mrs. Laura Schloesser, Executive Director - Nashville Fairgrounds  
P. O. Box 40208  
Nashville, TN 37204

Mr. Horton and Mrs. Schloesser:

Please find enclosed the results of our collaborative evaluation of the Nashville Fairgrounds facility. It provides recommendations for facility, site and infrastructure upgrades, improvements, as well as suggested community usage. Commonwealth Development Group, Inc. and Tennessee State University, conducted the site evaluation with respect to specific and defined objectives during the period of Fall 2015 to Summer 2016.

The content of this report represents a collective assessment of the infrastructure, revenue and expenses, and physical conditions of Nashville Fairgrounds. The proposed recommendations and improvements may result in new community functions and business activities, greater attendance, and safer operations of the Fairgrounds for working personnel.

In the context of the economic and population growth of metropolitan Nashville, we believe the enclosed recommendations will benefit and precipitate the future growth and sustainability of the Nashville Fairgrounds.

Sincerely,

Larry Atema, Commonwealth Development Group, Inc.

S. Keith Hargrove, Tennessee State University

Cc: Megan Barry, Mayor of Nashville

Rich Riebeling, Chief Operating Officer

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commonwealth Development Group and Tennessee State University recently completed a site and evaluation study of the Nashville Fairgrounds facility. The purpose of the study was to assess the current facilities and infrastructure for improvement and enhancement, and provide recommendations that would benefit the overall usability of the Fairgrounds to the regional and local community.

The project team has recommended the renovation and demolition of selected buildings based on condition and income generation, and suggested community-related developments with the available land acreage.

A strategic investment to the Nashville Fairgrounds should be deployed initially over a three (3) year period.

## **NASHVILLE FAIRGROUNDS**

The Fairgrounds in Nashville, TN is located on 117 acres and is approximately 2 miles south of Nashville. The location is a multi-use site for meetings, conferences, trade shows and special events for a variety of activities for Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County. The Fairgrounds has eight (8) climate-controlled buildings of more than 120,000 square feet of indoor space and sufficient parking to accommodate more than 300,000 visitors annually. With direct access from I-65, I-440 and I-24, the location makes it attractive and an affordable Expo facility for indoor and large outdoor events. The State Fair and a monthly Flea Market are key attractions of the facility.

The Fairgrounds has a history that precedes the state of Tennessee, and was once recognized as a site for horse breeding and racing. However, it has transformed over two centuries to become a facility for entertainment and business expositions in the middle Tennessee region. The business activity has fluctuated over the last twenty years, and several studies have been performed to assess the facilities and utilization, market and event analysis, and proposed investment opportunities.

The Fairgrounds has completed studies for Phase I and Phase II of a Master Plan, and several other studies have been conducted in the past ([www.nashville.gov](http://www.nashville.gov)). This site improvement study is now interested in revisiting these outcomes to determine the next phase for a capital investment by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Therefore, a team has been formed to conduct a study and evaluate the site for improvements and recommend potential use of the fairgrounds location at the request of the Office of the Mayor and the Metropolitan Board of Fair Commissioners.

## **PROJECT STUDY AND OBJECTIVE**

At the request of the Office of the Mayor, a joint team was formed to assess the Nashville Fairgrounds. Commonwealth Development Group, Inc. was identified as the lead consultant in collaboration with Tennessee State University's College of Engineering. Commonwealth Development Group, Inc. provides capital project management and real estate development services. Commonwealth Development Group has managed major projects for Metro Nashville government and other business clients in retail and industrial development, universities, non-profits and foundations, and historic restoration

(www.cdgtn.com). The company is led by Mr. Larry Atema, President and CEO. Tennessee State University is Nashville's only public and state university, and enrolls more than 9,000 students in more than 43 academic disciplines. The College of Engineering at Tennessee State University enrolls more than 1,000 students in several engineering programs, including computer science and industrial technology. A team of selected faculty and students participated in the site evaluation. Dr. S. Keith Hargrove, serves as the Dean of the College of Engineering (www.tnstate.edu/engineering).

The project had specific tasks and goals to complete the site evaluation of the Fairgrounds. Under the project management of Mr. Larry Atema and Dr. S. Keith Hargrove, the project completed the following task(s):

- 1. Revisit and assess the facility condition of buildings and infrastructure at the Fairgrounds;*
- 2. Examine and/or update the geographical and urban planning documents for the Fairgrounds Site;*
- 3. Review revenue generating activities and facility expenses of the Fairgrounds to help guide improvement, recommendations, and planning;*
- 4. Recommend site improvements to the existing facilities and infrastructure;*
- 5. Recommend potential uses and/or opportunities for the site;*

Listed below are the project team members from Commonwealth Development Group and Tennessee State University:

*Larry Atema, Sr. Project & Development Manager (Project Lead)*

*Jordan Wyman, Project Manager*

*Edward Henley, Project Manager - Budget, Finance & Administration*

*Thaddeus Dukes, Project & Student Liaison*

*S. Keith Hargrove, Project Leader (University Lead)*

*Dwight Martin, Urban Planner (TSU Faculty)*

*Reginald Archer, GIS (TSU Faculty)*

*Bri Ong, Project Coordinator*

*TSU Students - Abram Musinguzi, Dwight Pullen, Kyra Bryant, Demetria Snorton*

## FAIRGROUNDS SITE AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

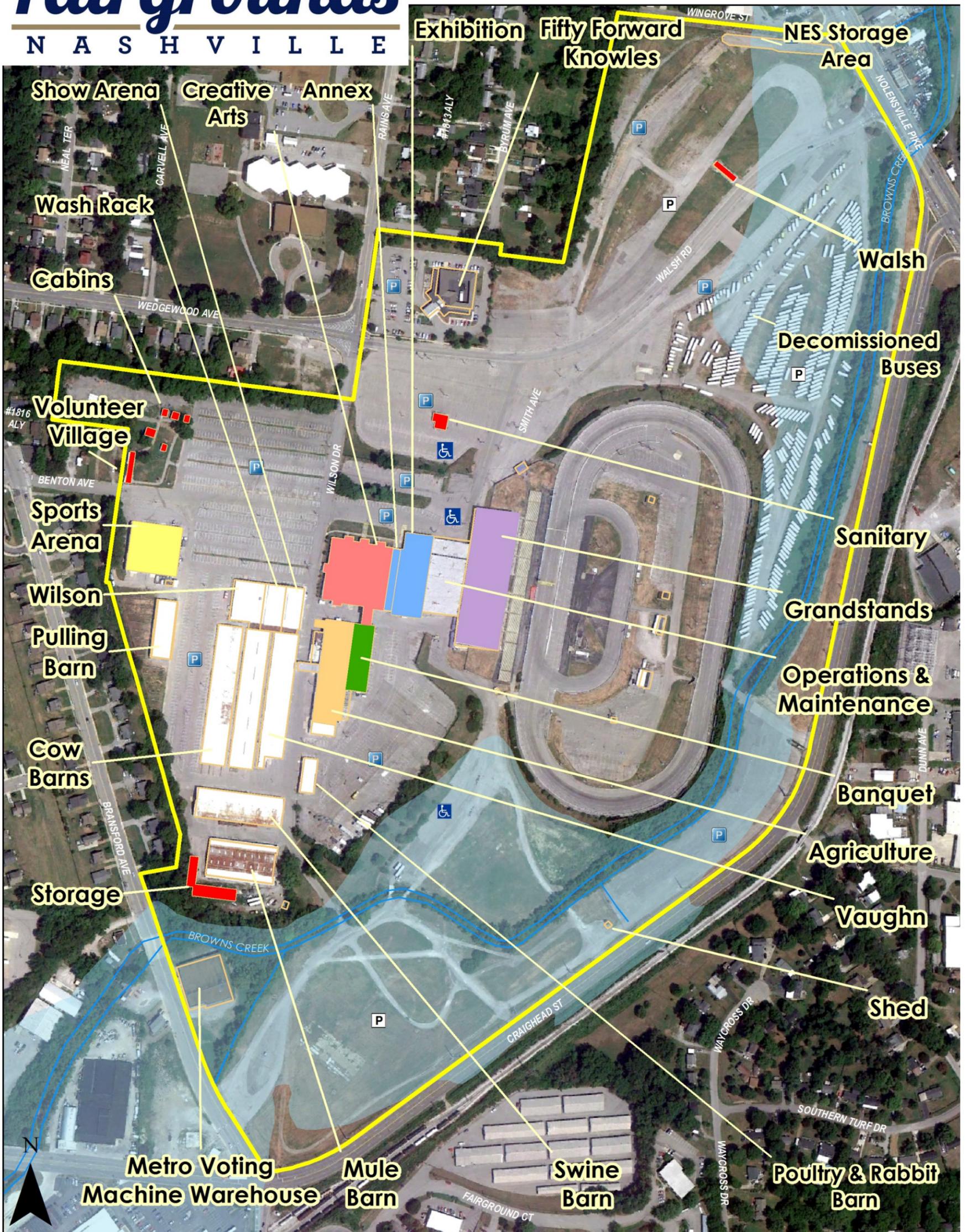
The project team reviewed several maps and documents to assess the Fairgrounds site and facility. This included multiple geographical maps and surveys for the Fairground facility obtained with the cooperation of the Metro Planning Operations Office. The maps listed below were confirmed with the Metro Planning Operations (MPO) Office and are used for conducting the site evaluation and improvement study.

- *Fairgrounds Location Map* - exhibits the general location of the fairgrounds with respect to the Nashville metropolitan area;
- *Property & Proposed Recreational Usage Map* - outlines the land owned by the fairgrounds including all of the buildings on the property, and illustrations of soccer fields, dog park, and Greenway trail;
- *Parking Areas Map* - displays all paved and unpaved areas used for parking within the fairgrounds property. This includes handicapped and recreational vehicle (RV) parking.

### FAIRGROUNDS NASHVILLE:

A consolidated property map of the Fairgrounds follows and highlights the property and facilities as they exist currently (Summer 2016).

