



Columbus Redevelopment Commission Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park

Management and Programming Study

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AMS Planning & Research Corp.

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Introduction

Background

AMS Planning & Research was engaged to assist the Columbus Redevelopment Commission in assessing management and programming options for a refurbished outdoor amphitheater (Custer-Nugent Amphitheater) in Mill Race Park. The park is located in the west end of downtown Columbus, and is located on 85-acres of land. An amphitheater steering committee, made up of local businesspeople, residents and arts supporters, has been working on plans to renovate the amphitheater since April 2013.

By way of the rehabilitation of land use, the Columbus Redevelopment Commission provides economic opportunities in the city of Columbus, Indiana. The Commission's dual charges has it providing local public improvements in the City of Columbus, while also assisting in the establishment of new residential units and local businesses.

The mission of the Redevelopment Commission is to promote and encourage business growth and expansion, while appropriating land use and improvements within the City of Columbus. In doing so, it facilitates discussions on economic development issues, provides land use and development information to local elected and appointed officials, and provides public input on development, land use, and other economic development issues.¹

Owned and operated by the City of Columbus, the Custer-Nugent Amphitheater provides programming from two vantage points; the larger side (Festival Side) of the grounds has accommodated crowds of up to 7,000, while the smaller side

(Mound Side) has a capacity of 450. Programming includes large concerts, an annual Hospice event, fundraisers, festivals and community events (such as marathons/walks, local music events, church services, and children's programming).

A number of issues have prompted the desire, by some, to renovate the amphitheater. Of primary concern is that the venue is situated in a designated floodway, and over the 22-year history of the facility, water and mud have damaged dressing rooms and electrical panels. Additionally, the stage does not have adequate rigging, and is too high on the Festival Side to provide adequate sightlines.

Process

A key focus of AMS's study was to assist in understanding the local and regional market for arts, cultural and entertainment programming; determine the range of performances and events appropriate for the market and the renovated amphitheater; assess the operating model and impact of proposed programming adjustments and facility investments; and develop a financial forecast of operating results.

The study addressed several key questions concerning programming and management of the renovated Custer-Nugent Amphitheater in Mill Race Park:

- What are the highest and best uses for the Custer-Nugent Amphitheatre?
- What additional revenue opportunities exist through maximization of utilization?
- What is the market and competitive environment for the amphitheater? What is a realistic projection of attendance at programs and events?

¹ <http://www.columbus.in.gov/redevelopment/>

- What are the operational challenges within the amphitheater? What production-related enhancements are desired by current and potential users?
- What patron amenity improvements would enhance the overall attendance experience?
- What can be learned from similar investments in peer markets?
- What operating assumptions are most critical to financial stability? What are the most volatile operating assumptions?

Tasks undertaken for this study included background research, a market analysis, stakeholder interviews, competitive environment research, comparable case studies, inventory of operating models and development of a business model, which provides an activity profile, management and staffing recommendations, and operating pro forma.

Situation Analysis

Background Review

AMS reviewed relevant existing documentation, including previous venue-related reports and studies, to understand current uses of the amphitheater, administrative structure, programming and recent operational history. Columbus Area Arts Council provided concert data and geographic market information, programming data, and media articles from *The Republic*. The Parks & Recreation Department shared historical information on Mill Race Park, Mill Race Park event schedules, the department's policies, including

rental information, and a landscape architecture report. Additionally, AMS was forwarded a number of additional media pieces.

Organizational Structure

The Custer-Nugent Amphitheater is owned and operated by the City of Columbus, with management duties performed by the Parks & Recreation department.

The management of Custer-Nugent Amphitheater was set up in the early 90's as a partnership between Columbus Area Arts Council and Columbus Parks & Recreation. The structure had Columbus Area Arts Council providing the technical support (maintain and operate sound equipment and lighting), for all events that take place at the Custer-Nugent Amphitheater. Parks & Recreation would provide the support/management of other aspects of the facility (maintain rental calendar, contracts for rentals, book keeping/financial, maintenance of grounds and issues, plumbing, heating etc., and provide tables, chairs etc. for programs), as well as offer information and support to renters, for items such as recommended companies to order dumpsters and port-o-lets. Programming of the facility included a good deal of co-sponsored (by both Columbus Area Arts Council and Parks & Rec) activities/programs with Columbus Area Arts Council providing expertise in selection of performers and contract issues.

The City also has a Columbus Parks & Recreation Board, which is the policy-making authority for the Columbus Parks & Recreation Department. Additionally, the Columbus Park Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, is in place. The Foundation receives and manages funds and resources, with the focus of delivering quality recreation services in Columbus, Indiana. The tax

deductible funds raised are spent to improve parks and recreation in Columbus. Efforts include expansion and maintenance of parks' facilities and amenities.

Staffing

The city's Parks & Recreation staff that perform duties relating to the amphitheater are Director of Parks & Recreation, Director of Business Services, Resource Development/Projects Director, Manager of Park Operations, Recreation/Columbus Gymnastics Center Director, Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator, and Columbus Area Arts Council's Technical Director (also Custer-Nugent Amphitheater Technical Director by way of partnership with Columbus Area Arts Council).

Programming

The typical season for activity for the amphitheater is May to October, with the peak of the season occurring during the months of June, July, August, and September. Programming includes two large scale concerts, which take place annually – Rock the Park, sponsored by the Arts Council, and a Hospice concert sponsored by Hospice of South Central Indiana. Rock the Park is a ticketed performance (tickets \$15 to \$25) and net proceeds go to support the Columbus Area Arts Council. Hospice is a free event but raises funds for Hospice of South Central Indiana with sponsorships and other means. Other staged activities include festivals, local music events, and church services. Activities on the grounds include fundraisers, weddings, and community events (such as marathons/walks, and children's programming).

City programming that takes place onsite includes movies, battle of the bands, and some running events. A myriad of other activity takes place at the park, but not on the stage, including family events (egg hunts, fishing derbies, and duck races), other running events,

cultural celebrations, bicycle races, class reunions, and elementary school field days.

Partnerships Events

Partnerships have been an important component of the Parks & Recreations operating structure, and the department has worked with several agencies and organizations, including the Columbus Area Arts Council, Mill Race Players, Mill Race Senior Center, Parks Foundation, Foundation for Youth, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, Lincoln Central Family Neighborhood Center, Teen Council and Healthy Community, an initiative through Columbus Regional Health (the local hospital).

Rentals

Current rental rates for not-for-profit groups, for Sunday through Thursday is \$50 an hour. Rental fees Friday, Saturday and holidays is \$250 an hour with a five hour minimum. For-profit renters pay \$80 an hour on Sunday through Thursday and \$400 an hour on Fridays and Saturdays, for five hours.

