

From: Regina Mundekis <reggie_mundekis@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 10:13 AM
To: Ashleigh Aitken Board (aitken@ocfairboard.com); Barbara Bagneris; Sandra Cervantes; Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia; npham@ocfairboard.com; rruiz@ocfairboard.com; nkovacevich@ocfairboard.com; dlabelle@ocfairboard.com
Cc: Michele Richards
Subject: Infrastructure Analysis Workshop Letter
Attachments: 2020_10_02_Infrastructure_Ltr_to_Board.pdf

Dear Board,

Please see the attached letter regarding the Draft Infrastructure Analysis and workshop on said subject.

Thank you for your interest in this matter,

Reggie Mundekis



Friends and Neighbors of the Orange County Fairgrounds
Working for a Fairgrounds that is Focused on the Community

PMB 5014
600 W Santa Ana Blvd, Ste 114A
Santa Ana, CA 92701
reggie_mundekis@me.com

October 6, 2020

VIA E-MAIL

Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia, Board Chair
32nd District Agricultural Ass'n Board
32nd District Agricultural Ass'n
88 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

RE: *Information Regarding Draft Infrastructure Analysis*

Dear Board,

We are writing to you to discuss the Draft Infrastructure Audit (referred to as “Audit” herein) which is the subject of a public workshop on October 7, 2020. We appreciate the effort the Audit entailed and see the Audit findings as opportunities to improve the buildings and facilities at the 32nd District Agricultural Association (referred to as “32nd DAA” herein). The needs of the 32nd DAA which have included addressing immediate requirements and statutory compliance issues, conservation of historic buildings, has been impacted by the recognition of a need to plan for a future which has changed considerably since the Audit was conceived. As such, we wanted to provide you with the following written observations in each of these areas that we hope you will consider while contemplating future actions stemming from the Infrastructure Audit.

Immediate Requirements

Deferred Maintenance in the Equestrian Center: The Audit identified a number of areas in the Equestrian Center (referred to as “EQC” herein) which have deferred maintenance, including deferred maintenance which may have caused structural damage to buildings owned by the 32nd DAA. This is an opportunity to have needed maintenance performed while work on a new vision for the EQC is created.

The Audit findings include:

- **Shop and Storage Building:** Replacement recommended for roof and roof structure, windows, exterior door, and parking lots. Interior walls need to be painted.
- **Barns:** Replacement recommended for sinks, large metal rolling doors and interior metal walls. Wood patios need to be repainted with repairs made as needed. Conducting a structural study to

- assess damage from deferred maintenance is needed.
- Metal Bleachers at Arena: Need to be replaced.
- Metal Tube Fencing: Multiple areas recommended for replacement.

A contractor operates the EQC and is obligated under their contract to pay for maintenance, upkeep, and repairs to the EQC. (Refer to Equestrian Center Restated Rental Agreement Terms and Conditions §6 Improvements, Maintenance and Repairs.) The contracted EQC operator is bound under the contract to pay for the structural study and for any and all need repairs and replacements to the satisfaction of the 32nd DAA.

It is our understanding that the term of the operations contract for the EQC has expired and is being continued on a term-to-term basis. This might be an opportunity to reevaluate the role of the EQC as part of the 32nd DAA, e.g., a transition from a for-profit private boarding and training facility to a center for equestrian-based public outreach programming and the facility needs for the future.

Improving Electrical Power System and Eliminating Use of Lights Powered by Diesel

Generators: Past practice has been to rent diesel powered generators to provide additional lighting at several gates to allow parking sales at night with the rentals on a regular and scheduled basis. Additionally, diesel powered generators have regularly been used to provide power to re-occurring tenants of OCFEC. There is at least anecdotal evidence that the current power capacity of the OCFEC may be insufficient to satisfy the facilities current and near-future needs. Although the Utilities Infrastructure Study appeared to be a thorough and professional analysis of the condition of the Utilities systems and subsystems, it does not appear to have included any analysis of current and future utility needs. We recommend such a study to assess the current and near-future utility needs of the OCFEC and to, perhaps, suggest broad areas where the OCFEC can be more environmentally friendly and/or more cost effective in its utility usage.

Compliance Issues

California Americans with Disabilities Act Standards: California has standards for access by disabled persons which are more encompassing than the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (referred to as “ADA” herein”). Barriers to access for all remain and need to be addressed. A consultant specializing in California ADA issues should be engaged to inspect the buildings and facilities and to create a plan for bringing the property up to California ADA standards. Creating a highly accessible facility will be a marketing point and add to the brand.