Please note that in the report the color coding of buildings and features is consistent in all exhibits and charts. For example; the Agricultural Building is in orange in all maps, financial charts and cost estimates, etc



## Property Map

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Yards

### Legend

- |                     |              |               |               |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Browns Creek        | Agriculture  | Creative Arts | Sports Arena  |
| Fairground Property | Annex        | Exhibition    | To Be Removed |
| Floodplain          | Banquet Hall | Grandstands   |               |

## **FAIRGROUND FINANCIALS**

### **Fairgrounds Revenue**

The project team reviewed and analyzed revenue activities of the Fairgrounds facility over specific times and operational periods. In cooperation with the staff and personnel of the Nashville Fairgrounds, and available public information accessible to the project team, data was obtained with respect to facilities (building use), parking, and Fairground events. Financial information was reviewed over the last three complete fiscal years (2013, 2014, and 2015). Facility and Space revenue information was gathered and contributed to the prioritization of recommended resource allocation across the site. Also reviewed were annual revenues from the Grandstand/Ractrack.

#### **Key Note(s):**

The revenue generated by the facilities has increased from 2014 to 2015. However, some buildings produced very little income and are considered a low priority for this study.

The operation and revenue of the Raceway vary based on contractual agreements and usage frequency compared to other asset bearing revenue facilities and operations. Therefore, the financial assessment may require alternative methods for recognizing its financial impact on the Fairgrounds as well as its racetrack investment. The Flea Market is a primary revenue attraction for the Fairgrounds, generating at least \$300K every year. Income for renting vendor booths has increased every year since 2013.

### **Fairgrounds Expenses**

Fairgrounds operational data was gathered for utility expenses across the site for the purpose of determining costs and the potential impact of improved energy consumption measures (Annual Expense for Utilities). It is recommended that upgrades to the Fairgrounds lighting and conditioning systems, and other HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) equipment can favorably cut annual utility expenses significantly (See Building Assessment Section). The annual costs of maintenance and repair services and supplies at the Fairgrounds have ranged from \$175,000 to \$290,000 over the past few years (Annual Maintenance & Repairs). A significant portion of their annual budget is used to cover these expenses, which can be large and difficult to predict. The difficulty with predicting expenses can have an effect on contractual and annual events, and daily operations.

#### **Key Note(s):**

It is recommended and estimated that an investment in updating public utility equipment and systems at the Fairgrounds facilities will lower energy consumption costs, and result in a short payback period to allow savings to be allocated across the facility. The current maintenance and repair costs would be reduced thus resulting in a viable return on investment of the public utility equipment upgrades (eg. lighting, electrical systems, plumbing, HVAC).

### **Parking/Outdoor Revenue Analysis**

The Nashville Fairgrounds encompasses 117 acres, and a portion of the site is located within the 100-Year Flood Plain. A significant portion of the Fairgrounds Property is undeveloped (consisting of open grass, paved, and uncovered areas). These undeveloped areas of the fairgrounds generate revenue primarily from parking fees for events and activities (see Annual Parking/Outdoor Revenue Bar Graph). However, the Fairground's is also generating an increasing amount of revenue from the lease of the undeveloped areas for parking large vehicles (eg. RVs, Trailers, etc.) and hosting outdoor events, such as running races and concerts.

#### **Key Note(s):**

The Fairgrounds continues to generate revenue from its main monthly event, the Flea Market, through booth rentals and parking fees on the site (Annual Flea Market Revenue). A large amount of revenue is also generated from leasing out facilities; select buildings are more frequently rented and/or for greater rates than others, thus generating more revenue (Annual Revenue by Facility /Space). It is suggested that investing in site and building improvements will be quite impactful considering the amount of outdoor space and current condition of the Fairgrounds. The result of which would make the Fairgrounds more adapt for creating structured or systematic parking offerings such as: parking reservations, park and ride, tiered parking prices, etc. This would also create a much more attractive location for outdoor events to be held, both of which would spur growth in revenue.

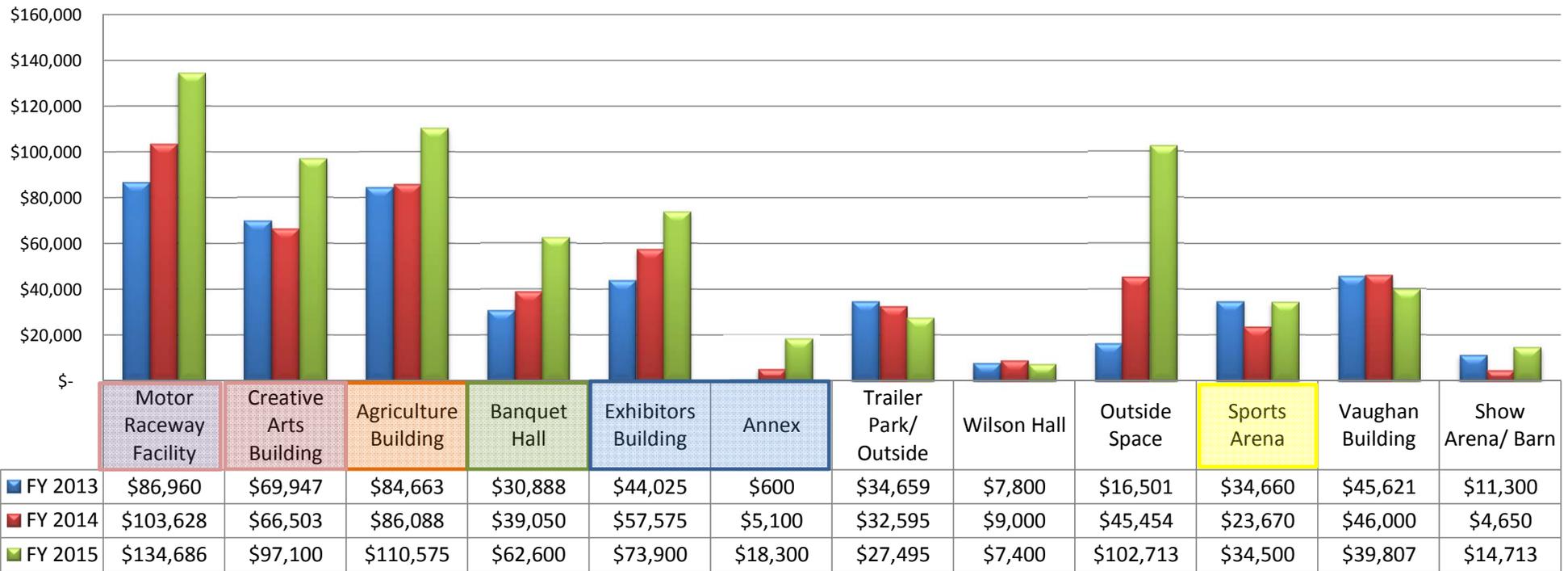
Another consideration is that the Fairgrounds acquires and implements a scheduling and management system/software. This system could allow for optimal scheduling of events, building usage, logistics, and the management of outdoor space to maximize revenue and better efficiency of operations.

## **FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

1. Annual Revenue by Facility/Space
2. Annual Expense for Utilities
3. Annual Maintenance & Repair Expense
4. Annual Flea Market Revenue
5. Annual Parking/Outside Space Revenue