Policies

The city has an amphitheater facility use agreement that explains what equipment is included in the rental, what manner of broadcasting the event is or is not permissible, insurance requirements, and the necessity that the renter obtain an "Amusement Entertainment Permit" through the Indiana office of the Department of Homeland Security-Division of Fire Safety-Permit Division. The policy also mandates adhering to The Americans with Disabilities Act. In terms of the Mill Race Park & Amphitheater rain/inclement weather policy, the Parks & Recreation Department and the Columbus Area Arts Council make the final decision regarding whether an event will take place or not.

Current Issues

AMS met with community and project leadership and other key stakeholders² in order to obtain a broad perspective of feedback regarding future success for the amphitheater. Interviewees were asked to provide insight and feedback regarding current issues with the facility. The venue in its current state has a number of challenges, key among them is that the venue is in a designated floodway and has suffered water damage over the years. This has also impacted the amphitheater's dressing rooms and electrical panels, which have been damaged not only by the water, but by mud. Additionally, the stage lacks adequate rigging and does not have wing space. Cost of equipment rental is seen as prohibitive to additional use of the facility. The need for a parking strategy, erection of a permanent gate or fencing to control the crowds, and improvement of the restrooms and concession areas were noted as issues. Additionally, the need for staff with arts program management skills and resources to more proactively program the facility was also a key theme.

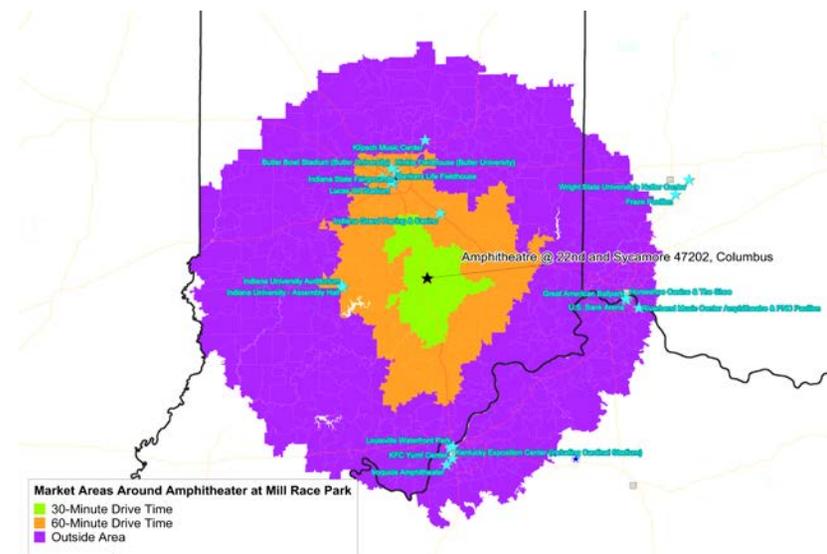
Market Analysis

A market analysis provided information about the current resident marketplace in and around Columbus. While this report shares highlights of the analysis, a detailed marketing analysis report has been provided to the client.

Market areas used in the analysis were:

- **Primary Market Area:** the 15 ZIP Codes that are within an approximate 30-Minute drive around Mill Race Park. This is assumed to be the target market for Mound Side Events.
- **Total Trade Area:** the additional 104 ZIP Codes that are within an approximate 60-minute drive. This is assumed to be the target market for large Festival Side events.
- **State:** the entire state of Indiana, used for comparative purposes.

Market Definition – Primary Market and Total Trade Area



The Market Scan contextualized the demographics and behavioral attributes of the market areas by comparing (Part A) the primary

² Please see Appendix A for a list of those interviewed.

market area to both the state and the United States, and (Part B) the total trade area to both the state and the United States.

The In-Depth Consumer Insights used national consumer research data to identify specific segments in the market areas that show an increased potential to consume the product(s) of interest. For this study, we examined the potential to “go to rock/pop concerts.”

These findings were then compared to the Market Scan to help estimate consumer demand and determine which geographic areas represent the greatest potential for participation.

Key Findings

- The primary market area population tends to be older (over 45) than the total trade area. The fastest growing age segment in the primary market next five years is expected to be individuals 65-74.
- The primary market population tends to identify as “White,” but over the next five years, the area is expected to become more diverse with growth of African Americans and Hispanic or Latino individuals occurring faster than national growth.
- Households in the primary market tend to be middle-class families who, at least according to their likelihood to attend “rock/pop” concerts, are *not* a first-choice primary target.
- Households in the primary market are slightly more likely than the average US household to participate in certain arts and culture activities, including:³
 - Playing musical instruments;
 - Painting/Drawing/Sculpting;
 - Buying Latin music
 - Photography;

³ National Consumer Research Data

- Visiting museums;
- Attending music/dance performances

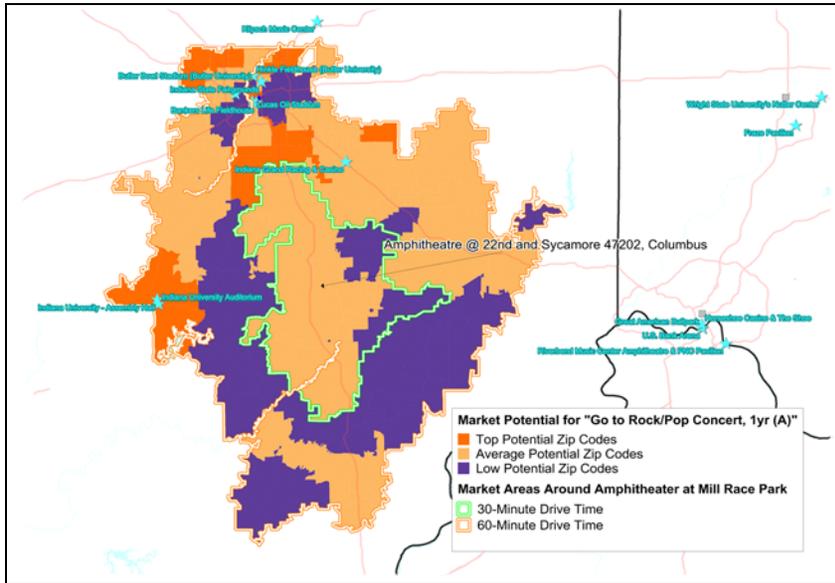
2015 Demographic Snapshot

Market Area: Columbus, IN Amphitheatre Primary Market (30-Minute Drive Time)

