



## Strategic Planning Workshop June 24, 2016

### Minutes

The strategic planning workshop of the 19<sup>th</sup> District Agricultural Association board of directors was called to order by President Rose at 9:15 am at Earl's Place Meeting Room on the Earl Warren Showgrounds.

Present were:

President Mary Rose

Director Miguel Avila

Director Gerardo Cornejo

Director Suzanne Perkins

Scott Grieves, CEO

Nancy \_\_\_\_\_, member of the public.

Becky Bailey-Findley, Facilitator

Vice President Michael Medel

Director Marshall Miller

Director Carola Nicholson

Director Betty Weiner

Pat Cary, Deputy General Manager

The planning workshop was turned over to facilitator Bailey-Findley who provided the following introduction and overview of strategic planning.

#### **Why Strategic Planning?**

- Cannot predict the future. You can create your future.
- Set specific goals and objectives, making decisions and acting upon the direction set.
- A series of well thought out, researched and systematic decision for the future makes up strategic planning.
- Understanding the past with an eye to the future.
- Knowing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the fair organization(s).
- Clearly understanding and embracing the purpose and direction of the fair organization(s).
- Creating an action plan to meet the goals.
- Being accountable to the community and the organization(s).

## Introductions

The participants then introduced themselves by sharing how many years they have been associated with the Earl Warren Showgrounds and Santa Barbara Fair & Expo and by sharing a childhood experience that shaped who they are as adults.

In total, the group represented over 300 years of experience with the Earl Warren Showgrounds. It was determined that the needed expertise for strategic planning for the future of the Earl Warren Showgrounds was in the room.

## Ground Rules for Strategic Planning Workshop

Bailey-Findley reviewed ground rules for the day. The rules include:

1. Confidentiality
2. Action
3. Contribute
4. Listen for Understanding
5. Focus
6. Pareto Principle

Pareto was an 18<sup>th</sup> century economist who recognized the natural ration of 80/20 in his world. In his view, 80% of the wealth was owned by 20% of the people. Other examples of the 80/20 ration in our world were detailed. In the context of the strategic planning session the 80/20 ratio means:

Focus on the **VITAL** few.  
Ignore the **TRIVIAL** many.

## Expectations for the Planning Session

The participants then shared what their expectations for the planning session were – what they hoped to accomplish. Their answers included:

- ◆ Outline a clear vision.
- ◆ Ranking our ideas in priority order.
- ◆ Developing consensus in goal setting
- ◆ Understanding the financial position and business of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA
- ◆ Articulating a clear view of the future for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA. Clearly identifying negotiables and non-negotiables.
- ◆ Clearly identifying objectives
- ◆ Denoting facility improvements and creating a 5-year plan.
- ◆ Ranking the facility improvement priorities
- ◆ Building consensus on what is discussed.
- ◆ Bringing the mission of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA to the forefront and use it as a guide to focus our efforts.
- ◆ Creating a vision for a multi-year plan, planning to accomplish the plan. Seek clarity.

- ◆ The 19<sup>th</sup> DAA is at a crossroads. Our goals and objectives set the direction for the organization. We want to articulate the most important direction for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA.
- ◆ One direction!

## **Assessing Past Performance of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA**

### **What has the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA Done Well in the Past?**

- + Survived through adversity. Survived no funding and a poor economy.
- + Survived a “hostile takeover” of the organization – a direction that did not make sense.
- + Provided a remedy for equestrian stakeholder concerns.
- + Creating a civic focus within the community
- + Growth of the fair and event businesses.
- + Developing diversity in income streams.
- + Performed with a balance between strong traditions with current community needs with the need for financial stability.
- + Evolving to meet community expectations and financial needs.
- + Preserved traditional events and programs.
- + Interaction and services of staff.
- + Providing support and assistance for outside events to grow.
- + Making use of the funding and staff that we have.
- + Worked through issues related to the Earl Warren Foundation.
- + Created a new, effective foundation.
- + Survived reduction and elimination of State funds that once supported deferred maintenance.
- + Facilities are the best they can be while in survival mode.
- + Accomplished effective “belt tightening” in order to survive.
- + The staff is doing more with less.

### **What in 19<sup>th</sup> DAA’s Past Could Have Been Done Better?**

- Inability to invest in the property, meeting maintenance needs. Funding issues.
- Lost State “subsidies” that funded specific operations or requirements.
- The Earl Warren Showgrounds Foundation issues resulted in a non-productive relationship with the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA.
- Long standing renters/events and their sense of entitlement. Policies not fairly exercised.
- Community understanding of what the DAA offers and 19<sup>th</sup> DAA benefits provided to the community.
- Conflict and confusion in the community about the role of the two foundations.
- Competition for donations and charitable giving.
- Lack of positive media relationships and partnerships.