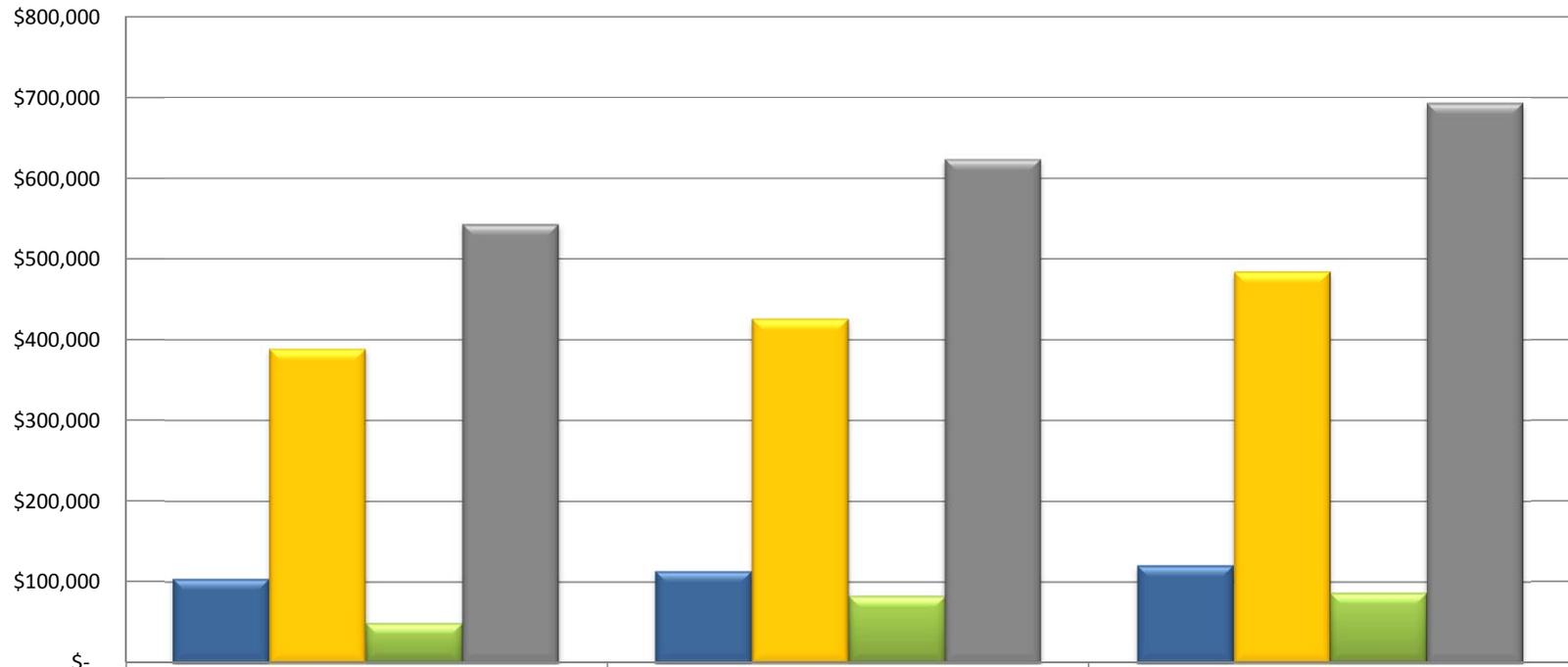


## Annual Revenue by Facility/Space



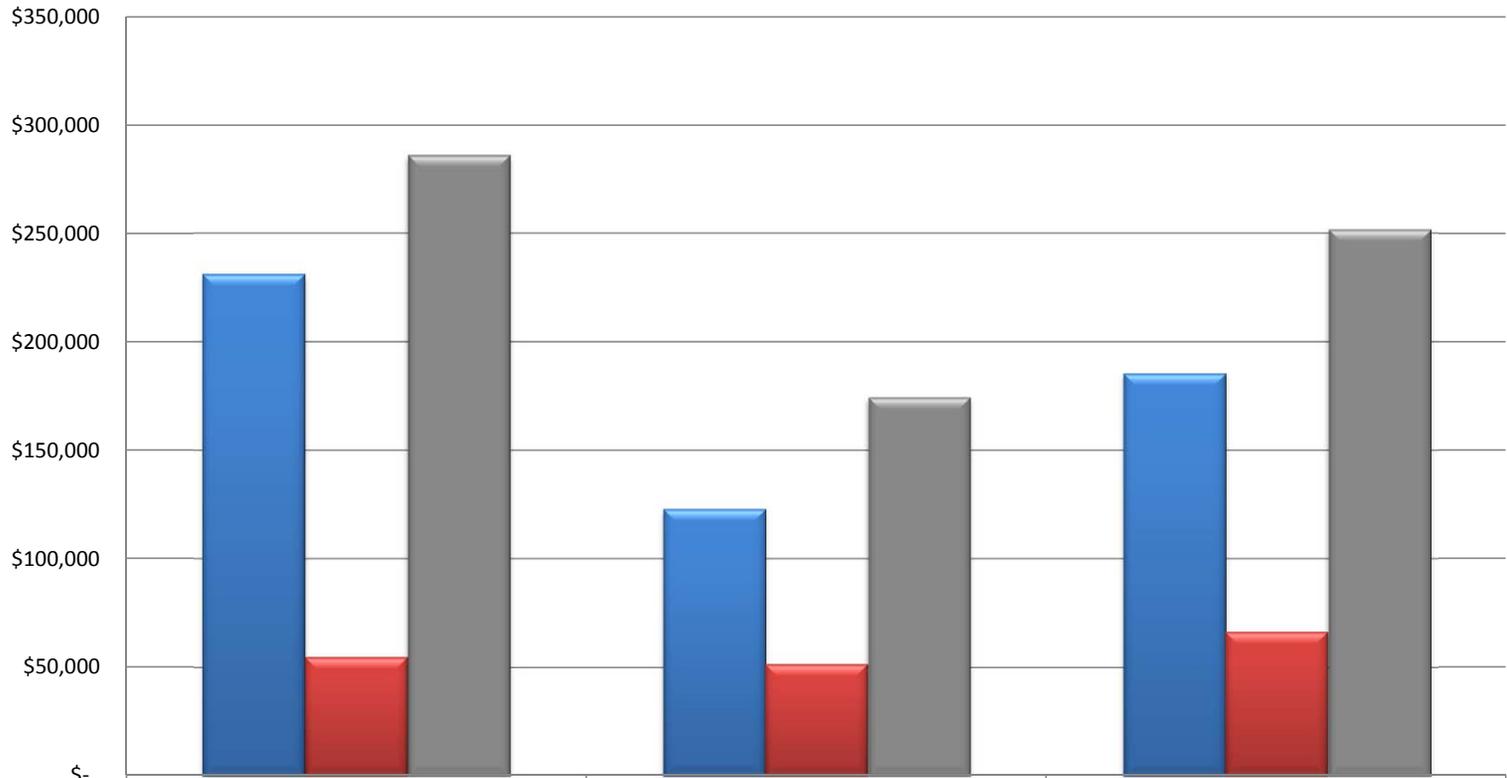
**Note:** For the *Tennessee State Fair* the entire Fairgrounds site, all Facilities and Spaces, are dedicated to that event. The figures above do not take into account that revenue nor does it reflect the revenue from the monthly *Flea Market*.

### Annual Expense for Utilities



	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Water	\$104,903	\$114,405	\$121,439
Electric	\$389,423	\$426,656	\$485,080
Gas	\$49,521	\$83,325	\$87,263
Utility Expense Total	\$543,847	\$624,386	\$693,782

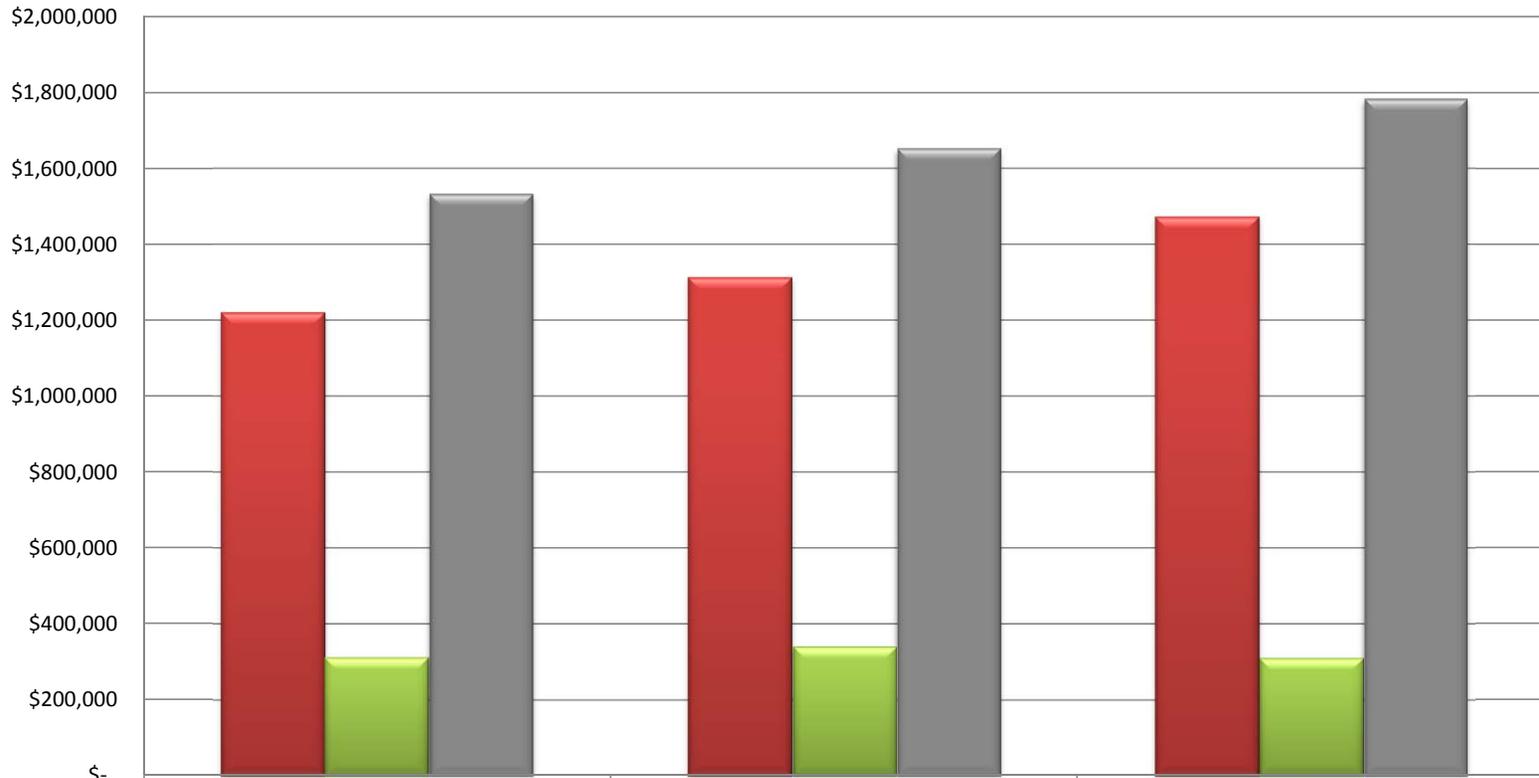
### Annual Maintenance & Repair Expense



	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Other Rpr & Maint Srvc	\$231,326	\$122,972	\$185,448
Repair & Maint Supply	\$54,784	\$51,580	\$66,428
Maintanience & Repair Total	\$286,110	\$174,552	\$251,876



