

Michigan State Fairgrounds  
**Strategic Plan Summary**

**Strategic Goal #1: Fairgrounds Finances.** Ensure a positive, long-term financial position for the Michigan State Fairgrounds & Exposition Center.

A. Increase Revenue generated during annual State Fair.

1. By the close of the 2009 State Fair, raise gate admission revenue by at least 15% over 2007 levels.
2. Raise an additional 10% in parking revenue over 2007 levels by the end of the 2010 Fair.
3. Enforce collection of all established license fees starting with the 2008 Fair
4. Investigate rates charged for concession vendors and determine if this approach should be changed prior to the 2009 State Fair.
5. Before July 1, 2008 determine price of admission (if any) for headliner entertainment.
6. Review number of “free” admissions provided for the Fair and reduce by 15% by the end of the 2009 Fair.
7. By August 1, 2008 assess previous sales of State Fair merchandise and determine if there are other items/ways to increase revenue

B. Increase Revenue for non-Fair rentals/activities.

1. By the end of 2010, increase total revenue days by 40% when compared to 2007 levels. Target a 10% increase for 2008, 15% for 2009 and another 15% for 2010.
2. Raise the overall operations revenue for 2010 to \$6.5 Million Dollars representing a 30% increase over the 2007 figure of \$5.1 Million Dollars by increasing building/grounds rental and partnering with others to hold more entertainment activities at the Fairgrounds. Attempt to increase the average operations revenue by 10% each year for 2008, 2009, and 2010.

C. Identify other revenue sources.

1. Initiate grant funding in 2008 with a goal of \$50,000 increasing to at least \$150,000 in annual grant funding by the end of 2010.
2. Increase Corporate Sponsorships to \$860,000 by 2010, an increase of 30% over 2007 levels.
  - a. Establish an annual goal of increasing sponsorships by 10% (\$66,000) each year starting in 2008.
  - b. Establish a goal for each Authority Board member to identify a new sponsor each year.
3. Explore naming rights to buildings/events with the goal of at least one sponsor buying such opportunity before the end of the 2008 calendar year.
4. Determine if any “excess” property exists that could be leased to new partners and publicize a state government-generated “Request For Information/Proposal” by June 1, 2008, with a determination being made by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 on the acceptance of any responses received.

**Strategic Goal #2: Infrastructure and Facilities.** Goal description: Enhance marketability, desirability of state fairgrounds infrastructure and facilities offerings.

- A. Fairgrounds utilities—Heating, Lighting, “Green” sponsors or partners?
1. Review utility assessments by DTE and determine if additional assessments are needed no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008
  2. Identify financial options for energy efficiencies by July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008
  3. By January 1, 2009 implement initial energy efficient efforts as determined based on ROI assessments.
  4. Complete all energy efficient improvements for all buildings before the 2010 State Fair.
  5. Enlist the support of Board Members and their various contacts to explore alternative energy sources, i.e. solar, wind, etc.
  6. For the 2008 State Fair attempt to develop a “green energy” exhibit associated with the Building of Science & Technology.
- B. Improve building amenities (especially bathrooms, heating, windows, doors)
1. Before May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 identify improvements from a spectator/exhibitor/vendor perspective and determine cost of such improvements.
  2. Review cost/benefit of improvements to amenities, and select top five improvements to be completed in time for the 2008 State Fair.
  3. Ascertain the cost of bringing all buildings up to ADA compliance before January 1, 2009.
  4. Identify revenue sources that will allow all building compliance to applicable ADA standards by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010.
  5. Auditorium repairs (seating, lighting, upgraded presentation technology)
    - a. By 3-1-08, assess options in replacing/repairing seats in J.L. Hudson Theater (auditorium)
    - b. Before March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008 replace/repair seats, on an ongoing basis continue to assess seating needs to ensure the Theater appearance supports ongoing activities.
    - c. Determine lighting needs and other major theater needs by March 21<sup>st</sup>. Schedule meeting with David Grossman and Christopher Ewing for assistance.
    - d. Prepare an inventory list of items to be checked periodically so that theater is maintained in acceptable selling-mode no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Utilize list as a part of a preventative maintenance program.
    - e. By May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 develop a satisfaction survey to be distributed to theater users after their event is complete and provide a quarterly assessment of responses. Include a category for additional equipment/tools that would enhance promoter/vendor utilization of theater.
- C. Repair and enhance fairgrounds roadways, walkways, landscaping, and entranceways.
1. By May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 identify priority list and possible funding sources for above.
  2. Before the start of the 2008 State Fair replace a portion of the current road system enlisting the support of Authority Board Members.
  3. Establish a time line for completing repairs/improvements with June 1, 2010 as the date for completion and reassessment of new needs.
  4. Identify a work weekend (May 31<sup>st</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008) for all interested parties to help beautify the Fairgrounds and annually thereafter.