Region: State of Indiana

	Market Area	Region	United States
Population			
2015 Estimate	173,388	6,567,159	317,199,353
2020 Projection	180,180	6,673,232	328,309,478
5-Year Est. Population % Growth	3.9%	1.6%	3.5%
Households & Families			
2015 Household Estimate	66,289	2,537,304	120,163,323
2020 Household Projection	69,035	2,581,446	124,622,797
5-Year Est. Household % Growth	4.1%	1.7%	3.7%
Households with People < 18	23,476 35.4%	33.4%	33.5%
Population by Age			
Under 5	11,312 6.5%	6.5%	6.4%
5 - 17	31,296 18.0%	17.6%	17.0%
18 - 24	15,557 9.0%	10.4%	10.0%
25 - 44	43,905 25.3%	24.9%	26.0%
45 - 64	45,810 26.4%	26.4%	26.5%
65 and Over	25,508 14.7%	14.1%	14.2%
2015 Est. Average Age	39 0%	38	39
2015 Est. Median Age	38 0%	37	38
Population (Age 25+) by Education Attainment			
Bachelor's Degree	15,977 13.9%	14.7%	17.8%
Master's Degree or Higher	9,601 8.3%	8.2%	10.6%
Household Income			
2015 Est. Average Household Income	\$66,580 0	\$61,175	\$71,319
2015 Est. Median Household Income	\$53,933 0	\$47,121	\$51,579
Population Hispanic or Latino by Origin			
Hispanic or Latino	9,949 5.7%	6.8%	17.6%
Population Race Class			
White	157,674 90.9%	83.5%	71.3%
Black or African American	3,230 1.9%	9.3%	12.7%
Amer. Indian and Alaska Native	509 0.3%	0.3%	1.0%
Asian	4,389 2.5%	1.8%	5.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Isl.	81 0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Some Other Race	7,505 4.3%	5.1%	9.8%

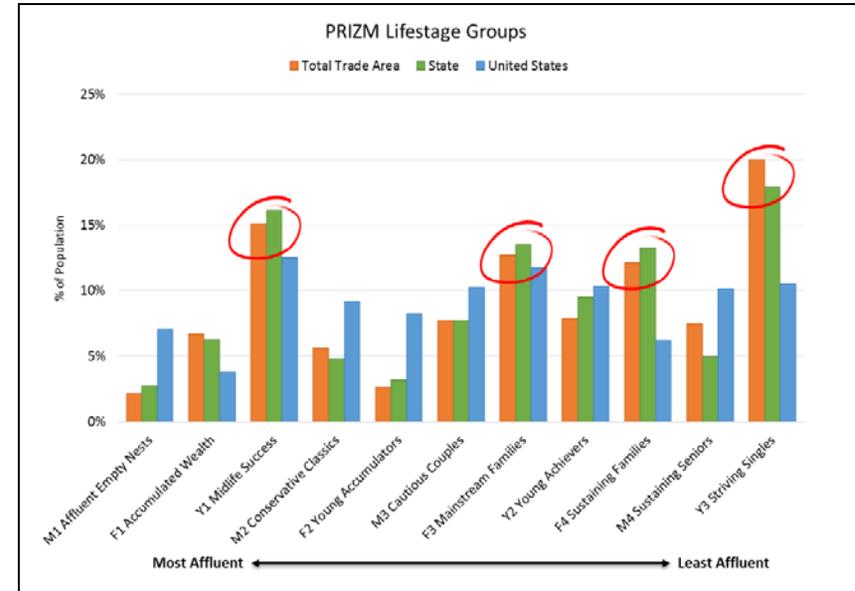
- **The total trade area holds more potential than the primary market area for attracting patrons to “rock/pop” concerts.** The following three groups of households that represent attractive targets:
 - Childless singles and couples in their thirties and forties make up 15% of households and are **1.7 times more likely to attend “rock/pop” concerts** than the average US household.
 - Twenty-somethings who have recently settled in metro neighborhoods with incomes ranging from working-class to well-to-do make up 8% of households and are **1.8 times more likely to attend.**
 - Twenty-something singles with low incomes make up 20% of households and are **1.1 times more likely to attend.**
- Certain ZIP Codes have more potential to contain target households. High potential areas include those found:
 - In downtown Indianapolis;
 - Right outside or near the beltway of Indianapolis, including Greenwood, Bagersville, Boggstown, Brownsburg, and Morristown; and,
 - In Bloomington.



As noted earlier, the analysis examined the potential to “go to rock/pop concerts.” The map above highlights top, average, and low potential to attend these concerts.

Market Segmentation

The analysis shows that 60% of market area households can be found in four PRIZM Lifestage Groups, three of which are also found in the primary market area.



The largest group present in the total trade area (Y3: Striving Singles) is one of the most “overrepresented” in the market area, compared to the state and the United States.

Y3: Striving Singles households comprise 20% of market area households and are 1.1 times more concentrated in the market area than in the state, and 1.9 times than in the US:

The next three largest groups present in the secondary market area are Y1: Midlife Success (15% of households), F3: Mainstream Families (13% of households), and F4: Sustaining Families (12% of households).

This data provides an inside view of the characteristics of those located within the market and can be of assistance as activity and marketing strategies are developed for the renovated facility.

Competitive Environment/Facilities

AMS evaluated the competitive situation with respect to other large scale concert venues in the primary and secondary market areas, and assembled and evaluated relevant data on capacity, ownership and management structure, and recent programming/acts.

As can be seen to the right, a number of the venues are owned by the State of Indiana, and operated by the Indiana State Fair Commission. Others are owned by the city, corporations, or by live events entertainment company, Live Nation, or Nederlander Organization, both large theatre operators and event promoters.

While concerts are a mainstay for most, activity also included festivals, fair events, exhibits, community events and sports events.

In a conversation with the Live Nation representative for the State of Indiana, it became clear that the two venues which would present significant competition for large-scale rock and pop performances in Columbus were Klipsch Music Center (capacity 25,000) and Farm Bureau Insurance Lawn at White River State Park (capacity 7,500). Competition presents itself both for audiences and for product, as exclusivity clauses will prohibit artists who play those venues (and others in the State) from performing in Columbus.