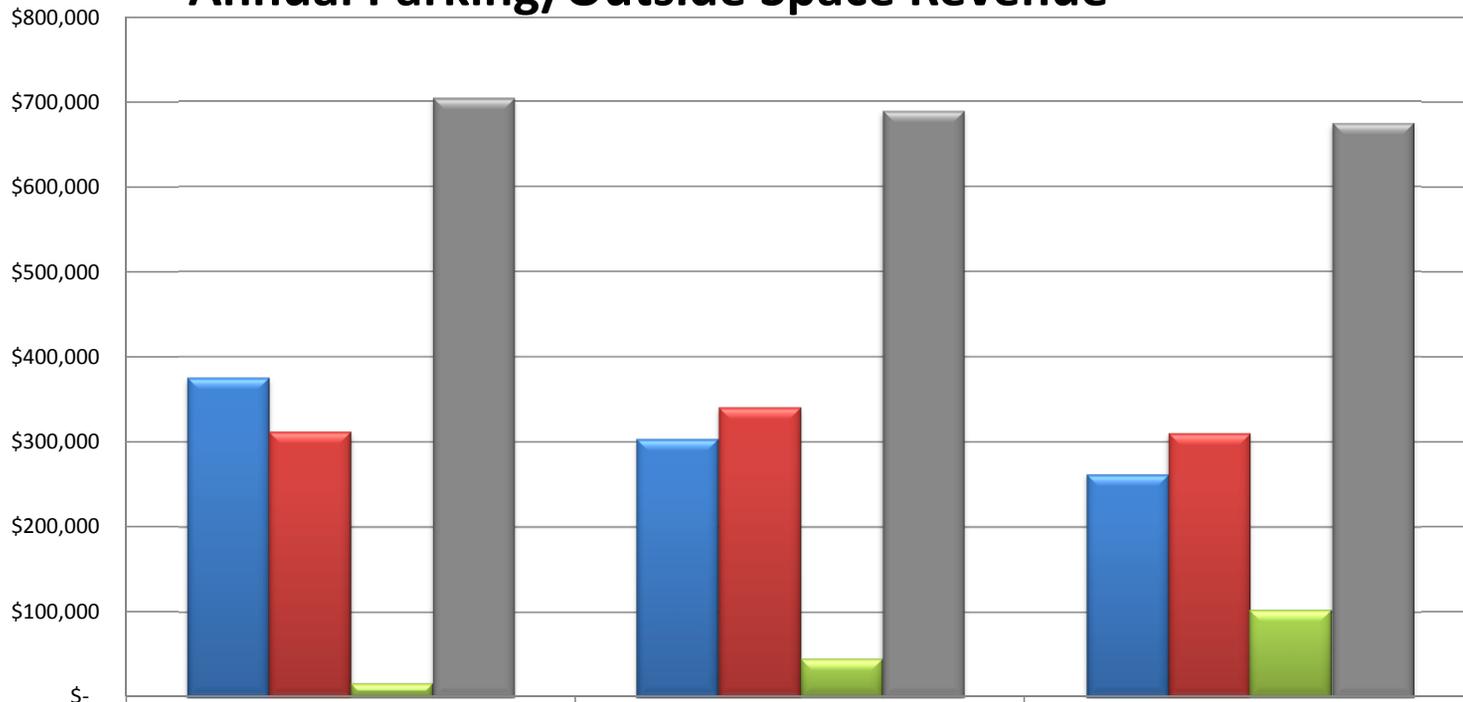
## Annual Flea Market Revenue



	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Flea Market Booth Rent	\$1,221,189	\$1,313,271	\$1,473,144
Flea Market Parking Fees	\$311,996	\$340,422	\$310,206
Flea Market Revenue Total	\$1,533,185	\$1,653,693	\$1,783,350



## Annual Parking/Outside Space Revenue



	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
■ Rentals Parking Fees	\$375,634	\$303,318	\$261,883
■ Flea Market Parking Fees	\$311,996	\$340,422	\$310,206
■ Outside Space	\$16,501	\$45,454	\$102,713
■ Parking/Outdoor Space Revenue Total	\$704,131	\$689,194	\$674,802

## BUILDING EVALUATION AND ASSESMENT

The building evaluation process serves as a source of current site & property conditions to initiate the plans to renovate and improve the existing assets at The Fairgrounds provided a scale of (1 - 10), 1 being most frequently used, to rate each building based on its frequency of use and for what purpose. In addition, we provided three (3) terms to more analytically describe current conditions (Satisfactory, Salvageable, and Poor). Through on-site observations, significant attention was paid to the condition of roofing, exteriors, paint, doors, flooring, HVAC, plumbing, lighting, and electrical components. (See APPENDIX A – BUILDING EVALUATION SHEET).

In conjunction with building conditions, revenue rates were analyzed to determine a “best use factor” for project funding and maximum property value added improvements. The evaluation spreadsheet gives an overview and summary of the site conditions to clarify and solidify what we can feasibly improve. The factors considered include; cost, time period to make these alterations, and preserving the rich history and culture of the site.

Based upon our investigation, there are 4-6 buildings that could use significant improvements that could have an increased revenue impact associated with upgrades. Building renovations can reduce energy consumption and enhance utility conservation, provide more efficient use of space, generate a larger renting audience, attract new clientele with upgraded facility, or just overall user satisfaction and wide spread positive public relations or marketing. It is also suggested that an upgrade of the Grandstand would be more attractive to potential activities and have more usage. The following pages are several building evaluation summaries with current conditions and recommendations. To complete our evaluation and improvement suggestions, an estimated project improvements draft budget is also provided.

## Volunteer Village

- Significant structure decay
- Loss of energy & poor electrical
- Inefficient HVAC units



- Structure shifting/expanding
- Substantial door alignment issues
- Inefficient weather proofing
- Little to no revenue contribution to property



\*Suggested to be demolished

## The Walsh House

- Significant deterioration
- Poor location
- Valuable property space

- Significant fixture decay
- Insufficient lighting & security
- No revenue contribution to property



\*Suggested to be demolished

## The Sanitation Building

- Significant structure deterioration
- Poor location
- Valuable property space
- Inefficient HVAC units



- Inefficient & leaking plumbing fixtures
- Insufficient lighting & security
- Substantial infrastructure failure
- No revenue contribution to property



\*Suggested to be demolished

## Site Parking

- 140+ decommissioned Metro School Buses
- Valuable property space
- No revenue contribution to property



\*Suggested to be removed

## Agricultural Building

- Failing/outdated HVAC units
- Deteriorated paint
- Leaking roof



- Unsafe/outdated electrical panels
- Inefficient lighting/plumbing fixtures
- Highest revenue generating building



# Creative Arts

- Failing/outdated HVAC units
- Structural design restriction
- Inefficient plumbing fixtures
- Leaking roof

- Unsafe/outdated main electrical switchgear
- Inefficient lighting fixtures
- Minimal convenience power available
- Second highest revenue generating building



## Exhibitor/Annex Building

- Failing/outdated HVAC units
- Aged ceiling tile & cosmetics
- Poor/inefficient restroom fixtures
- Poor/inefficient lighting fixtures
- Deteriorating exterior finishes
- Outdated concessions
- Minimal convenience power available
- Third highest revenue generating building



# Banquet Hall Building

- Failing/outdated HVAC units
- Aged ceiling tile & cosmetics
- Leaking roof
- Poor/inefficient lighting fixtures

- Deteriorating exterior finishes
- Poor/Inefficient restroom fixtures
- Minimal convenience power available
- Fourth highest revenue generating building



## Sports Arena Building

- Failing/outdated HVAC units
- Salvageable paint
- Leaking roof
- Poor/inefficient lighting fixtures



- Deteriorating exterior finishes
- Poor/Inefficient restroom amenities
- Minimal convenience power available



# Grandstands

- Sound Steel Roof Structure
- Paint Needed
- Minor Electrical / Lighting
- Capacity close to 14,500 persons



- Inefficient/minimal concessions
- Restrooms need restoration
- Main Entrance / Ticketing Organization needed
- Limited Access Currently



## **BROWN'S CREEK GREENWAY AND RECREATIONAL USE INQUIRY**

In May of 2010, the Nashville community experienced two consecutive days of 100-year probable rainfall and catastrophic flood that paralyzed the community for days. The effect of this event resulted in a Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) revised definition of the Nashville Floodplains. The Browns Creek waterway tributary and related branches are one of the waterways that experienced elevated flood levels. This creek also travels through the south east section of the Nashville Fairgrounds site. As a result, the experienced site flooding resulted in limitations of the land use on the Fairgrounds' property which is on the south side of the site area. Map of the flood plain areas is included in this report.

Despite the flood plain location, the Fairgrounds may lend itself for the creation of several community designs based on the acreage. The impetus to consider the development of a Greenway, soccer fields, and dog park(s) along the Browns Creek flood plain (tributary) has its grounding based on land availability, growing community neighborhoods, business development, and adjacent to the Fairgrounds. However, this land area is restricted in use by Federal mandates which affect land development based on satisfying a higher compliance standard.

### **Nashville Fairgrounds Greenways and Recreation Facilities**

A number of major US cities have created and deployed the concept of community trails, Greenways, and blue-ways (water trails), as they historically have the capacity to provide a wide variety of health, environmental, economic, and social benefits to communities collectively and to individuals as well. The potential of expanding the uncovered grounds of the Fairgrounds acreage may be beneficial to adjacent neighborhoods and the social viability of stable communities ([www.greenways.com](http://www.greenways.com)).

Therefore, with the availability of land, this project team is recommending the consideration of developing a Brown's Creek Greenway. This suggestion is aligned with the Greenways Commission of Nashville in its promotion of locating a greenway trail within 2 miles of urban communities for recreation and the conservation of green space.

A primary area of the Nashville Fairgrounds affected by the May Flood of 2010, is the southern portion bordered on the north by Browns Creek, Craighead

Avenue on the south, Bransford Avenue to west, and Nolensville Road to the east. This area incorporates approximately 18 acres. However, though in a flood area, its location and vicinity can be designated for several proposed future programmatic activities that make it useful for the growing regional community.

It is suggested that selected areas of the Fairgrounds be designated for community development. Three (3) developments are recommended (APPENDIX B):

1. Greenway walk/run/bike design along Nolensville and Craighead corridor;
2. Proposed soccer fields in specific regions of the Fairgrounds property;
3. Consideration of one (1) to three (3) dog parks for local and community residents;

Each of these activities is predicated on the past growth of the Nashville community and region over the past decade. This growth is anticipated to continue into the near and distant future ([www.nashvillempo.gov](http://www.nashvillempo.gov)).

### **Fairgrounds Greenway**

The *Fairgrounds Greenway* path for walk/run/bike is proposed to move through the Craighead Browns Creek area while paralleling the Browns Creek tributary. It will originate at Bransford Avenue on the west and terminate on the east, which totals approximately 3,900 feet. The Greenway will loop and reconnect to the main path allowing pathway users a shortened return transition or looping alternative. Long term, the pathway should ultimately include lighting fixtures, trash receptacles, water fountains, resting shelters and benches, as well as restroom facilities with ADA supported designs characteristics. The proposed Browns Creek (Fairgrounds) Greenway may also include local WiFi Hot Spots allowing for greater and extended periods of greenway space engagement (leisure, exercise, work) activities for users.

The Fairgrounds Greenway in consideration by the Nashville Parks Greenway plans (*Nashville Parks and Recreations*) will continue on beyond the illustrated design pattern as suggested in the Fairgrounds Greenway plan. The Fairgrounds site travels across Nolensville Road to the north primarily following the Browns Creek Tributary as it continues on toward the Cumberland River.

## Fairgrounds Soccer Fields

On the Fairgrounds site, three (3) to six (6) recreational soccer fields are proposed which include fields which range from the Youth to Adult level. These fields will be oriented toward serving the immediate and near communities. Additionally, these fields will be available to serve community organizations and related competitive level soccer contests.

### *Fairgrounds Soccer Fields Proposal*

As many as four (4) to six (6) fields are proposed by the project team. The configurations are listed below:

Six (6) Soccer Fields located on approximately eight (8) acres of the site at Bransford and Craighead Ave.

a.	2 Fields	U 8	60'-0" x 75'-0"
b.	2 Fields	U 12	135'-0" X 210'-0"
c.	2 Fields	U 19	150'-0" X 300'-0"

### *Recreational and Soccer Parking*

It is recommended that available parking be provided north of Browns Creek. The Fairgrounds currently has sufficient parking for a variety of functions, and this area should be designated for both greenway visitors and soccer game participants/spectators. Recommendations for new recreational parking at the Fairgrounds should factor into this increased demand.

