

MISSION STATEMENT: 2015 Vision **West Haymarket Action Team**

Background

In October 2005, the *Events Facility Task Force* appointed by Mayor Coleen Seng recommended that the State of Nebraska, State Fair Board, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, City of Lincoln, Lancaster, and Lancaster County Agricultural Society approach the issue of events-related physical facilities in a unified manner that produced an integrated plan.

The Task Force concluded that the Lincoln community would be well served by building an arena, a hotel/convention center, and an exposition center in a planned sequence. The preferred location for a future arena and hotel/convention center is the West Haymarket district, the group reported. In submitting their report, the Task Force members asked and the Mayor re-authorized them to continue pursuing their recommendations.



On November 9, 2006, the Task Force submitted to Mayor Seng a comprehensive second report that reaffirmed the initial report's conclusion that the West Haymarket is the right location for a new arena and hotel/convention center. The Task Force's November 2006 report urged the mayor to appoint a new citizen group to build on the Task Force's work by informing the community about the vision that had been developed.

Also in November 2006, the *2015 Vision Steering Committee* hosted a news conference to share its vision for Lincoln. The vision calls for the private sector to come together with the public sector to achieve a set of pillar projects for the community. In the 2015 Vision Group's view, the West Haymarket initiative must be one of those pillars.

In February 2007, Mayor Seng named the 2015 Vision Group as the citizen group to continue the community work called for by the Task Force. "This community is built on public-private partnerships because government cannot and should not do it al," Mayor Seng said in naming the 2015 Vision Group. "I welcome the 2015 Group as an active and engaged partner in continuing the expansion of Lincoln economy."

West Haymarket Action Team Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Vision 2015 West Haymarket Action Team is to further the quality development, vitality, and long term viability of West Haymarket and environs. This is to be accomplished in part by cultivating, promoting, and putting in place sustainable private-public partnerships.

The development envisioned for West Haymarket – in addition to established businesses and residential activities in the vicinity – should generally include:

- Multi-Purpose Arena
- Convention Center and Exhibit Space
- Hotel and Lodging Facilities
- Retailing Opportunities
- Office and Service Space
- Residential Units

During the course of their deliberations, the Action Team should expected to further define and refine the scope, mix, and phased development of these proposed uses.

As a starting point of discussion, the Action Team should consider a program involving a **multi-purpose arena** with a minimum permanent seating capacity of 15,000 attendees; with provisions for additional seating to be added as facility expansion is deemed feasible and appropriate. (The arena design should incorporate contemporary skybox and luxury seating options as well.) The Action Team should look at the question of what 15,000 seats means relative to the events anticipated for the arena. For example, seating configurations (and seating capacities) for basketball games or ice shows are different from those for concerts.

The arena design will further need to address facility access for event equipment, storage, concessions, communications, internal pedestrian flow, lighting, and a myriad of other operational and facility management details.

Consideration should also be given to the integration of a practice facility as part of the arena complex to support practice and warm up space for basketball, wrestling, volleyball, and other athletic events to be held in the arena.

The overall West Haymarket program design should include **convention center** space with a main **exhibition hall** of between 50,000 to 65,000 square feet, with 30 foot ceilings, floor utilities, a communication network and multiple loading docks. This configuration would allow Lincoln to host local, state, and even regional sized exhibitions. Attached to the main exhibit hall would be a 20,000 to 32,000 square feet **ballroom/banquet space** with hotel quality finishing. A large foyer and pre-function gartering space would also be needed. Phased development of the entire complex should be examined by the Action Team. A main design concept behind the convention center and exhibition facilities should be to provide Lincoln with new space that doesn't duplicate currently available space; in short, to extend the opportunities for Lincoln's convention and visitors market.

The overall design program should address the need for **lodging** in the immediate West Haymarket district as well as within Downtown Lincoln and the greater metropolitan community. The initial concept foresees a hotel with perhaps between 300 to 400 rooms located in West Haymarket. The Action Team should examine ways for securing a commitment from the private sector to finance the construction, operation, and management of such accommodations.

The Action Team should explore the considerable retail, office, service, and residential development opportunities these projects will introduce into the overall Haymarket area. Secondary economic growth and business stability can be substantial from the ripple affects of private and community investment which would occur over the coming years. To the degree reasonable, the Action Team should record and categorize investment possibilities they envision for the West Haymarket district and surrounding vicinity.

In addition, the Action Team's deliberations must account for the physical infrastructure (e.g., roads, parking, pedestrian access, utilities, rail services) to support the West Haymarket vision. It is also critical the Action Team address environmental and floodplain considerations associated with potential development opportunities.

As the Action Team goes about its work during the ensuing months, it is imperative that the process and resulting projects respect the existing fabric, current businesses, and historic character of Lincoln's invest in the Haymarket district and greater Downtown area.

The Action Team is charged with implementing the community's Vision for West Haymarket. The Action Team is not intended to serve as merely a planning or policy advisory board. The Action Team is expected to work to create, assemble, and monitor those entities, processes, and resources necessary to put in place the primary and support facilities noted above.

Considerable background research and contemplation has already taken place to craft a vision for this area. The "West Haymarket Vision" is embodied in an assemblage of documents including the *City-County Comprehensive Plan* and the *Lincoln Downtown Master Plan*; along with the final report and recommendations of the Mayor's Events Facility Task Force, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Campus Master Plan, and the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan.

The Action Team should routinely consult this tremendous body of work during their deliberations, as well as conduct all additional analysis they feel is necessary to ensure a viable, practical, achievable, and positive outcome.

Unwavering allegiance to these plans is not an Action Team mandate; rather, these plans and program documents form an overall perspective for the Acton Team to pursue while realizing the periodic need to alter, modify, and adjust the concepts as unique situations warrant.

In working to bring about the West Haymarket vision, the Action Team should formulate and act upon all plans and documents necessary to carry out the vision including but not limited to such functions as:

- Property Acquisition
- Site preparation
- Environmental Mitigation
- Financing Program
- Management/Administrative Implementation Structure(s)
- State and Local Legislation
- Legal Documents
- Building/Facility Design
- Land Use Arrangements
- Infrastructure Development Program(s)

- Ownership Rights
- Marketing Strategy
- Implementation Schedule
- Task Assignments

It is anticipated the Action Team may serve for a period of up to two years, or as otherwise determined by the Mayor, the 2015 Vision Steering Committee, and the 2015 Vision West Haymarket Action Team.

Action Team Membership

The 2015 Vision West Haymarket Action Team is composed of eighteen members drawn from a board range of interests from the greater Lincoln community:

Mayor Seng, City of Lincoln (Tri-Chair)
Wendy Birdsall (Tri-Chair)
David Landis (Tri-Chair)
Dick Campbell
Chancellor Harvey Perlman
Steve Pederson
Terry Fairfield
Mike Dunlap
Amy Tipton
Lynn Wilson
Cathy Beecham
Charles Hull
Liz Shotkoski
Cori Sampson-Vokoun
Linda Wilson
Doug Lienemann
Terry Uland

Staff support to the Action Team will be drawn from Lincoln's public and private sectors. It will include individuals with the range of skills sought by the Action Team.

Additional Information

Additional information concerning the work of the West Haymarket Action Team, the Mayor's Event Facility Task Force and the 2015 Vision Group can be viewed at the following three Internet sites:

West Haymarket Action Team

<http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/what/index.htm>

City of Lincoln: Mayor's Event Facilities Task Force

<http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/arena/finalrpt.htm>

2015 Vision Group

<http://www.2015vision.org/>