Competitive Venues Indianapolis

Indiana State Fairgrounds

Dow Agro Sciences Celebration Park

- > 5,000, Outdoor fixed stage
- > Concert, Festivals

Hoosier Lottery Grand Stand

- > 13,921, Outdoor Venue
- > Motor sports, other events

Indiana Farmers Coliseum

- > 8,200, Arena
- > State Fair events, concerts, sports

Blue Ribbon Pavilion

- > 5,000, Multi-purpose Venue
- > Consumer events, exhibits, sports

West Pavilion

- > 9,400 Seats, Multi-purpose Venue
- > Consumer events, exhibits, sports, trade shows, banquets

Klipsch Music Center

- > Capacity 25,000
- > Outdoor fixed stage, seating, lawn
- > Concert, Festivals
- > Owned and operated by Live Nation

Farm Bureau Insurance Lawn at White River State Park

- > Capacity 7,500
- > Outdoor with lawn seating
- > Concerts
- > Operated by Live Nation



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Competitive Venues

Evansville

Ford Center

- > 10,900 Seats
- > City of Evansville/Venue Works
- > Arena
- > Sports, Concerts

Louisville

Big Four Lawn

- > 10,000
- > Operated by Waterfront Development Cooperation
- > Amphitheatre
- > Large lawn — concerts, festivals, walks/runs, weddings, galas

Brown-Forman Amphitheatre

- > 10,000
- > Amphitheatre
- > Operated by Waterfront Development Cooperation
- > 3 acres flat land accommodates from 250 to festivals of 10,000

Festival Plaza

- > 10,000
- > Operated by Waterfront Development Corporation
- > Outdoor Venue
- > Accommodates up to 10,000 /adjacent to wharf-Concerts

Cincinnati

US Bank Arena

- > 12,833
- > Nederlander Organization
- > Arena
- > Disney on Ice, Concerts, Harlem Globetrotters

Dayton

Wright State University Nutter Center

- > 11,000
- > Wright State University
- > Concerts

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Learning from Others: Comparable Facilities Case Studies

The study identified three comparable facilities located in other markets with the purpose of studying the facilities/organizations to see what could be learned in terms of programming, operations, finances, policies and staffing. A number of criteria were kept in mind, including seating capacity, proximity to other cities, population, operating structure and program offerings.

The theaters selected for the case studies were First Security Amphitheater (Little Rock, AR), Artpark Amphitheater (Lewiston, NY) and The John C. Dunham Pavilion (Aurora, IL).

Detailed case studies were prepared for each venue and provided to the client. Summary information is provided below:

First Security Amphitheater

Little Rock, AK



Capacity

- 7,875 (1,078 permanent seating)
- Other Spaces-Pavilions, Farmers Market, Multipurpose Room

Operating Structure

- The River Market (and Amphitheater) is owned by the City of Little Rock Parks & Recreation. The Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau entered into a management agreement with the City to manage Ottenheimer Market Hall, the Pavilions, and the First Security Amphitheater (Formerly Riverfest Amphitheater).

Staff

- Director of Operations, Park and Rec staff (all staff work on and for all River Market facilities)

Programming

- Concerts, (promoters take risk), movies, special events, Festivals; some free events

Budget

- Rolled into the Market River Budget; \$71,620 in rental fees

With an event capacity of 7,875, First Security Amphitheater sits on seven acres, and has 1,375 fixed seats. Amenities include four dressing rooms (all include showers), and restrooms that can accommodate attendance of 4,000.

Other facilities on the grounds are two river market pavilions that combined offer seating for 1,000. The Farmers Market and other events take place at the pavilions. Located between the two

pavilions is the River Plaza. Additionally, the grounds include the Bill and Margaret Clark Multi-Purpose Room.

The amphitheater is available for rental with a non-profit rate of \$2,000 and a commercial rate of \$3,000 plus 5% of gross ticket sales, whichever is greater, not to exceed \$5,000.

In terms of ticket prices, the market can bear a price of \$40 for concerts.

Attendance in the RiverMarket District, where the amphitheater is located, was 325,000 this year. However, this total includes 200,000 people who attended Riverfest, a popular festival. Popular concerts draw 7,000 people.

Concerts proceed rain or shine, and nearby, convenient parking is available.

Current challenges include ticketing. Currently, River Market is not working through a ticketing program. Groups using the space manage their own tickets. Security, which the renter provides, can also be an issue if the renter does not hire sufficient help. Finally, noise can be a problem. The facility is located within a residential area four blocks from the amphitheater.

Artpark Amphitheater

Lewiston, New York



Mission

Artpark & Company produces and presents excellence in the performing and visual arts, and creates unique cultural experiences in a casual, natural setting. Artistic talent is nurtured and allowed to flourish in an atmosphere that is entertaining, educational and interactive for Artpark visitors.

Seating Capacity

- 10,000
- Other Spaces-Theatre (2,400), Visual Arts Installation areas

Operating Structure

- Owned by State of New York and managed by Artpark & Company

Staff

- Artpark & Company

Programming

- Tuesday in the Park
- Concerts, Coors Light Wednesday Concerts, (Artpark & Company takes the risk), summer camps and workshop, free movie nights

Budget

- 2014FY \$4,379,517

Earl W. Brydges Artpark State Park is located in the Village of Lewiston in Niagara County, New York, generally referred to as “Artpark”, and was created on the site of a former industrial waste dump. The Park includes, in addition to the amphitheater, a mainstage theater, theater terrace lounge, and picnic area. Artpark's Outdoor Amphitheater sits on top of the Niagara River Gorge, which provides a scenic backdrop.

The amphitheater underwent a renovation that was completed in June of 2013. The renovation took place as a result of the popularity of their summer concert series, and the desire to renovate the space to improve the experience for the patron. The effort gave patrons a better view of the stage, new walkways, and easier and safer access. New service areas for concessions, and a new restroom building was also included.

Ticket prices for the Tuesday in the Park concerts are \$5 in advance, \$10 the week of the concert, with select Tuesday concerts ticketed at \$10 in advance and \$15 the week of the concert. Group discounts are available for groups of over 20. The Wednesday Concert Series is free.

In terms of attendance, the park in its entirety saw 224,000 people from May to August. This includes everything from concerts to community members fishing and walking their dogs. The two concert series combined brought in an audience of 151,600 people. Audience is not tracked for free events.

Overcrowding for the Tuesday concerts was an issue, so a fence has been erected in a half circle around the venue. This new fence restricts access and entry can only be made by those willing to pay a small admission fee. The venue does provide parking. For the Tuesday in the Park evening concerts the cost is \$5 for cars and \$3 for motorcycles. Parking for Coors Light Wednesday free concerts are \$10 for cars and \$6 for motorcycles.

Currently, sound is an issue. When the venue was renovated a sound engineer was engaged to place speakers and audio equipment in what was hoped would be a manner that would shift sound away from the community. The venue is located in a small village and Canada is right across the river. Depending on how the wind is blowing, people can hear the music. There is sound curfew of 10pm for Tuesday and Wednesday concerts and 11pm on weekends. Each act has their own sound personnel and Arts Park staff has little control of the sound.