## Fairgrounds Dog Park

The concept of the “dog park” has evolved over the past three decades, and is becoming commonplace in communities. Dog parks have emerged in the last decade or so as places for pet owners living in suburban and urban areas to exercise their dogs.

In the urban communities and cities across America, along with an increasing population density and neighborhood, policies now require dog owners to comply with “*leash laws*” for restricted dog activities. Most dog parks incorporate approximately one acre of land for the provision of the space for dog runs, exercises and play activities. Therefore, this project proposes two (2) dog parks long-term, which are located near the intersection of Craighead and Bransford Avenue. Another dog park is recommended at Nolensville and Craighead. For recommended and selected dog parks not used would likely serve as parking areas or for recreational usage.

The project team produced the following geographical maps to assess the property boundaries and suggest land usage that would complement the local and regional community of the Fairgrounds. Figure 1 displays the impact and effect of the May 2010 flood on the Nashville Fairgrounds. As mentioned, a large portion of the land facility is recognized within a flood plain. Figure 2 highlights the flood plain as identified by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Figure 3 displays recommended areas for recreational areas. Figure 4 provides a view for a recommended Greenway along Brown’s Creek and adjacent to Craighead Street. The implementation of this Greenway should be aligned with the plan provided by the Metropolitan Parks Division. Figure 5 suggests land usage for recreational fields (soccer) to complement the growth of the local community, and Figure 6 list three (3) dog park options in the south area of the Fairgrounds, and one (1) located in the northern area along Nolensville Pike.

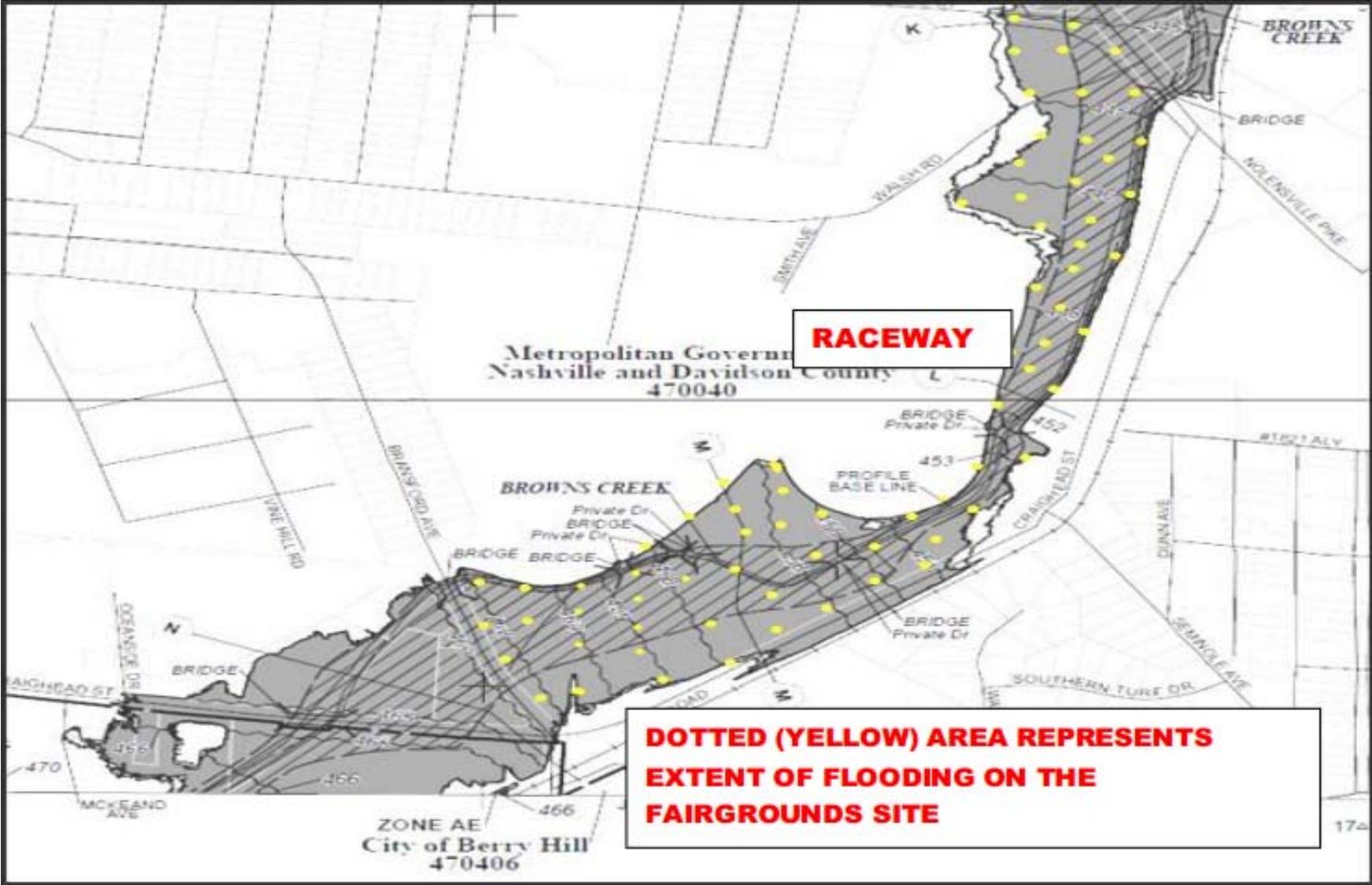
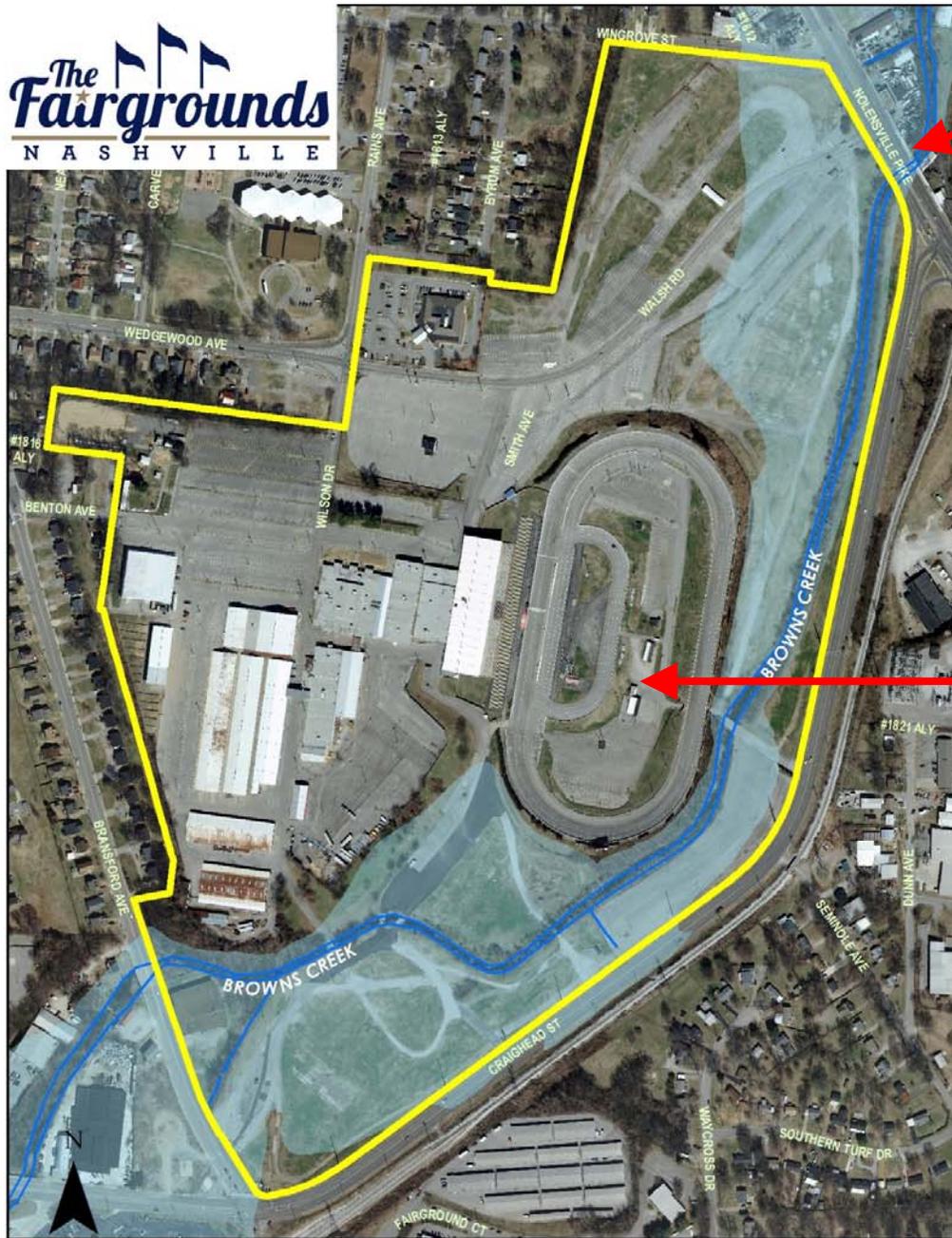


Figure 1: Map showing the extent of flooding on the Fairgrounds Site



While the FEMA Floodplain does not illustrate flooding within the raceway, this image illustrates extensive flooding inside the speedway's lower pit area during the May 2010 Flood. (Photo Credit: Mike Curran, JuiceBox Production)

### Legend

- Browns Creek
- Fairground Property
- Floodplain

Map Created by Dr. Reginald Archer and Kyra M. Bryant  
Imagery Courtesy of Google Earth 07.07.16

Figure 2: Property Map with FEMA Floodplain



**Legend**

-  Browns Creek
-  Fairground Property
-  Floodplain
-  To Be Removed
-  Proposed Dog Park Options <sup>(1)</sup>
-  Proposed Multiuse Fields
-  Proposed Greenway Trail
-  Disabled Parking
-  Paved Lot
-  Unpaved Lot

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Yards

Map Created by Dr. Reginald Archer and Kyra M. Bryant  
Imagery Courtesy of Google Earth 07.07.16

