

MEETING DATE: October 28, 2025

STAFF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Zach Burns, Fairgrounds Manager

DESCRIPTION: Fairgrounds Business Model Adjustment

SUMMARY: **Douglas County Fairgrounds: Repositioning for Growth and Community Impact**

The Douglas County Fairgrounds is embarking on a bold repositioning effort to ensure the venue attracts larger, high-impact events while continuing to serve the community. The current first-come, first-served booking system limits availability for multi-day, high-value events that deliver significant economic benefit. To remain competitive, the Fairgrounds must adopt a structured, transparent approach that prioritizes events based on impact, balances economic returns with community access, aligns rental rates with market norms, and elevates its reputation as a premier regional facility.

Transition to an Application-Based Booking Model

A scoring-based application process will guide event scheduling:

- **Event Classifications**
 - **Mega Events:** up to 24-month booking window
 - **Large Events:** up to 12-month booking window
 - **Small Events:** up to 6-month booking window
- **Evaluation Factors**
 - Estimated attendance
 - Event duration
 - Number of facilities used
 - Positive event history at the venue

This framework ensures peak dates are reserved for events that bring the greatest value to Douglas County.

Rental Rates and Surcharges

- Facility rental rates will increase by approximately **50%**, bringing them closer to comparable Front Range venues while maintaining competitiveness.
- Non-profit discount reduced from **50%** → **35%** (peer average).
- Eliminate the use of an adjusted Rate for events subject to surcharges.
- Security deposits standardized at \$500-\$1,000.

Updated Rate Schedule

Venue Space	Current Rental Fee	Updated Rental Fee
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Event Center	\$2,000	\$3,000		
Indoor Arena	\$1,000	\$1,500		
Outdoor Arena	\$650	\$1,000		
Kirk Hall	\$400	\$600		
Multi-Purpose Barn North		\$200	\$300	
Multi-Purpose Barn South		\$200	\$300	
Pavilion	\$100	\$200		
Large Animal Barn	\$500	\$750		
Midway / Heritage Plaza	\$300	\$200		
Event Center Conference Room		\$40/hour	\$60/hour	

Venue Surcharges

* Surcharges adjusted to simplify and align with industry standards

Surcharge	Current Surcharge	Updated Surcharge
Ticketing	Larger of \$1 or 5%	10%
Participant	Larger of \$1 or 10%	10%
Vendor Booth Surcharge	Larger of \$15 or 10%	10%

RECOMMENDED

ACTION:

Approval of the Fairgrounds Business Model Adjustment.

REVIEW:

Tim Hallmark	Approve	10/13/2025
Jeff Garcia	Approve	10/17/2025
Christie Guthrie	Approve	10/20/2025
Doug DeBord	Approve	10/21/2025