The John C. Dunham Pavilion

Aurora, IL



Seating Capacity

- 8,500

Operating Structure

- Pavilion publicly owned and operated by Aurora Civic Center Authority (ACCA), which is the owner and operator of the Paramount Theatre

Staff

- 34 (work for Paramount and Pavilion)

Programming

- Concerts, Festivals, Movies, Community Events (ACCA takes risk) Has some free events

Budget

- \$2.5 to \$3 Million (part of the city's River Edge Park budget) Spend \$300,000 a year on marketing and \$100,000 on security

The John C. Dunham Pavilion is located along the Fox River, on the 30-acre grounds of RiverEdge Park. The park is open year-round. The grounds have, in addition to the concert pavilion, a river walk, bike path and pier. JCDP does offer food and drinks provided by the local Two Brothers Roundhouse, a brewpub restaurant. The premises also has a permanent food and beverage vending area, with a varied menu.

The venue is available for rent. The non-profit fee is \$5,000, while the commercial rate is \$10,000.

Ticket prices vary widely ranging from \$55-\$85 for concerts to \$3 for local bands.

In 2014 attendance was around 100,000; 12,000 of this figure can be attributed to free events. This number is expected to double in the next 3 to 4 years

Concerts take place rain or shine, and while there are no refunds, if shows are cancelled, patrons can use the tickets to see shows taking place at Paramount Theatre. The venue has no dedicated parking. The city does charge for use of their parking areas (\$10 a car), while parking is free for small community events. In terms of crowd control, for large events temporary fencing is erected.

The venue does experience some challenges, including competition from The Ravinia Festival, which is the oldest outdoor music festival in North America. Ravinia engages some of the same acts the Paramount would like to engage. Lollapalooza, a three-day music festival that takes place in Grant Park in Chicago, also creates a competitive marketplace. Additionally, no shade exists for the audience, and the concession area only accommodates 2,000.

The Paramount Theatre has been working to bring elevated stature to the community and remove the stigma that has lingered since the 80's when gangs and violence were present in the area, and provides a reason for people to come downtown. The focus of the theatre's effort is to create the best mix of programming and work to develop relationships within the community.

Case Study Summary

A common theme among the organizations studied was the issue of "risk taking" when planning the venues' programming. The repercussions of making decisions that do not prove successful financially are of significant concern for the decision makers.

Additionally, keeping community members engaged by offering diverse small and large scale programming is an important focus, as well as providing programming that is "low cost" or free to the patron.

Finally, all three venues primarily offer their programming in the summer, with the weather being the main reason activities do not take place other times during the year.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater: A Vision for the Future

Key Themes from Interviews

There were a number of key themes that can be articulated from the stakeholder interviews. Key among them includes making a concerted effort to “invite” the community to participate in offered programming. Another consistent theme throughout was that the community of Columbus is accustomed and expects to attend events for free. Interviewees thought that there may be some resistance to offering a number of events that community members will be asked to pay for.

In terms of programming, interviewees would like to see proactive, and diverse programming. In other words, that those tasked with programming the facility take active initiative to determine the best mix of programming, designed to engage Columbus community members. The offerings should be broad-based.

In order to achieve the above, respondents believe that skilled, effective management with expertise in programming the venue should be engaged.

Finally, by and large, support does exist for the renovation of the facility.

Envisioned Programming

Programming activity was seen as taking place primarily during the summer months.

Programming envisioned in the renovated space is diverse, attracts all ages, and includes a wide range of genres. Respondents would like to see theatre, musicals, and music (symphony, concerts, including a summer concert series). There were also requests for

Popfest, which took place at the Library Plaza, and was one of the city’s longest running annual concerts, running for 30 years, to take place at the Custer-Nugent Amphitheater. It was last offered in 2009, and ended due to the economic downturn. The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra was the headliner. Other programming interviewees would like to see includes dance, festivals, comedy shows, movies, sports programming, such as talks that include fitness instruction workshops, and fundraisers. Programs offered by the diverse cultural groups in the city are also on the roster. Ideally, some of the programming would include touring shows, youth activities, and some events would be offered in conjunction with other park uses. Interviewees envision a mix of paid and free public performances.

Potential Users

Interviewees suggested and envisioned a number of potential users, and saw existing programming provided by the Parks & Recreation Department and the Arts Council continuing. Currently, a number of respondents would like to see the Philharmonic on the stage. The City Band was also suggested. In terms of theater, Mill Race Players and Crump Players were mentioned. Concerts, festivals, church services, weddings and trade shows were also among envisioned offerings. While dance was also suggested, it was noted that sufficient wing space and an acceptable dance floor (marley, for example), would be required.

Operating Expectations

In terms of the operating expectations for the venue, most respondents could see the Parks & Recreation Department or another local nonprofit agency operating and managing the facility, but expressed the importance of engaging personnel skilled in programming. It was also assumed that operating subsidy will be needed to support the facility, and a means to securing these funds

would need to be realized. Some interviewees did share that the option of bringing in outside commercial management may not be looked upon favorably by some community members.

Success in the **Future**

Success in the future is tied to, among other things, engaged programming offered by a variety of groups, in a space that is flexible, very active in the summer, and is affordable for community use. As seen below, it is also hoped that the programming and venue will serve as a regional draw.

- Proactive vs. reactive programming
- Usable for all -- accommodates small and large groups
- Flexible space
- Heavily programmed in the summer
- Diversity of programming/small and large events
- Low cost for community users
- Venue is a regional draw
- Another jewel in the showcase of Columbus
- Meets community needs
- Revenue neutral from operations (without debt service)

Business Plan

Operating Recommendations

Management Structure

This study included exploring a variety of possible operating models that might be considered, including City management, sub-contracted management to a local nonprofit organization, or sub-contracted management to a commercial operator. There is

⁴ The current conceptual design for the amphitheater includes a special event space within the artist pavilion.

precedent for each of these arrangements in Columbus, with Hamilton Center Ice Arena serving as an example of a separate business unit within Parks & Recreation, previous management contracts with the Arts Council to operate the Commons, and commercial management of the local parking structure. While one particular model is not definitively recommended, AMS recommends that operational responsibility live either within an agency of the City or be sub-contracted to a private, nonprofit organization. Considerations include:

- Community expectations that the amphitheater accommodate a variety of local uses;
- Current practices that keep rental rates and ticket prices below market rates; and
- Area competition for large scale concert acts.

In light of these issues, commercial operation of the facility is unlikely to be successful.

Benefits of each of the two potential models are enumerated below. It should be noted that in either arrangement additional support staff, designated responsibilities, stated policies and procedures and the necessity to take risk on presentations will be required.

