



NAPA COUNTY FAIR & FIREWORKS
MOUNT ST. HELENA GOLF COURSE
CALISTOGA SPEEDWAY
CALISTOGA RV PARK

October 26, 2016

NAPA COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION Strategic Planning

Joint Powers Authority Governance Recommendations

Background

We appreciate the response of the Napa County Board of Supervisors and the Calistoga City Council to our request to consider the formation of a Joint Powers Authority to govern the operation of the Napa County Fairgrounds.

The Napa County Fair Association Board, in a recent strategic planning workshop, reviewed and affirmed planning assumptions and set direction for future development of a master plan. In that process, the board also affirmed the opportunity and benefits of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) between the County of Napa and the City of Calistoga as a potential governance structure for the Napa County Fairgrounds.

The Board of Directors of the Napa County Fair Association respectfully submits the following considerations to the joint committee assigned to research and evaluate a JPA governance model for the Napa County Fairgrounds.

We would also appreciate an opportunity to meet with the committee to discuss the recommendations listed below and to provide historical context based on our 80 years of operating the fairgrounds.

Joint Powers Authority Critical Planning Considerations.

- 1) The core purpose of the Napa County Fairgrounds – *to serve the citizens of Napa County with cultural, economic and social benefits in times of celebration as well as need* - should remain central to discussions and development of the JPA governance structure.
- 2) The JPA structure should preserve the tradition of presenting an annual County Fair - a community celebration and representation of Napa County's agricultural and civic heritage.
- 3) The JPA structure should insure that the Napa County Fairgrounds remain eligible to participate in and receive benefit from the California Network of Fairs, including the possibility of receiving State and/or Federal funds to support programs and/or facility improvements.

- 4) The JPA structure should commit to continuing to operate the fairgrounds as a resource for public benefit.
 - a. A place for learning and education;
 - b. A place for entertainment and recreation;
 - c. A place that provides opportunity for community, family and business involvement;
 - d. A place that supports tourism to the region;
 - e. A place that supports emergency preparedness, response, and disaster relief need of the community.

- 5) The JPA structure should consider land uses that include open space areas and flexible use facilities to support ongoing activities described above and to support emergency preparedness, response, and disaster relief needs of the community.

- 6) The JPA structure should take into account the benefits of a future role for the Fair Association, such as continuing management operations, fundraising, concession operation, or any other role that would be appropriate for a supporting entity.

- 7) The JPA board structure should include representation by the Napa County Fair Association Board.

- 8) The JPA structure should retain current management and staff currently employed by the Napa County Fair Association to ensure a smooth transition, continue established programs, and further develop private-public partnership and fundraising opportunities.

- 9) The JPA structure should consider and define future land uses on the Napa County Fairgrounds. We recommend the following:
 - a. Consider uses that serve the greater public good and allow for equal access for citizens of Napa County.
 - b. Consider uses that complement the annual County Fair.
 - c. Consider configurations and land use planning that creates open space areas and flexible use facilities to support emergency preparedness, response, and disaster relief.

- 10) It is equally important is to consider land uses that would *not be compatible* with the core purpose of the Napa County Fairgrounds. The Napa County Fair Association board believes the following uses should be expressly excluded in any JPA structure:
 - a. Selling or leasing fairgrounds property for housing.
 - b. Selling or leasing fairgrounds property for a commercial use that competes with Calistoga downtown businesses.
 - c. Selling or leasing fairgrounds property for a use that does not benefit the public and/or detracts from other public benefit uses.
 - d. Selling or leasing fairgrounds property for a hotel or lodging use that competes with Calistoga downtown hotel/lodging businesses.
 - ✧ *However, a lodging concept that supports personal event use on the fairgrounds such as weddings, family gatherings, and memorials should be considered if it can be customized in such a way that it supports community benefits.*

- 11) Investment in the fairgrounds infrastructure and facilities is needed. Current operations of programs on the fairgrounds do not generate enough proceeds to fund needed infrastructure repairs, upgrades and capital improvements. The JPA structure must effectively support:
- a. Investment and funding of fairgrounds infrastructure improvements and new facilities;
 - b. The ability to generate significant investment capital to support infrastructure repair and capital improvements such as issuing public bonds;
 - c. Proceeds from fairgrounds programs and land uses should be earmarked for funding improvements and facilities – that is, all proceeds should be reinvested into the fairgrounds.
 - d. Commitment of government funds if needed to build civic center type of buildings or facilities.
 - e. Strong encouragement of public/private partnerships.

The Napa County Fair Association stands ready to assist the JPA joint research committee in evaluating, studying and considering the JPA governance structure as a means to sustain the Napa County Fairgrounds, the community's number 1 asset, and to support the ability for the Napa County Fairgrounds to thrive for future generations.

Sincerely,

Bob Beck
Chairperson
Napa County Fair Association