- D. To improve fairgrounds year-round marketability and desirability, develop new buildings dedicated to
- Agriculture
  - Technology
  - Education
1. Complete assessment of current buildings that could be used for the above use by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008
  2. Identify partners that may be interested in utilizing buildings for the above referenced purposes no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009
  3. Start utilizing buildings for the purposes detailed by September, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.
- E. Increase user and visitor satisfaction with facilities and infrastructure.
1. Develop customer satisfaction surveys to be used for all user types by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
  2. Administer surveys for non-fair activity after each usage
  3. Administer survey for fair annually
  4. Before the 2009 State Fair, provide an internet based customer feedback tool.

**Strategic Goal #3: Marketing.** Create a Fairgrounds marketing function with responsibility for increasing public and private sector awareness of, and participation in, State Fairgrounds activities, events, programs, and facilities.

- A. Develop and implement a formal State Fairgrounds marketing department and function, to include job description(s), manpower requirements, and resource allocations.
1. Hire a Promotional Agent by May 1, 2008
  2. Develop a promotional budget for each year starting with FY09 providing for both Fair and non-Fair activities.
- B. Develop and implement a strategic State Fairgrounds marketing action plan.
1. Produce brochures/flyers/website opportunities advertising the various aspects of the Fairgrounds. By July 1, 2008 determine a timeline and a priority for the development of promotional materials.
  2. Annually, review promotional materials and update as needed.
  3. No later than October 1, 2008 develop an e-mail database for mailings. Continue to build this database so that by the end of 2010 more than 10,000 names and addresses are available.
  4. By March 1, 2009 identify venues where marketing should have a presence in promoting the annual State Fair and non-Fair activities. Annually, ensure that at least 10 venues have a presence of Fairgrounds Marketing materials/staff.
  5. Develop a website that is more entertainment oriented (vs. government) and make a recommendation for such undertaking by January 1, 2009.
  6. Establish “link” opportunities with other related websites. By the end of 2009 have the Fairgrounds “linked” to at least 25 other websites.
  7. By the end of 2008 identify primary and secondary audiences of the Michigan State Fairgrounds.
- C. Among Fairgrounds primary and secondary target audiences, establish the Michigan State Fairgrounds as the region's preferred special event venue for family entertainment, recreation, and educational events.
1. No later than December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 establish database of organizations that could utilize the various facilities/grounds for their activities. Request Board Members to provide names of organizations to help populate the database.
  2. Develop a “speaker’s bureau” from staff and Authority Board Members and publicize their availability to primary and secondary audiences with the goal of at least one (1) engagement each month starting in 2009.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #4: Organizational structure.** Investigate and recommend an operating structure that best supports the strategic direction and the Mission /Vision Statements of the Michigan State Fairgrounds.

- A. Identify current staffing including State employees, contract employees and all other personnel who work at the fair grounds
  - 1. By December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 develop a spreadsheet detailing both fair and non-fair employees segmenting them by employment type and areas of responsibility. As a part of this task review job/position descriptions of each employee.
  - 2. Review all Independent and Special Personal Services contracts no later than January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 to determine which responsibilities can be converted to MSF employees. As a part of this task review job/position descriptions of each employee.
  
- B. Identify needed additional staff and determine method of filling needs
  - 1. Determine tasks and responsibilities necessary to fulfill all aspects of MSF's mission statement (year-round family oriented event center)
  - 2. Before March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 develop a migration plan with time frames and priority in filling of positions in order to fully staff MSF with identified employees including the calculation of associated payroll costs. Complete migration should be targeted for October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.
  - 3. If responsibilities and tasks of positions do not lend themselves to regular MSF employees, determine by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 make recommendation on how such tasks and responsibilities will be completed.
  - 4. By the end of 2008, explore the development of a "loaned executive" program to provide additional staff support.
  
- C. Investigate and determine the best business entity for the Fairgrounds, i.e. remain government, 501c3, other entity.
  - 1. By December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009 establish a committee to explore alternative organization structures that would review possible alternatives to the current structure of the MSF (type of business entity).
  - 2. Prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 prepare a report of findings with a recommendation for an ongoing business structure of the MSF.
  - 3. Before December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 review involvement/purpose of Friends of the Fair with a goal of making that organization fully supportive of our Mission and Vision. Assist the FOF in expanding their membership and financial support for the Fairgrounds.