- Lack of funds to invest in “business” development and facilities.
- Marketing and sales function.
- Balance of “nonprofit” and “Business” approach to managing the showgrounds.
- Marketing our rental program.
- Community awareness and understanding of how their needs can be met at the Earl Warren Showgrounds.
- Recognition of the highest and best use of the fairgrounds and facilities.
- Self-promotion of the Earl Warren Showgrounds.
- Focused marketing and sales function.
- Local competition.
- Understanding what yields a return on investment most effectively.
- Not playing to our strengths.
- Staying current with Hispanic community. Need to market to this segment of the community.
- Adapting to change and moving forward with traditional programs. Managing passion!
- Ambiguous about our “business” in order to support our goals.
- What are we losing money on? What is a reasonable return on investment?

**What are the key concerns impacting the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA’s future?**

- \* Financial health and stability
- \* Preserving the equestrian tradition.
- \* Keeping current with facility improvements
- \* Providing for staff development and support
- \* Focus on community service and meeting community needs.
- \* Articulating the identify of the Earl Warren Showgrounds.
- \* Evaluating the highest and best use of the showgrounds and facilities.

**Assessing Current Conditions**

CEO Grieves lead the board through a review of the current financial condition of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA. He presented a break down of revenue and expenses by source. **(See attached reports.) (Unfortunately I came away without the reports. Please attach to the minutes when sending out for review.)**

The group then engaged in a SWOT analysis of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA. Their analysis is as follows.

**Strengths of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA**

(Check marks indicate repeat mentions of this strength)

- ✓✓✓✓✓ Location of the Earl Warren Showgrounds
- ✓✓✓✓ Engagement of the board of directors

- ✓✓ Competent and dedicated staff
- ✓✓ A multi-use facility and community center
- ✓ Ownership of the property
- Strong name recognition and local tradition
- Latent and potential demand
- Timing in the market
- Opportunity for growth in the future.
- Land and available facilities
- Building on historic uses.
- Balanced budget
- Strong Hispanic market involved in the Fair and showgrounds.
- They are a local market.

### **Areas for Growth/Weaknesses of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA**

(Check marks indicate repeat mentions of this weakness)

- ✓✓✓ Condition of the facilities
- ✓ Existing Site plan
- ✓ Underutilized facilities and grounds
- ✓ Not fulfilling the mission of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA
- ✓ Property not large enough to support expansion. Land locked.
- ✓ Community awareness of the benefits the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA provides
- The pervasive attitude that “its always been done that way.”
- Ownership of the property.
- Not sufficient funds to improve the facilities
- Marketing and promotional efforts.
- Lack of community media partners.
- Financial position is not strong.
- Degradation of facilities.
- Understanding cost accounting of 19<sup>th</sup> DAA business units.
- Lack of a sales team and sales function.
- Need to expanded relationship with Foundation.

### **Opportunities in the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA’s Future**

(Check marks indicate repeat mentions of this opportunity.)

- ✓ Interest from two potential long-term tenants
- Large donor naming opportunities
- Sponsorship opportunities
- Helping traditional uses and events grow. Partnering with existing events.
- Cross promotions with events and tenants.
- Partnership with hotels who do not have event/convention space.
- Help drive hotel beds. Share in TOT.
- Marketing to event planners. Take membership in event planner groups.

Hire a sales team or person on commission to bring in opportunities.  
 Develop marketing and outreach efforts and tools.  
 Evaluate existing facility uses, fees and compatibility of events.  
 Evaluate the “name” of the facility. What is our image, identify and branding.  
 Fair sponsorship, partnership, theming and alcohol sponsorships.  
 Integration of the Hispanic community with the equestrian mission of the showgrounds.

### **Threats to the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA’s Future**

(Check marks indicate repeat mentions of this threat.)

- ✓✓ Lack of facility improvements and the liability the deficiencies may \ cause: ADA, healthy & safety.
- ✓✓ Impact of long-term rentals.
- ✓ Inability to control rising costs: labor, leave balances, utility costs, etc.
- ✓ The State selling a portion of the property  
 Failure to adapt and evolve. Do nothing.  
 Population shift and the influence of the millennial market.  
 Failure to adapt to new ideas.  
 The volatility of the world economy.  
 Failure to work as a team to be innovators.  
 It takes time to implement change.  
 The board can be a threat by not supporting consensus.  
 Turnover in the board and redirection of vision.  
 Drought and use of water.  
 State laws changing to unfavorable conditions for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA.  
 City and County relationship  
 Unknown future of the neighboring golf course.  
 Not integration the Hispanic customer into the equestrian tradition.

## **Planning for the Future**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission statement of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA is to accomplish the following:

- ✓ Defines the purpose of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA.
- ✓ Why does the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA exist?
- ✓ What does the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA stand for?