Figure 3: Property Map with proposed recreational areas

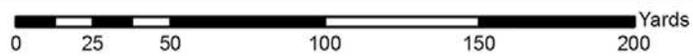
Note (1): Likely two dog parks – Long term unselected areas to be recreational parking



0 25 50 100 150 200 Yards

Map Created by Dr. Reginald Archer and Kyra M. Bryant  
Imagery Courtesy of Google Earth. 07.07.16

Figure 4: Map of Proposed Greenway Trail



Map Created by [Ir. Reginald Archer and Kyra M. Bryant  
Imagery Courtesy of Google Earth. 07.07.16

Figure 5: Map of Proposed Recreational Fields



0 25 50 100 150 200 Yards

Figure 6: Map of Proposed Dog Park Options



- Option A: 1.42 acres
- Option B: 0.86 acres
- Option C: 0.63 acres
- Option D: 0.46 acres

*Note:* Likely two dog parks – Long term unselected areas to be recreational parking

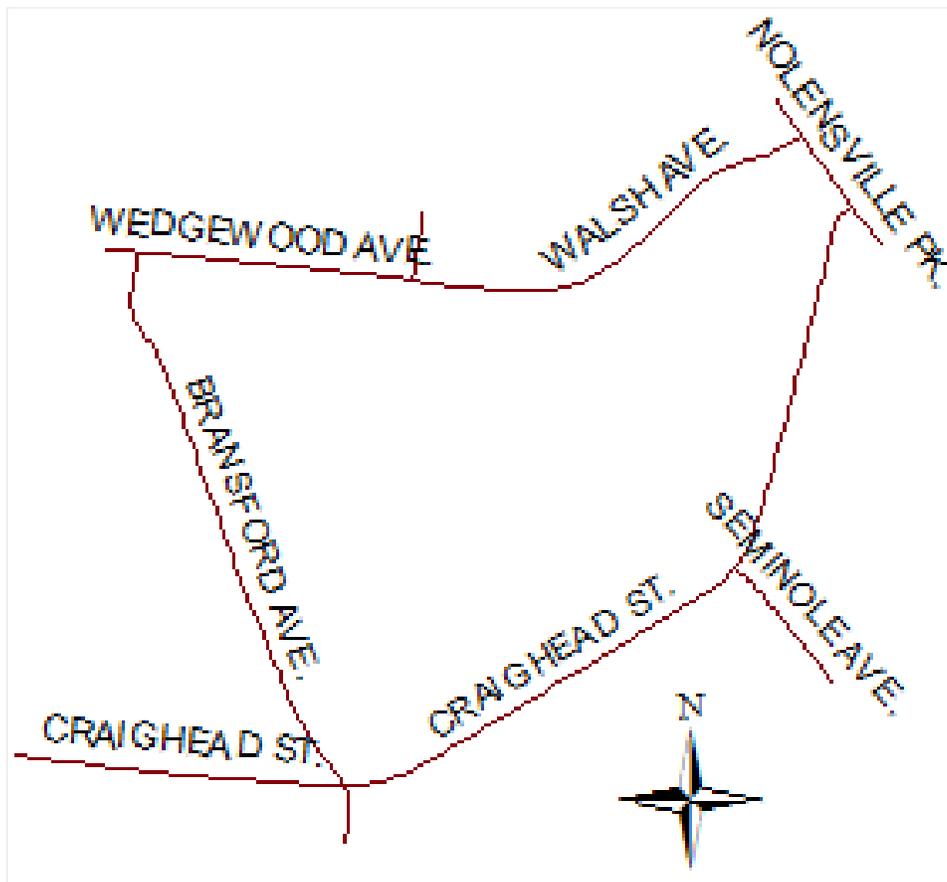


Map Created by Dr. Reginald Archer and Kyra M. Bryant  
Imagery Courtesy of Google Earth. 07.07.16

## FAIRGROUND TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

### Fairground Traffic Analysis Summary

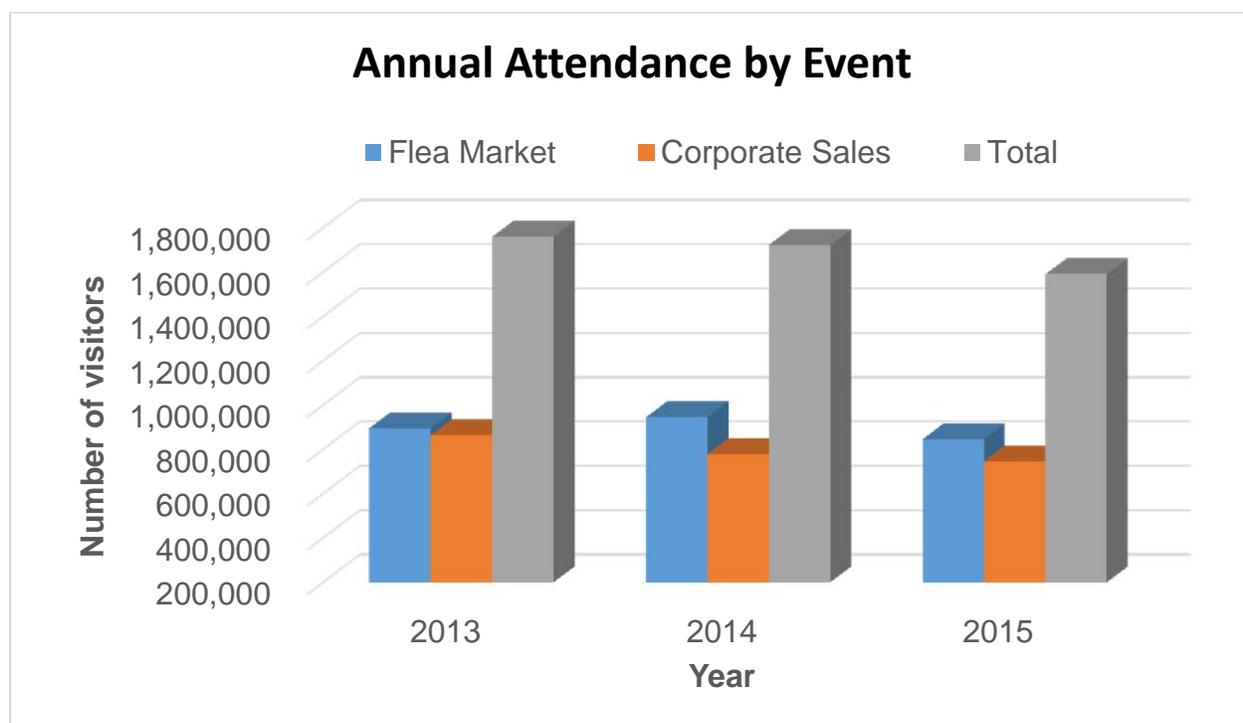
To supplement the Fairgrounds Site Evaluation Study, a detailed traffic impact and parking analysis was conducted with respect to the Tennessee State Fairgrounds access and departure intersections. Specifically, the goal of the study was to achieve the following objectives; 1) Collect and gather parking data and study the parking efficiency of the fairground facility; 2) Collect traffic data and assess existing traffic operating characteristics along main access roads and intersections around the fairground; and 3) To evaluate a proposal to re-route Walsh Road to Craighead Street and assess resulting traffic performance and benefits to the fairground. The street design is shown below.

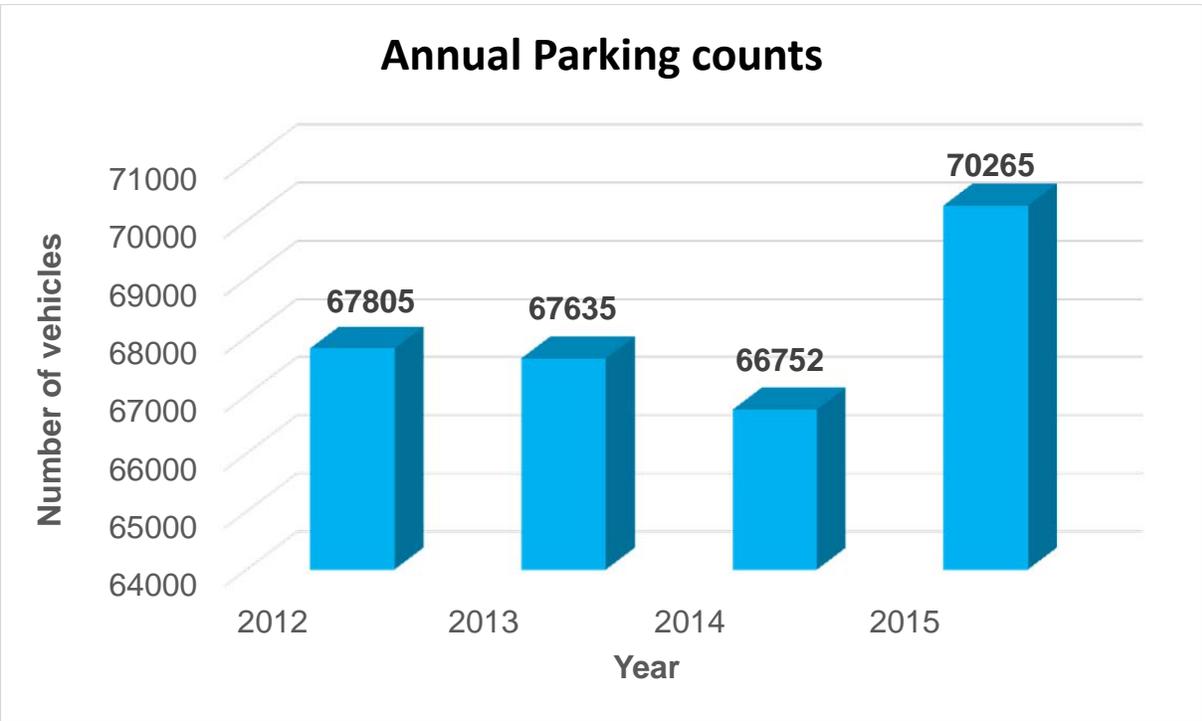


Subsequently, data was obtained from the Fairgrounds staff regarding event attendance, parking revenues and parking counts. Additionally, a request for traffic and turning movement counts was made to the Nashville Metro Planning

Organization (MPO) who provided the required data to conduct traffic simulation and traffic operations analysis.