**Key Strategic Issues**  
Work Plan

**Strategic Goal #1: Fairgrounds Finances.** Ensure a positive, long-term financial position for the Michigan State Fairgrounds & Exposition Center.

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>A. Increase Revenue generated during annual State Fair.</b>					
1. By the close of the 2009 State Fair, raise gate admission revenue by at least 15% over 2007 levels.	08/22/08	09/30/09	All involved, General Manager & Accountant to oversee	Comparison of gate receipts after conclusion of the 08 & 09 State Fairs	Marketing Plan and good weather
2. Raise an additional 10% in parking revenue over 2007 levels by the end of the 2010 Fair.	08/22/08	09/30/10	Staff with General Manager & Accountant to oversee	Comparison of gate receipts after conclusion of the 08, 09, & 2010 State Fairs	Marketing Plan, DPD assistance, and infrastructure changes.
3. Enforce collection of all established license fees starting with the 2008 Fair	08/22/08	Ongoing	Departmental Analyst & Parking Admin.	Onsite Audit of those allowed admission and verification of licenses	Parking Admin. & Departmental Analyst
4. Investigate rates charged for concession vendors and determine if this approach should be changed prior to the 2009 State Fair.	10/01/08	03/01/09	Vendor overseer and Accountant	Analysis of information gathered by reviewers	Research
5. Before July 1, 2008 determine price of admission (if any) for headliner entertainment.	05/01/08	09/01/08	General Manager	Established Price	

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>B. Increase Revenue for non-Fair rentals/activities.</b>					
1. By the end of 2010, increase total revenue days by 40% when compared to 2007 levels. Target a 10% increase for 2008, 15% for 2009 and another 15% for 2010.	01/01/08	12/31/10	All involved, General Manager & Department Technician to oversee	Comparison of non-Fair events held for each year starting with 2008	Marketing Plan, improved infrastructure
2. Raise the overall operations revenue for 2010 to \$6.5 Million Dollars representing a 30% increase over the 2007 figure of \$5.1 Million Dollars. Attempt to increase the average operations revenue by 10% each year for 2008, 2009, and 2010.	10/01/07	09/30/10	Staff with General Manager & Accountant to oversee	Comparison of total receipts after conclusion of the 08, 09, & 2010 fiscal years	Marketing Plan, Public awareness and improved infrastructure

Strategic Objective & Action Plan	Start:	End:	Responsible:	Measurement(s):	Resources Required:
<b>C. Identify other revenue sources</b>					
1. Initiate grant funding in 2008 with a goal of \$50,000 increasing to at least \$150,000 in annual grant funding by the end of 2010.	06/01/08	09/30/10	Promotional Agent (Grant Writer), General Manager	Review of grant funding revenue generated	Experienced Grant Writer and qualifying grants
2. Increase Corporate Sponsorships to \$860,000 by 2010, an increase of 30% over 2007 levels. a. Establish an annual goal of increasing sponsorships by 10% (\$66,000) each year starting in 2008. b. Establish a goal for each Authority Board member to identify a new sponsor each year.	09/30/08	09/30/10	General Manager, Promotional Agent, others including staff and Board Members	Comparison of receipts at the conclusion of the 08, 09, & 2010 Fiscal Years.	Marketing Plan, Contacts, Sponsorship Packages/Materials
3. Explore naming rights to buildings/events with the goal of at least one sponsor buying such opportunity before the end of the 2008 calendar year.	05/01/08	Ongoing	General Manager, Promotional Agent, staff and Board Members	A “named” building	Contacts
4. Determine if any “excess” property exists that could be leased to new partners and publicize a state government-generated “Request For Information/Proposal” by June 1, 2008, with a determination being made by December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2008 on the acceptance of any responses received.	06/01/08	12/31/08	Authority Board, DMB, General Manager	Action by Board/DMB	DMB Purchasing assistance

**Strategic Goal #2: Infrastructure and Facilities.** Enhance marketability, desirability of state fairgrounds infrastructure and facilities offerings.