The existing mission statement of the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA is:

## Current Mission Statement

The 19<sup>th</sup> District Agricultural Association manages Earl Warren Showgrounds as a financially self-supporting entity that maintains a first-class equine facility, promotes and supports agricultural resources, provides facilities for community events, meetings, and emergency response, and furthers the goals and objectives of the Association and the State of California.

The board discussed aspects of the mission statement that are critically important concepts:

- ◇ Equestrian Lifestyle
- ◇ Agriculture
- ◇ Supporting Community Events
- ◇ Serving as an Emergency Response Facility

The board determined that they would continue to support the current mission statement. As the strategic planning process evolves, they may wish to evaluate the mission statement for current relevancy.

## Vision Statement

The vision statement for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA is to accomplish the following:

- ✓ States where you want to go.
- ✓ What do you envision for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA?
- ✓ What do you want to be in the future?

The current vision statement is:

- a. To be a well-known, modern and efficient multi-use service destination facility offering a wide variety of educational and entertaining experiences for residents and visitors.
- b. Preserve and perpetuate equine tradition through the development and maintenance of first class equestrian facilities.
- c. Promote and support agriculture and serve as a neutral third party arbiter of agricultural excellence.
- d. Develop and maintain facilities for community access events and meetings.
- e. Actively engage in educational and youth oriented programs that promote local community and cultural enrichment.
- f. To be a valued community asset and considered a component of Santa Barbara's quality of life. To be so integrated in the daily life of the community that individuals, organizations and companies of all types willingly invest resources in our success.

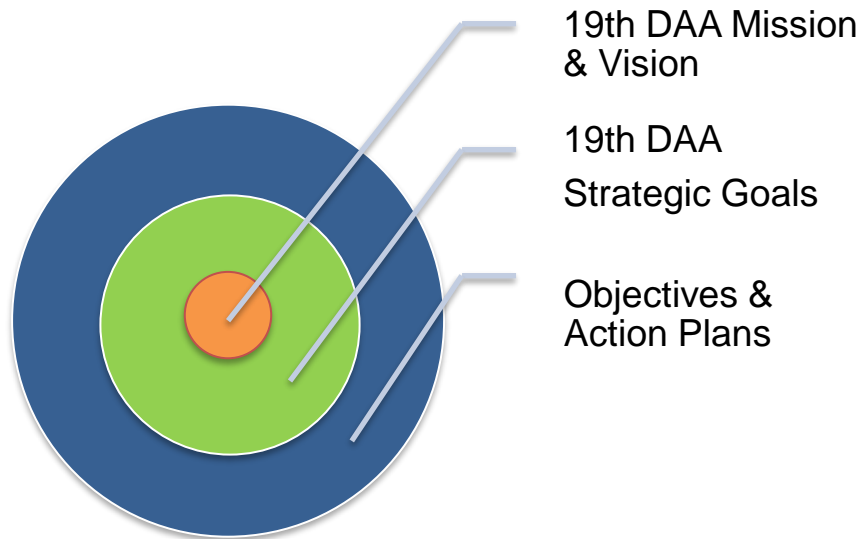
It was suggested that the Vision Statement be changed to:

## Proposed Vision Statement

To be a valued community asset and considered a component of Santa Barbara's quality of life. To be so integrated in the daily life of the community that individuals, organizations and companies of all types willingly invest resources in our success.

How do the mission and vision statements influence the planning process?

## The Target



## Setting Strategic Goals

### Goals at a 30,000' Level

The group prepared to set strategic goals for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA. They were encouraged to:

- Think beyond the current performance and capabilities of the organizations.
- Goals need to be clear, tangible – easy to understand.
- Goals need to be compelling – a call to action.
- Establish a clear finish line with strategic goals.
- Goals are to be engaging to the board, staff, stakeholders and the community.
- The best goals are energizing and motivating.

The group engaged in a process that articulated strategic goals and then selection of priorities. The following goals are listed in priority order. The bolded goals are the identified priorities for 2016.



- A. Develop a business plan that grows net proceeds to fund ongoing facility improvements and growth of the organization. The objectives of the business plan are to assess all current business units and plan how to maximize highest and best use of facilities and grounds. Additionally, new business opportunities will be considered and implemented under the same standard of highest and best use of the facilities and grounds.**
- B. Develop a facility improvement plan that incorporates both deferred maintenance planning and addition of new and remodeling facility improvements with a focus on addressing safety and accessibility issues as well as aesthetic and modernization enhancements. The plan is to be updated every two years.**
- C. In support of the business plan for the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA, create a comprehensive marketing, public relations and rebranding plan, including a sales function. Support the addition of staff and resources to implement this marketing and communications plan.**
- D. Grow the use and rental of the showgrounds for events, including events that are supported and promoted by the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA, increasing net proceeds of the year round event business unit by 5% annually.**
- E. In partnership with the Foundation, engage a grant writer to solicit grant opportunities in support of cultural events sponsored by the 19<sup>th</sup> DAA.**

## **How Do We Get There**

### **Setting Objectives and Action Plans**

To fully develop the strategic plan, objectives and action plans need to be created for each of the priority goals.