City Operation

The amphitheater's location within a City operated park is the greatest factor leaning towards City operations of the amphitheater. Further, current operations of the Commons by the City could lead to organizational and operational efficiencies, and eliminate and potential competition or cross-scheduling between the facilities⁴. The existing Parks & Recreation Foundation provides the structure

for the amphitheater to receive contributions and sponsorships in support of programming.

Sub-contracted Operation

Operation of the amphitheater by an existing or newly created nonprofit organization in Columbus could bring heightened expertise, knowledge of product, and clarity of purpose to the facility. Its intended use by area organizations could be strengthened by existing partnerships between nonprofits.

Because of its history operating the Commons and using the amphitheater, the Columbus Area Arts Council is certainly one potential candidate for consideration, should it consider facility operations appropriate to its mission. A second possibility relates to the potential renovation of the Crump Theater. During the course of our work the City received a report recommending that if the theater is renovated, it should be operated by a new nonprofit organization, which could also operate the amphitheater. Pending decisions about the Yes Cinema would also influence the options available for sub-contracted management.

Staffing Plan

Regardless of operational structure, dedicated, skilled and proactive management will be required in order to achieve success.

AMS recommends that a supervisor, in addition to one support staff be assigned on a seasonal basis to take on the necessary tasks of booking and operation of the facility. It is our assertion that this degree of focus will be necessary to guarantee that the facility receives the quality and quantity of attention needed for effective operation.

⁵ Projected user groups are for illustrative purposes only and do not reflect existing commitments to use the facility.

Activity Profile

In order to forecast financial results from operations, AMS developed an Activity Profile for the renovated amphitheater.

Taking into consideration input received from the stakeholder interviews, study undertaken through the comparable case studies, and AMS's knowledge base of other venues around the country, the following programming activity has been developed⁵:

Mill Race Park Amphitheatre Potential Uses and Users		
	Potential User	# of Events
Festival Side	Rock the Park Hospice Philharmonic Drive-in Movies Other Presented Acts	12
Mound Side	First Fridays for Family Battle of the Bands Mill Race Players Columbus City Band Bluegrass Jamboree Other Presented Events	26
Community Use	Celebration of Light Music & Arts Festival Parks & Rec Foundation Ethnic Festivals	8
Private Use	Weddings; Church	TBD

This operating model recommends presented and rental programming. Presented events take three forms: large-scale concerts (Rock the Park⁶, Hospice concert and others), drive-in movies, and other presented acts, that would take place on the Festival Side, and smaller scale concerts and music events, theatre, and family programming on the Mound Side. Festivals, and Parks & Recreation offerings are envisioned within the mix, as well as the potential for church services and weddings.

⁶ Rock the Park has been included as an on-going rental event, but it will need to be differentiated from other concert events. Alternately, the program could be incorporated into the series of other large-scale concert presentations.

Financial Model

Based on the Activity Profile and operating recommendations above, community input and additional secondary research, an operating pro forma estimate for a renovated Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park was created. A detailed financial model was delivered to the client, with summary information below:

Notes and Assumptions

The pro forma model contains the following escalations and assumptions:

- An average annual expense escalation of 3.0%
- An average biennial revenue escalation of 3.0%
- At this level of planning, a 5% expense contingency is included
- From 2015, an estimated completion of renovations in three years
- All summary figures are rounded to the nearest \$100

The operating pro forma is not intended as a budget, but as a model for decision-making based on the assumptions detailed below.

Operating Summary

Total operating expenses for the Custer-Nugent Amphitheater (including contingency) are approximately \$1.1 million in Year 3 (adjusted for annual expense escalation). Operating revenues of \$1.2 million allow the venue to operate at break-even after accounting for a 5% expense contingency which has been included in the projection.

Note: The Custer-Nugent Amphitheater is a City owned and operated facility. As such, some overhead costs are absorbed into other City department budgets and have not been accounted for here. These unallocated costs include, but are not limited to,

utilities (gas, water, electric), grounds maintenance, administrative support (accounting, IT, human resources) and insurance.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park					
SCHEDULE 2: SUMMARY PRO FORMA	Year 1	Year 2	Base Year	Year 4	Year 5
EARNED REVENUES					
Rental Income	\$65,300	\$68,800	\$75,200	\$78,800	\$87,400
Presenting Revenue	\$672,900	\$745,000	\$941,500	\$1,039,500	\$1,268,700
Parking	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Concessions, Net	\$90,200	\$96,400	\$110,200	\$118,100	\$134,400
Merchandise Sales, Net	\$5,500	\$5,900	\$7,100	\$7,700	\$9,100
Sponsorships	\$40,300	\$40,300	\$41,500	\$41,500	\$42,800
TOTAL EARNED REVENUES	\$874,200	\$956,400	\$1,175,500	\$1,285,600	\$1,542,400
OPERATING EXPENSES					
Compensation	\$134,600	\$138,600	\$142,800	\$147,100	\$151,500
Programming	\$703,600	\$744,900	\$924,100	\$973,300	\$1,176,500
Facility Operations	\$43,700	\$45,000	\$46,400	\$47,800	\$49,200
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$881,900	\$928,500	\$1,113,300	\$1,168,200	\$1,377,200
OPERATING RESULT	(\$7,700)	\$27,900	\$62,200	\$117,400	\$165,200
NET RESULTS	(\$7,700)	\$27,900	\$62,200	\$117,400	\$165,200
(Less Contingency)	(\$44,100)	(\$46,400)	(\$55,700)	(\$58,400)	(\$68,900)
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(\$51,800)	(\$18,500)	\$6,500	\$59,000	\$96,300

Revenue

The Custer-Nugent Amphitheater generates operating revenue from Facility Rental, Presenting Revenue and Ancillary Revenue (concessions, merchandise sales, and sponsorships).