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>A. Fairgrounds utilities—Heating, Lighting, “Green” sponsors or partners?</b>					
1. Review utility assessments by DTE and determine if additional assessments are needed no later than June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2008	02/01/08	06/1/08	Facilities Manager along with the General Manager	Assessment being completed	Contact with DTE and follow-up
2. Identify financial options for energy efficiencies by October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2008	05/01/08	10/01/08	Facilities Manager with General Manager and DMB Facilities	Identification of options	Staff
3. By January 1, 2009 implement initial energy efficient efforts as determined based on ROI assessments.	07/01/08	01/01/09	General Manager in conjunction with Facilities Manager and Accountant	Implementation action	Funding Sources and/or Financing Assistance
4. Complete all energy efficient improvements for all buildings before the 2010 State Fair.	01/01/09	08/01/10	General Manager in conjunction with Facilities Manager	Assessment of energy efficiencies completed	Funds
<b>B. Improve building amenities (especially bathrooms, heating, windows, doors)</b>					
1. Before May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2008 identify improvements from a spectator/exhibitor/vendor perspective and determine cost of such improvements.	02/01/08	06/1/08	Facilities Manager along with the General Manager	Assessment being completed	Contact with DTE and follow-up
2. Review cost/benefit of improvements to amenities, and select top five improvements to be completed in time for the 2008 State Fair.	05/01/08	10/01/08	Facilities Manager with General Manager and DMB Facilities	Identification of options	Staff

3. Ascertain the cost of bringing all buildings up to ADA compliance before January 1, 2009.	07/01/08	01/01/09	General Manager in conjunction with Facilities Manager and Accountant	Implementation action	Funding Sources and/or Financing Assistance
4. Identify revenue sources that will allow all building compliance to applicable ADA standards by December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2010.	01/01/09	08/01/10	General Manager in conjunction with Facilities Manager	Assessment of energy efficiencies completed	Funds
5. Auditorium repairs (seating, lighting, upgraded presentation technology)					
a. Prepare an inventory list of items to be checked periodically by June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2008.	06/01/08	Ongoing	Facilities Manager	Inventory list completed	Staff
b. By July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2008 develop a "satisfaction" survey.	07/01/08	Ongoing	Promotions Agent	Survey completed	Staff

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>C. Repair and enhance fairgrounds roadways, walkways, landscaping, and entranceways.</b>					
1. By June 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2008 identify priority list and possible funding sources for above.	04/01/08	06/15/08	Facilities Manager and General Manager	List completed	Staff time
2. Before the start of the 2008 State Fair replace a portion of the current road system.	04/01/08	08/15/08	Facilities Manager and General Manager supported by Board Members	New Roadway completed	Funds or other resources to complete project
3. Establish a time line for completing repairs/improvements with June 1, 2010 as the date for completion and reassessment of new needs.	05/01/08	06/01/10	Facilities Manager, General Manager, Departmental Analyst with support of Board	List completed	Staff
<b>D. To improve fairgrounds year-round marketability and desirability, develop (current &amp; new) buildings dedicated to: Agriculture, Technology and Education.</b>					
1. Complete assessment of current buildings that could be used for the above use by December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2008	04/01/08	12/31/08	Facilities Manager, Promotions Agent, General Manager	Assessment Completed	Feedback from as many sources as possible.
2. Identify partners that may be interested in utilizing buildings for the above referenced purposes no later than April 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2009	01/01/09	04/01/09	Board, General Manager, other interested parties	List of prospective partners completed	Input
3. Start utilizing buildings for the purposes detailed by October, 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010.	10/01/10	Ongoing	General Manager	New partners	Funds

<b>E. Increase user and visitor satisfaction with facilities and infrastructure.</b>					
1. Develop customer satisfaction surveys to be used for all user types by December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2008	05/01/08	12/31/08 Ongoing	Promotional Agent	Surveys in use	Feedback, Staff time
2. Administer surveys for non-fair activity after each usage	As they occur	Ongoing	Assigned Staff, General Manager	Surveys provided	Survey Collectors
3. Administer survey for fair annually	As they occur	Ongoing	Assigned Staff, General Manager	Surveys provided	Survey Collectors
4. Before the 2009 State Fair, provide an internet based customer feedback tool.	01/01/09	08/20/09	Promotional Agent, Departmental Analyst	Feedback tool on line	DIT assistance

**Strategic Goal #3: Marketing.** Create a Fairgrounds marketing function with responsibility for increasing public and private sector awareness of, and participation in, State Fairgrounds activities, events, programs, and facilities.