Objectives for the goals assists the organizations as follows:

1. They help focus time and energy on activities that are most likely to achieve the goals.
2. The organization knows how to allocate Fair resources.
3. Goals and objects set you apart from your competition. They give you a competitive edge.
4. The goals and objectives communicate the direction and plan to the organization and holds the organization (board, staff, and stakeholders) accountable for results.

5. Objectives allow you to track results and make mid-course adjustments if needed.
6. Goals and objectives help plan for the long term in order to address complex issues. It is important to avoid “seasonal” planning.

Once the objectives are identified, then specific action plans are articulated, including the step to be taken, by whom and by when.



To demonstrate how to develop objectives and action plans for a priority goal, the group worked with the facilitator in outlining objectives and action plans for one of the priority goals.

**Goal B: Develop a facility improvement plan that incorporates both deferred maintenance planning and addition of new and remodeling facility improvements with a focus on addressing safety and accessibility issues as well as aesthetic and modernization enhancements. The plan is to be updated every two years.**

**Objective 1:** Develop a priority capital improvement project list.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
Survey stakeholders and event renters, asking for suggested improvements.	CEO & Staff	
List all known improvements.	CEO & Staff	
Categorize the improvements by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Those that can be completed in house – by staff</li> <li>▶ Those that require contracted services;</li> <li>▶ \$ investment needed</li> <li>▶ Include capital equipment needed.</li> </ul>	CEO & Staff	
Solicit professional estimates of costs.	CEO	9/1/16
Bring draft list to Facilities and Grounds committee for review.	CEO	Sept. 2016 meeting
Board to approve list based upon staff and committee recommendation.	CEO	Part of 2017 budget process.

**Objective 2:** Revisit the ADA survey to determine what improvements need to be done according to this work plan.

**Objective 3:** In collaboration with the development of the business plan, identify improvements that support the implementation of the plan.

**Objective 4:** Identify conservation projects to include in the improvement plan, specifically water use related improvements.

**Objective 5:** Revisit the safety inspection reports to identify key health and safety improvements.

### **Moving the Plan Forward**

1. Fully develop the strategic plan by outlining objectives and action plans for each goal.
2. Involve the board in reviewing the developing plan and build consensus.
3. Create a timetable/schedule for the strategic plan.
4. Make job assignments and hold each other accountable.
5. Communicate, communicate, communicate. The strategic plan can be an effective communication tool.
6. Put the strategic plan into action.
7. Review on a regular basis and measure results.
8. Make mid-course adjustments as needed.
9. Revise and update the strategic plan each year.

### **Next Steps for 19<sup>th</sup> DAA**

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
1. Type minutes of the planning session.	Becky	7/6/16
2. Send minutes to CEO and Exec Committee to edit.	Becky	7/15/16
3. Draft minutes sent to full board for review and approval.	CEO	Distribute 7/18/16 Review & approve 7/28/16 Or 8/25/16
4. Create a board committee structure and membership in support of the strategic plan. Seek board approval for the structure.	CEO & Exec Committee	7/28/16 or 8/25/16

## Conclusion

### Evaluation of the Planning Workshop

What Went Well?	What Could Have Been Better?
<b>Full participation by the board of directors. (Emphasis added!)</b>	Not all participants stayed to the end of the workshop.
Ideas and contributions were realistic. No one approached the planning from left field.	Lack of time to fully develop the plan.
Felt as if we built consensus.	Need to find a way to be efficient with everyone's time.
Engaged in open discussion.	Did not look at past plans.
Everyone contributed.	How to put the plan in action.
Varied perceptions and understandings were expressed and heard.	
Collectively articulated a new mindset of moving the 19 <sup>th</sup> DAA forward beyond survival mode.	

### Final Thoughts

When we commit to a vision or direction to do something that has never been done before, there is no way to know how to get there. We simply have to build the bridge as we walk on it.

Quin 2004

Even if you have it all together you can't know where you're going to end up. There are too many forces as deep and invisible as tides that keep us bouncing into places where we never thought we'd end up. Sometimes the best we can hope for is to be graceful and brave in the face of all the changes that will surely come.

Pratchell 2008

When we deal in generalities we shall never succeed.  
When we deal in specifics we shall rarely have failure.

Santos

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.