The parking study conducted indicated that the Fairgrounds receive annual attendance of about 330,000 to 350,000 visitors. As shown in the Financial Section, the Flea market is the biggest contributor to this attendance and attracts an average of 70,000 visitors monthly according to Fairground data. However, attendance is tracked based on parking revenue and it is possible that not all cars are counted. The current parking fee is \$5 per car, while the handicapped parking is free. According to Fairground records, there are approximately 1,200 to 1,300 striped parking spaces and approximately 3,800 to 4,000 paved parking spaces. This number seems sufficient to accommodate an estimated 8000 vehicles visiting the Fairgrounds during regular Flea market events. However, it is believed that there is additional street parking that is unaccountable, especially along Rains Avenue. Attendance and Parking data is shown below.

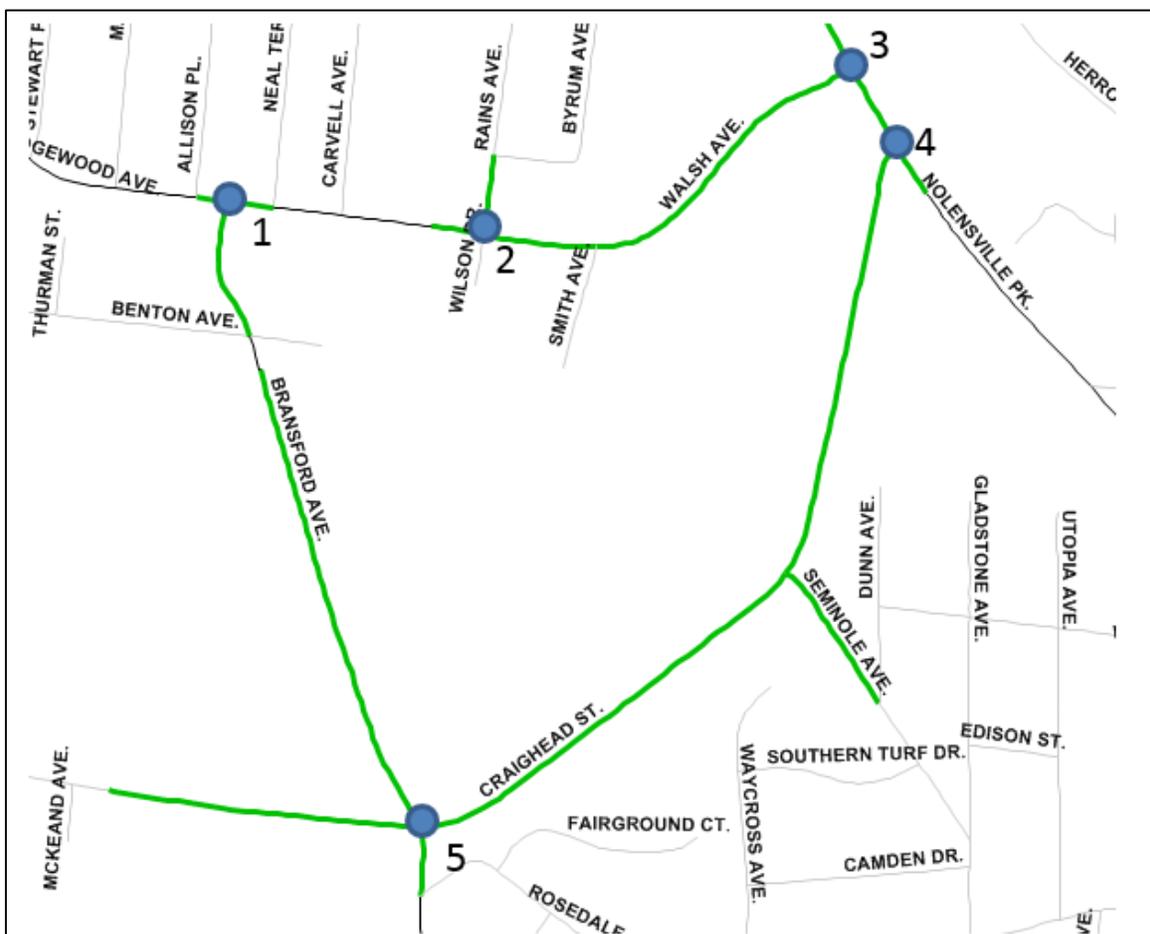




Generally speaking, there is a need to improve the overall accountability of parking revenue for events at the Fairgrounds. This would also include enhancing the infrastructure, access and exit locations, and parking management. New improvements proposed by this study include more lot signage to facilitate traffic flow and parking, and more paved and striped parking spaces. The aspect of bicycle parking should also be incorporated.

The site improvement study further analyzed traffic performance characteristics on major access points to the Nashville Fairgrounds. Wedgewood Avenue - Bransford Avenue intersection, which is the main access from I-65 exit, is currently performing with good progression of traffic movements and has low levels of traffic delay. Nolensville Pike - Craighead Street Intersection is having considerable high levels of delay on all movements, with exception of the right turn movement from Craighead Street to Nolensville Pike. Bransford Avenue - Craighead Street Intersection, is another important access point mostly used by traffic from Nolensville Pike and I-440 to access the Fairgrounds at Gate 6. Most turning movements operate with low levels of delays. Its performance is likely to decline with heavy event traffic. Below is a diagram of access points to the Fairgrounds and five (5) major intersections, and table data for traffic per hour.

### Major Intersections accessing the Fairgrounds

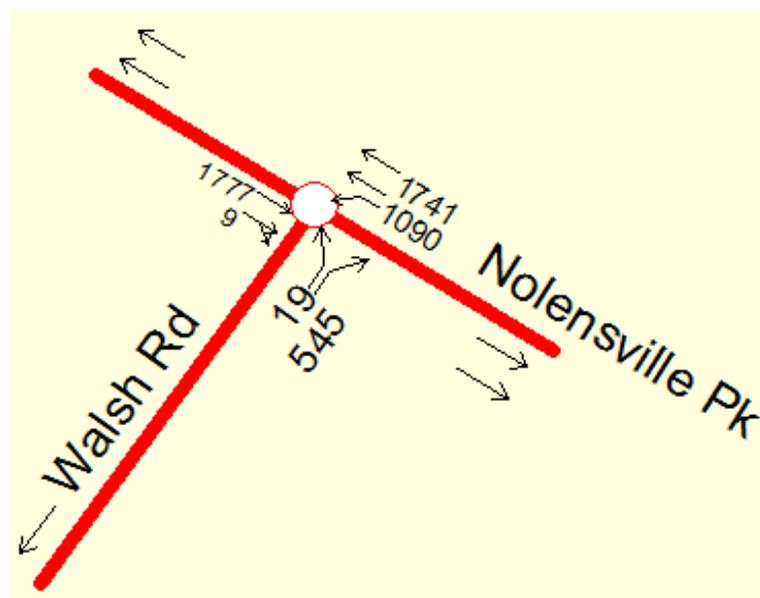


## Major access data for roads to the Fairgrounds

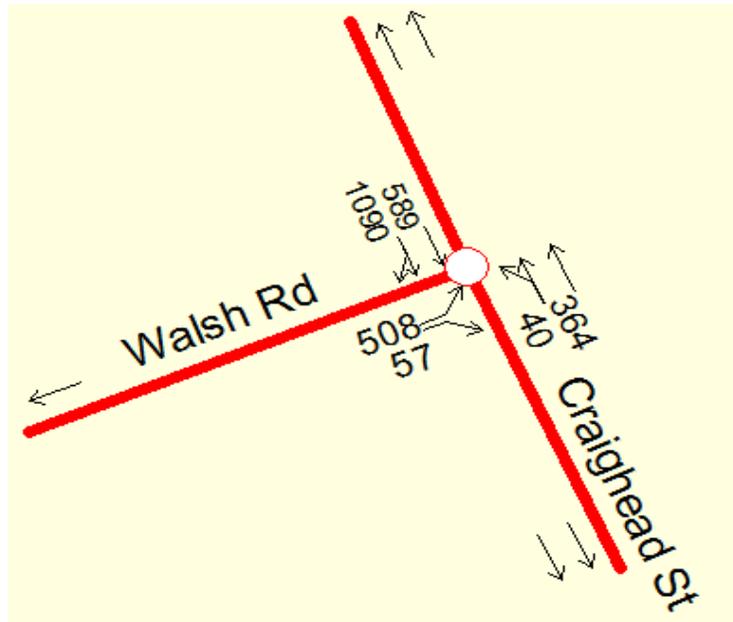
Road	Classification	Number of lanes of lanes	Average traffic	Growth Rate
Wedgewood Ave.	Arterial	4	4542	5%
Rains Ave.	Local	2	2106	5%
Walsh Rd.	Local	2	4340	5%
Nolensville Pk.	Arterial	4	11855	5%
Craighead St.	Collector	4	3432	4%
Bransford Ave.	Collector	2	5280	4%

The traffic study for the Fairgrounds further analyzed the Walsh Road & Nolensville Road Intersection (below), and a proposal to re-route Walsh Road to Craighead Street. This study proposed a traffic signal at the resulting intersection. In general, this intersection would perform better, and is associated with lower traffic delays than the existing Walsh Road – Nolensville Pike intersection. Below is a diagram of *traffic counts per hour of vehicles* and impact of the re-route design.