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>A. Develop and implement a formal State Fairgrounds marketing department and function, to include job description(s), manpower requirements, and resource allocations.</b>					
1. Hire a Promotional Agent by May 1, 2008	Completed				
2. Develop a promotional budget for each year starting with FY09 providing for both Fair and non-Fair activities.	10/01/08	Ongoing	Promotional Agent as approved by General Manager	Budget proposed	DMB Budget Office, Funds
<b>B. Develop and implement a strategic State Fairgrounds marketing action plan.</b>					
1. Produce brochures/flyers/website opportunities of the Fairgrounds. By July 1, 2008 determine a timeline for the development of promotional materials.	05/01/08	07/01/08	Promotional Agent	Timeline developed	Staff time
2. Annually, review promotional materials and update as needed.	Ongoing		Promotional Agent	Review completed	Staff time
3. No later than October 1, 2008 develop an e-mail database. Build this data base so that by the end of 2010 more than 10,000 names and addresses are available.	05/01/08	10/01/08 12/31/10	Promotional Agent, Departmental Analyst, and Special Projects	Data base initiated and number of names tallied	Input from multiple sources

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
4. By March 1, 2009 identify venues for promoting the annual State Fair and non-Fair activities. Yearly, 10 venues will have a presence of materials/staff.	06/01/08	03/01/09	Board, Promotional Agent, General Manager	Having venues identified and counting the number of venues visited	Staff time, materials
5. Develop a website that is entertainment oriented and make it available by April 1, 2009.	10/01/08	04/01/09	Departmental Analyst, Promotional Agent, Special Projects	Website existence	DIT and Staff Time
6. Establish “link” opportunities. By the end of 2009 have the Fairgrounds “linked” to at least 25 other websites.	10/01/08	12/31/09	Departmental Analyst, Promotional Agent	Number of links	DIT and Staff Time
7. By March 1, 2009, identify primary and secondary audiences of the Michigan State Fairgrounds.	09/01/08	03/01/09	Board, General Manager and other staff	List being completed	All Partners

<b>C. Among Fairgrounds primary and secondary target audiences, establish the Michigan State Fairgrounds as the region's preferred special event venue for family entertainment, recreation, and educational events.</b>					
1. No later than December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2008 establish database of organizations that could utilize the facilities/grounds. Request Board Members to provide names of organizations to help populate the database.	05/01/08	12/31/08	Promotional Agent Departmental Analyst	Data base completed	Staff Time
2. Develop a “speaker’s bureau”. Publicize the availability to our audiences with at least one (1) engagement per month starting in 2009.	06/01/08	01/01/09 Ongoing	Promotional Agent Board, General Manager	Speaker’s Bureau publicized and adding up the number of engagements.	Board Volunteering Publicity

**Strategic Goal #4: Organizational structure.** Investigate and recommend an operating structure that best supports the strategic direction and the Mission /Vision Statements of the Michigan State Fairgrounds.

<b>Strategic Objective &amp; Action Plan</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>End:</b>	<b>Responsible:</b>	<b>Measurement(s):</b>	<b>Resources Required:</b>
<b>A. Identify current staffing including State employees, contract employees and all other personnel who work at the fair grounds</b>					
1. By September 30 <sup>th</sup> 2008 develop a spreadsheet detailing both fair and non-fair employees segmenting them by employment type and areas of responsibility.	05/01/08	09/30/08	General Manager	Spreadsheet complete	Staff time
2. Review all Independent and Special Personal Services contracts no later than January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2009 to determine which responsibilities can be converted to MSF employees.	10/01/08	01/01/09	Departmental Analyst, General Manager	Review complete	Staff time
<b>B. Identify needed additional staff and determine method of filling needs</b>					
1. By June 1, 2009 determine tasks and responsibilities necessary to fulfill all aspects of MSF's mission statement (year-round family oriented event center)	10/01/08	06/01/09	General Manager	Tasks identified	Staff Time
2. By August 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2009 develop a migration plan prioritizing the filling of positions. Identify employees including the calculation of associated payroll costs. Complete migration should be targeted for October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010.	01/01/09	08/01/09  10/01/10	General Manager Accountant	Meeting timelines	Funds, DMB assistance

2A. If responsibilities and tasks of positions do not lend themselves to regular MSF employees, determined by objective #1 make recommendation on how such tasks and responsibilities will be completed. Timeline of August 1st, 2009	06/01/09	08/01/09	General Manager	Recommendation made	Staff Time, DMB Human Resources, Funds
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<b>C. Investigate and determine the best business entity for the Fairgrounds, i.e. remain government, 501c3, other entity.</b>					
1. By December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2009 establish a committee to explore alternative organization structures that would review possible alternatives to the current structure of the MSF (type of business entity).	12/31/09	12/31/09	Board, General Manager	Committee established	Board Time, Board Volunteers to serve
2. Prior to October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010 prepare a report of findings with a recommendation for an ongoing business structure of the MSF.	07/01/10	10/01/10	Board, General Manager	Report provided	Board Time