Facility Rental: Facility rental fees are projected based on the Activity Profile and a rental rate schedule which reflects community priorities and current practice at the Commons, and is an important source of revenue for the Custer-Nugent Amphitheater moving

forward. The following Schedule 6 assumes base rent to cover existing available equipment. All other production costs, to include all labor costs, additional equipment rental, fencing and porta

potties (Festival Side) are paid for by the renter and are net zero to the City.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park																
SCHEDULE 6: RENTAL INCOME	Rental Rate	Year 1			Year 2			Base Year			Year 4			Year 5		
		Uses	Adjusted Rental Rate	Rental Charge	Uses	Adjusted Rental Rate	Rental Charges	Uses	Adjusted Rental Rate	Rental Charges	Uses	Adjusted Rental Rate	Rental Charges	Uses	Adjusted Rental Rate	Rental Charges
Festival Side																
Commercial - Performance (day)	\$4,000	4	\$4,244	\$16,974	4	\$4,244	\$16,976	5	\$4,372	\$21,860	5	\$4,372	\$21,860	6	\$4,502	\$27,012
Commercial - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$2,000	0	\$2,122	\$0	0	\$2,122	\$0	0	\$2,186	\$0	0	\$2,186	\$0	0	\$2,251	\$0
Nonprofit - Performance (day)	\$1,500	8	\$1,591	\$12,731	9	\$1,592	\$14,324	9	\$1,640	\$14,756	10	\$1,640	\$16,395	11	\$1,688	\$18,571
Nonprofit - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$750	5	\$796	\$3,978	5	\$796	\$3,979	5	\$820	\$4,099	5	\$820	\$4,099	5	\$844	\$4,221
Subtotal, Festival Side		17		\$33,684	18		\$35,278	19		\$40,714	20		\$42,354	22		\$49,804
Mound Side																
Commercial - Performance (day)	\$900	10	\$955	\$9,548	12	\$955	\$11,459	12	\$984	\$11,804	14	\$984	\$13,772	14	\$1,013	\$14,181
Commercial - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$450	0	\$477	\$0	0	\$477	\$0	0	\$492	\$0	0	\$492	\$0	0	\$506	\$0
Nonprofit - Performance (day)	\$450	16	\$477	\$7,638	16	\$477	\$7,639	16	\$492	\$7,870	16	\$492	\$7,870	16	\$506	\$8,104
Nonprofit - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$225	7	\$239	\$1,671	7	\$239	\$1,671	7	\$246	\$1,721	7	\$246	\$1,721	7	\$253	\$1,773
Subtotal, Mound Side		33		\$18,857	35		\$20,769	35		\$21,395	37		\$23,363	37		\$24,058
Community Events (both sides)																
Commercial - Performance (day)	\$3,000	0	\$3,183	\$0	0	\$3,183	\$0	0	\$3,279	\$0	0	\$3,279	\$0	0	\$3,377	\$0
Commercial - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$1,200	0	\$1,273	\$0	0	\$1,273	\$0	0	\$1,312	\$0	0	\$1,312	\$0	0	\$1,351	\$0
Nonprofit - Performance (day)	\$1,500	8	\$1,591	\$12,731	8	\$1,592	\$12,732	8	\$1,640	\$13,116	8	\$1,640	\$13,116	8	\$1,688	\$13,506
Nonprofit - Load/Rehearsal (4 hours)	\$750	0	\$796	\$0	0	\$796	\$0	0	\$820	\$0	0	\$820	\$0	0	\$844	\$0
Subtotal, Community Events		8		\$12,731	8		\$12,732	8		\$13,116	8		\$13,116	8		\$13,506
TOTAL RENTAL USES & REVENUE		58		\$65,272	61		\$68,779	62		\$75,226	65		\$78,833	67		\$87,368

Presenting:

The Activity Profile calls for the facility to engage in direct concert presentations at risk. Per the operating model notes above, this activity can be carried out by an individual employed by the City or by an enterprise contracted by the City to do so. Projected attendance and ticket sales for presented events are shown in Schedule 8 below.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park																	
SCHEDULE 8: BOX OFFICE PROJECTIONS	Average Ticket Price	Year 1				Year 2			Base Year			Year 4			Year 5		
		# Tickets Sold	Avg Ticket Price	Ticket Sales	Projected # Tickets Sold	Adj Ticket Price	Projected Ticket Sales	Projected # Tickets Sold	Adj Ticket Price	Projected Ticket Sales	Projected # Tickets Sold	Adj Ticket Price	Projected Ticket Sales	Projected # Tickets Sold	Adj Ticket Price	Projected Ticket Sales	
At Risk Presentations																	
Festival Concerts	\$36	16,000	\$38	\$611,078	17,600	\$38	\$672,250	22,000	\$39	\$865,656	24,200	\$39	\$952,222	29,040	\$41	\$1,176,652	
Mound Concerts	\$12	3,825	\$13	\$48,695	4,590	\$13	\$58,440	4,590	\$13	\$60,202	5,355	\$13	\$70,236	5,355	\$14	\$72,325	
Movies (Drive in)	\$2	1500	\$2	\$3,183	2000	\$2	\$4,244	2000	\$2	\$4,372	2500	\$2	\$5,465	3000	\$2	\$6,753	
Subtotal, At Risk Presentations		21,325		\$662,956	24,190		\$734,933	28,590		\$930,230	32,055		\$1,027,923	37,395		\$1,255,730	
Ticket Fees																	
	# of Tickets	Fee															
Festival Concerts	100%	\$1	23,000	\$24,401	24,600	\$26,101	29,000	\$31,697	31,200	\$34,102	36,040	\$40,563					
Subtotal, At Risk Presentations																	
Additional Expenses																	
	% of Sales	Fee															
Credit Card Fees Festival	75%	3%		(\$13,749)		(\$15,126)		(\$19,477)		(\$21,425)		(\$26,475)					
Credit Card Fees Mound	50%	3%		(\$730)		(\$877)		(\$903)		(\$1,054)		(\$1,085)					
Credit Card Fees Movie	20%	3%		(\$19)		(\$25)		(\$26)		(\$33)		(\$41)					
TOTAL BOX OFFICE REVENUE				\$672,858		\$745,006		\$941,521		\$1,039,513		\$1,268,694					

Presented events take three forms: large-scale concerts (Festival Side), drive-in movies (Festival Side) and smaller scale concerts (Mound Side). The number of presented activities grows biannually. All other (rental) activity remains flat. Attendance at Festival Side concerts grows every other year, while attendance at all other activities remains flat.

Average ticket price is reflective of current practice. A ticket fee of \$1.00 applies to all ticket purchases for Festival concerts and Rock the Park. The cost of servicing ticket sales (box office) is included in individual event production costs on a net basis.

Ancillary Revenues

Ancillary revenues include concessions, merchandise, and ticket fees. Revenue is derived by the amphitheater from concessions and merchandise sales at presented concerts but not at community activities (runs, Ethnic festivals, etc.) nor the Hospice Concert as in these cases revenues are accrued to the benefit of the renter.