Addressing Impacts of Climate Change: We are feeling impacts of climate change with hotter summers and periods of droughts interspersed with wet winters with heavy rains which can cause localized flooding. State agencies were directed in California Executive Order B-30-15 to take actions to identify risks associated with climate change and to consider climate change in all planning and investment, including infrastructure investment. A starting place is State guidance for agencies, “Planning and Investing for a Resilient California: A Guidebook for State Agencies” and “Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update.”

Increasingly hot and humid summers have been impacting the OC Fair in recent years and environmentally responsible ways to make customers more comfortable are likely to become even more important in the near future. We believe that the 32nd DAA can become an example of adapting events and facilities to climate change and use these changes as a way to attract business and

customers, e.g., building large shade structures over the Main Mall capped with solar panels to both cool the mall and generate power. Such an effort, which might be performed in conjunction with the utility needs analysis can put the 32nd DAA at the forefront of such efforts.

Conservation of Historic Buildings

Historic buildings on the 32nd DAA property contribute to the character of the property and need to be conserved and used to educate the public about the history of the property including how use of the property has changed over time. Historic areas are marketable and successful with the long term draw of Old Towne Orange being an example.

- **Baja Blues and Building 15 (Farmhouse):** These are historic buildings which date from the Santa Ana Army Air Base and must remain on the property. Studies are needed to determine how to conserve and enhance historical elements and educational materials explaining the historic significance of the buildings are needed.
- **Livestock Barns:** These pre-1950 barns may be original buildings from the beginning of the Orange County Fairgrounds. Studies are needed to determine how to conserve and enhance historical elements and educational materials explaining the historic significance of the buildings are needed.

Planning for a Changed Future

Facility Improvements and Changes Needed to Deal with Disease Outbreaks: The current COVID-19 pandemic requires operational changes for all businesses including reduced capacities to allow for social distancing, spaces at entry points to allow for health screenings, and increased sanitation including hand washing. Although we hope that immediate impacts of COVID-19 will be under control by the time any infrastructure updates or changes are being made at the 32nd DAA as a result of this study, the reality of the highly connected world in which we live, has lead both the National Security Counsel and the National Institutes of Health to conclude that we will likely face additional virulent disease threats in the coming years. The 32nd DAA should evaluate improving building ventilation, increasing the number of bathrooms and separate hand washing areas, and limiting soft surfaces in favor of hard surfaces which are easier to sanitize, among other changes, to prepare for current and future disease outbreaks. When remodeling plans are made for an existing facility such as the bathrooms and food facilities at the Pacific Amphitheatre, a determination should be made if it is cost effective to remodel or if the existing facility should be rebuilt anew to current standards.

Creating Yearly Maintenance Cycle and Budget: The significant number of maintenance issues identified in the Audit, ranging from paint, to inoperable dust collection systems, to issues with roofs and windows, among others, raise a number of issues:

- **Track and Manage Maintenance Project:** Tracking of maintenance projects is needed. Staff must not feel pressure to not place needed maintenance projects on the list especially those impacting health and safety such as the dust collection system.
- **Plan for Preventative Maintenance:** Preventative maintenance is the cheapest maintenance in that long term damage to buildings and facilities is curtailed. Maintenance needs for each building such as painting, sealing floors, and inspecting windows and roofs, in addition to other needs, should be established along with a schedule for conducting said maintenance needs.
- **Create a Maintenance Budget:** A budget for maintenance apart from the capital projects budget is needed.

Apply Industry Standard Construction Management Techniques: We recently wrote to you about the applicability of, and advantages arising from, the use of industry standard and legally mandated construction management techniques to the 32nd DAA. We hope that you will consider applying these as you move forward in addressing issues raised in the audit. We, especially, want to encourage the use of a specific planning, plan check/evaluation, and plan approval step with separate approval of the development plan and budget for capital improvement plans. This should lead to less public surprise, fiscal shock, and easier management going forward.

We look forward to continuing discussions on how to create world class facilities at the 32nd DAA. Our fairgrounds can become a showcase of how to be accessible to all while being prepared to deal with ongoing issues of climate change and upcoming disease outbreaks and educating the public about their history through conservation of historic resources.

Thank you for your interest in these matters,



Reggie Mundekis
President, Friends and Neighbors of the
Orange County Fairgrounds

Distribution:

Board of Directors - 32nd District Agricultural Ass'n

Chair Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia
Vice Chair Doug La Belle
Ashleigh Aitken
Barbara Bagneris
Sandra Cervantes
Nick Kovacevich
Newton Pham
Robert Ruiz

nrubalcava-garcia@ocfairboard.com
dlabelle@ocfairboard.com
aaiken@ocfairboard.com
bbagneris@ocfairboard.com
scervantes@ocfairboard.com
nkovacevich@ocfairboard.com
npham@ocfairboard.com
r Ruiz@ocfairboard.com

CC: CEO Michele Richards *mrichards@ocfair.com*