### Current Walsh Road – Nolensville Pike Intersection



## Proposed Walsh Road - Craighead Street Intersection



Additionally, the re-routed road segment is shorter than the existing 0.36-mile segment, which is easier to maintain. It is also our observation that the re-routing of Walsh Road creates space that is not fragmented, and that could be used for other site development opportunities.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project team consisting of Commonwealth Development Group, Inc. and Tennessee State University has completed the Nashville Fairgrounds Site Evaluation and Improvement Study. This study sought to conduct an assessment of the facilities and make recommendations that will benefit the growth and usage of the facility. Though a number of previous studies have been conducted, the objective of this project was to simply identify opportunities for upgrade, renovation, and suggestions to further impact the local and regional community with the acreage and resources of the Fairgrounds. Listed are the task assessment and actions taken for each:

**TASK ASSESSMENT** - *Revisit and assess the facility condition of buildings and Infrastructure at the Fairgrounds;*

**ACTION** – *Suggest renovation and/or demolition of existing buildings based on condition and income generation;*

**TASK ASSESSMENT** - *Examine and/or update the geographical and urban planning documents for the Fairgrounds Site;*

**ACTION** – *Provided geographical maps of existing site with project report;*

**TASK ASSESSMENT** - *Review revenue generating activities, facility expenses, and events of the Fairgrounds;*

**ACTION** – *Identified income generating activities, facility related expenses, and compiled trending information on the Fairgrounds;*

**TASK ASSESSEMT** - *Recommend site improvements to the existing facilities;*

**ACTION** – *Provided recommendations for renovations and infrastructure improvements;*

**TASK ASSESSMENT** - *Recommend potential uses and/or opportunities for the site;*

**ACTION** – *Recommended community-related developments with available land acreage;*

The project team reviewed several local government documents, previous reports and studies, and talked with many constituents of the Nashville Fairgrounds facility. A team of professional real estate professionals, project managers, GIS/urban planners, and students completed the study of the Nashville Fairgrounds. As a result, the team suggests the following recommendations be implemented over a three (3) year period in phases to coincide with the resources of the local government, and ability to conduct renovations during concurrent Fairgrounds operations. Listed below are the recommendations of the project team:

### Phase 1 / Year 1

- Renovate/upgrade 3 to 5 of the most used exhibition buildings. The renovation should include upgrading the mechanical, electrical systems, plumbing, lighting, hardware, security/low-voltage systems, roofing, and indoor/outdoor painting. Some of the buildings may also require selected structural improvements to address access and building use constraints. Provide an upgrade to the Grandstand for potential usage of future activities;
- Demolish unused and dilapidated buildings, clean up storage lots, unused poles, fences and other outdated features. It is recommended to remove and relocate 140+ school buses from the Fairgrounds property as well as;
- Address selected site improvements: road access and building signage; site furniture, trash receptacles, landscape pockets, exterior lighting and other aesthetic enhancements.
- Create recreational soccer fields (up to 4 – 6) for youth to adult in the flood plain area near Craighead and Bransford intersection, and related recreational parking areas.
- Study, plan, and develop detailed designs for Phase II / Year 2: 1.) Identify and complete additional property improvements; 2.) Develop plans for Brown's Creek Greenway through the Fairgrounds property; 3.) Identify additional park and recreational features for development; 4.) Further study and revise the alignment of Walsh Road to Craighead intersection; and 5.) Initiate the transportation engineering for Walsh Rd. realignment.

## Phase II / Year 2

- Continue systematic Fairgrounds facility upgrades including remodeling, site utilization, alternative building uses, parking and visual appearance upgrades;
- Assess the development of the Brown's Creek Greenway stream naturalization/mitigation effort and the construction of the Greenway through the Fairgrounds property;
- Construct additional parks and recreational soccer fields as needed and park elements and features;
- Consider the engagement of public and private businesses to increase activities and growth of the Fairgrounds;
- Execute the realignment of Walsh Avenue/Road to Craighead Street;
- Study, plan, and develop specific details for Phase III / Year 3

## Phase III / Year 3

- Assess further improvement to the Fairgrounds property;
- Study, plan, and develop specific details for future phases and improvements.

**NOTE** - This study was conducted to only assess the current state of the Nashville Fairgrounds site, its building facilities, review financial operations, and prioritize improvements to the facility based on an informal evaluation by the contractor(s). Much of the review and evaluation obtained required information and documents from Metro government offices, and required personnel interface to make assessments and recommendations to the site. This report does not provide and did not conduct a marketing study or feasibility study for the specific development of the recommendations, detailed management operations, staffing, labor issues, or legal concerns of the site. The report is only to provide recommendations on behalf of the expertise and knowledge of the contractor to the Office of the Mayor of Nashville.

**Acknowledgement** - The project team would like to thank the staff and personnel of the Nashville Fairgrounds and the Metro government offices that provided information to conduct this site study.

# TN Fairground's Building Evaluations



Income Rating:	1 to 10	1 - Most Proficient	10 - Least Proficient
Usage Frequency Rating:	1 to 10	1 - Most Frequent	10 - Least Frequent
Conditions:	Satisfactory	Salvageable	Poor
	Good enough to use in current state	Usable if restored and/or touch up	Cannot be used in current state
			Mostly like to book multiple events throughout year
			Least likely be booked for a large number of events throughout year

Income Rating (\$)	Rate (1-10)
Above \$100,000	1
\$91,000 - \$100,000	2
\$81,000 - \$90,000	3
\$71,000 - \$80,000	4
\$61,000 - \$70,000	5
\$51,000 - \$60,000	6
\$41,000 - \$50,000	7
\$31,000 - \$40,000	8
\$21,000 - \$30,000	9
Below \$21,000	10

Building Name	Income Rating	Building Usage Frequency	Demo?	Paint Conditions	Roofing Conditions	Building Use	Electrical/Lighting	Flooring Conditions	HVAC Conditions	Plumbing Condition	Door Condition	Notes
Agriculture Building	1	1	No	Poor	Poor - Replacement Needed	Fair & Expos	Poor	Salvageable	Poor - (1) 25 ton heat & air unit and (2) 20 ton air only units needs replacement. 2 hang down heater units needing replacement.	Satisfactory	Salvageable	Restrooms need upgrading. HVAC can be upgraded. Ceiling tiles have water damage throughout. Electrical upgrades needed, tripping and failing issues in panels. New paint job needed. Base trim repair.
Annex/Exhibitor's	2	2	No	Poor	Satisfactory - Metal roofing	Fair & Expos	Poor	Salvageable		Satisfactory	Poor	Paint job needed. Ceiling tiles have water damage throughout. Lighting/electrical upgrades needed.
Creative Arts	2	1	No	Salvageable	Poor - Replacement Needed	Fair & Expos	Poor	Salvageable	17 1/2 ton unit needs to be replaced.	Satisfactory	Poor	Door, frame and hardware need replacements. Paint job needed. Ceiling tiles to be replaced. Electrical upgrades in panels. Main Switchgear need increased capacity.
Exhibitor's/Annex	2	2	No	Poor	Satisfactory	Fair & Expos	Poor	Salvageable	Poor - (2) hang down heater units need replacing. (2) 7 1/2 units and (1) 17 1/2 unit	Satisfactory	Poor	HVAC has 30 ton units that needs to be replaced. Paint job needed. Water damage in ceiling tiles. Lighting/electrical upgrades needed.
Banquet Hall	5	3	No	Salvageable	Poor - Replacement Needed, leaks a lot.	Fair & Expos	Poor	Salvageable	7 ton (air only) condenser need to be replaced. Need additional cooling units (currently has six small units)	Poor	Poor	Water damage in ceiling tiles throughout. Paint job needed. Plumbing is men's restroom is bad, pipe leaking in wall.
Sports Arena	8	5	No	Salvageable	Poor - Metal roofing need replacing. Leaks a lot	Fair & Other Events	Poor		Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Power wash and paint
Grandstand	N/A	N/A	No	Salvageable	Satisfactory	Races	Poor	Salvageable	Salvageable	Poor	Salvageable	Restrooms and entrance area is in need of full restoration
Vaughan	8	5	No	Salvageable	Poor	Fair ONLY	Salvageable	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Salvageable	HVAC has 4 units and need 3 to be replaced. Overhead door damaged. Paint job needed. Ceiling tiles has water damaged. Insulation needs to be redone.
Wilson Hall	10	6	No	Salvageable	Poor - Metal roofing need replacing. Leaks a lot	Fair & Other Events	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Water damage in ceiling tiles throughout. Base trim needs repair. Rollup door needs repairs. Restrooms can be upgraded. Flooring is peeling. Kitchen can be upgraded *Check A/v for possible upgrades.
Walsh House	10	10	Yes									
Sanitation Building	10	10	Yes	Poor	Poor	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
Volunteer Village	10	10	Yes									

**FAIRGROUNDS NASHVILLE - BUDGETING DRAFT**

<b><u>Building</u></b>	<b><u>SqFt.</u></b>	<b><u>Low End</u></b>	<b><u>High End</u></b>	<b><u>Low End/SqFt.</u></b>	<b><u>High End/SqFt.</u></b>
<b>DEMO</b>		\$ 350,000.00	\$ 450,000.00		
Village					
Sanitary					
Walsh					
Old Storage (2)					
<b>Creative Arts</b>	28,830	\$ 1,875,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 65.04	\$ 69.37
<b>Agriculture</b>	21,400	\$ 1,400,000.00	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ 65.42	\$ 70.09
<b>Annex/Ehibitor's</b>	22,800	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ 1,600,000.00	\$ 65.79	\$ 70.18
<b>Banquet Hall</b>	10,500	\$ 700,000.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 66.67	\$ 71.43
<b>Sports Arena</b>	11,000	\$ 715,000.00	\$ 775,000.00	\$ 65.00	\$ 70.45
<b>Grandstands</b>		\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 3,500,000.00		
<b>Exterior</b>		\$ 750,000.00	\$ 850,000.00		
Signage					
Landscape					
Paving					
		\$ 9,790,000.00	\$ 11,425,000.00		
<b>Soft Cost</b>		\$ 979,000.00	\$ 1,142,500.00		
Design	Incl.				
Engineering	Incl.				
Project Mgmt.	Incl.				
Permits	Incl.				
Testing	Incl.				
Insurance/bonds	Incl.				
		\$ 10,769,000.00	\$ 12,567,500.00		
FF&E		\$ 100,000.00	\$ 150,000.00		
Contingency 10%		\$ 1,086,900.00	\$ 1,271,750.00		
<b>FAIRGROUNDS IMPROVMENTS</b>		<b>\$ 11,955,900.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,989,250.00</b>		

<u>Building</u>	<u>SqFt.</u>	<u>Low End</u>	<u>High End</u>	<u>Low End/SqFt.</u>	<u>High End/SqFt.</u>
<b>Parks - Sports Fields</b>		\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 3,500,000.00		
<i>Soft Cost</i>		\$ 250,000.00	\$ 350,000.00		
Design	Incl.				
Engineering	Incl.				
PM	Incl.				
Testing	Incl.				
Insurance/bonds	Incl.				
		\$ 2,750,000.00	\$ 3,850,000.00		
Contingency 10%		\$ 275,000.00	\$ 385,000.00		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 3,025,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,235,000.00</b>		