Sponsorships

Sponsorships include three sponsor categories: Annual Season Sponsors, Festival Sponsors, and Mound Sponsors. Each category has several tiers of support. A summary of projected sponsorship revenue is found in Schedule II below:

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park											
SCHEDULE 11: SPONSORSHIP SALES PROJECTIONS	Year 1		Year 2		Base Year		Year 4		Year 5		
	Average	# Sponsors	Revenue								
Annual Season Sponsors											
Lead	\$5,000	1	\$5,305	1	\$5,305	1	\$5,465	1	\$5,465	1	\$5,628
Supporting	\$2,500	2	\$5,305	2	\$5,305	2	\$5,465	2	\$5,465	2	\$5,628
Festival Side Sponsors											
Other Presented Acts - Lead	\$3,000	3	\$9,548	3	\$9,549	3	\$9,837	3	\$9,837	3	\$10,130
Other Presented Acts - Supporting	\$1,500	6	\$9,548	6	\$9,549	6	\$9,837	6	\$9,837	6	\$10,130
Movies - Lead	\$500	3	\$1,591	3	\$1,592	3	\$1,640	3	\$1,640	3	\$1,688
Movies - Supporting	\$250	2	\$530	2	\$531	2	\$547	2	\$547	2	\$563
Mound Side Sponsors											
Season Sponsor	\$1,500	1	\$1,591	1	\$1,592	1	\$1,640	1	\$1,640	1	\$1,688
Supporting Sponsor	\$750	2	\$1,591	2	\$1,592	2	\$1,640	2	\$1,640	2	\$1,688
Other Presented Acts - Lead	\$500	5	\$2,652	5	\$2,653	5	\$2,733	5	\$2,733	5	\$2,814
Other Presented Acts - Supporting	\$250	10	\$2,652	10	\$2,653	10	\$2,733	10	\$2,733	10	\$2,814
TOTAL SPONSORSHIPS		35	\$40,314	35	\$40,318	35	\$41,534	35	\$41,534	35	\$42,769

Expense

Expenses fall into three general categories: presenting, staffing, and facility operations.

Presenting Expense: Presenting expenses include the production support personnel (event staff), City support services (Police and Fire Departments), contract services (security, valet, lighting/sound equipment and services, traffic support, porta-potties, venue cleaning, ticketing services, transportation, and fireworks), and artist personnel needed for each performance.

Presenting costs are detailed for Festival Concerts, Mound Concerts and movies.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park																
SCHEDULE 12: PRESENTING EXPENSES	Year 1			Year 2			Base Year			Year 4			Year 5			
	# of Events	Adj. Expense Per Event	Total Expense	# of Events	Adj. Expense Per Event	Total Expense	# of Events	Adj. Expense Per Event	Total Expense	# of Events	Adj. Expense Per Event	Total Expense	# of Events	Adj. Expense Per Event	Total Expense	
At Risk Presentations																
Festival Concerts	4	\$147,880	\$591,519	4	\$152,316	\$609,264	5	\$156,886	\$784,428	5	\$161,585	\$807,925	6	\$166,439	\$998,636	
Mound Concerts	10	\$6,456	\$64,557	12	\$6,649	\$79,792	12	\$6,849	\$82,186	14	\$7,054	\$98,756	14	\$7,266	\$101,723	
Movies (Drive in)	3	\$6,722	\$20,167	4	\$6,924	\$27,696	4	\$7,132	\$28,527	5	\$7,345	\$36,727	6	\$7,566	\$45,396	
Subtotal, At Risk Presentations	17		\$676,242	20		\$716,753	21		\$895,140	24		\$943,408	26		\$1,145,755	
Seasonal Expenses																
Fireworks	\$25,000		\$27,318			\$28,138			\$28,982			\$29,850			\$30,747	
TOTAL PRESENTING EXPENSES			\$703,561			\$744,890			\$924,122			\$973,258			\$1,176,501	

Net from Presenting Activity

Taking all related revenues and expenses into consideration, net revenue from Presented Activities in Year 3 is as follows:

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater Presentations at Risk (Year 3)				
	Festival Concerts	Mound	Movies	Total
Total Ticket Sales	\$865,656	\$60,202	\$4,372	\$930,230
Ancillary Revenues	\$59,514	\$1,967	\$12,040	\$73,522
Sponsorships	\$19,674	\$5,465	\$2,186	\$27,325
Total Revenue	\$944,844	\$67,635	\$18,598	\$1,031,077
Production Expenses	(\$784,428)	(\$82,186)	(\$28,527)	(\$895,140)
Total Net Revenue	\$160,416	(\$14,551)	(\$9,928)	\$135,937

Staffing: AMS has projected one Supervisor and one Support Personnel on a seasonal basis to support activity at the amphitheater. Using an hourly rate, the Supervisor is estimated at full-time plus on-site time at all events during the season (18 weeks), half-time during a 10-week “shoulder season”, and 10 hours per week during the off season. An Assistant is estimated at full-time during the performance season only.

Custer-Nugent Amphitheater at Mill Race Park												
SCHEDULE 13: INCREMENTAL STAFFING AND COMPENSATION (Non- Performance)			Year 1		Year 2		Base Year		Year 4		Year 5	
	Hourly Rate	Rate With Benefits	Hours	Expense	Hours	Cost (Incl. benefits)	Hours	Cost (Inc. benefits)	Hours	Cost (Incl. benefits)	Hours	Cost (Incl. benefits)
Administration												
Supervisor	\$42	\$59	1500	\$96,379	1500	\$99,270	1500	\$102,248	1500	\$105,311	1500	\$108,475
Presenting Assistant	\$25	\$35	1000	\$38,215	1000	\$39,361	1000	\$40,542	1000	\$41,757	1000	\$43,011
TOTAL STAFFING & COMPENSATION				\$134,593		\$138,631		\$142,790		\$147,067		\$151,486

Projected amphitheater staffing is the recommended level of resources that would need to be available for planning, programming and operational oversight of the facility, regardless of the entity responsible for facility operations. The projected staffing is separate from event-specific staffing, which is included as part of presenting expenses, above.

Facility Operations: As a City owned facility located in a City park, operating expenses including seasonal equipment rental, security (non-performance), landscaping/grounds upkeep, and costs related to utilities (gas, water, electric), and insurance are assumed to be covered by Parks & Recreation and not allocated to the amphitheater budget.

Administrative Expenses: There are additional overhead costs which are absorbed into other City department budgets and have not been accounted for here, including accounting, IT, and human resources. Cleaning and maintenance for the facility on a per use basis accounted for in Programming expenses.

Conclusion

With a reasonable investment, the City of Columbus has the opportunity to rehabilitate and improve an important asset in Mill Race Park. The Custer-Nugent Amphitheater can become a significant community amenity, used by local area arts organizations and enjoyed by Columbus citizens for a diversity of concerts, festivals and activities.

The commitment to invest in its infrastructure requires a commitment to ensure its operational success. Dedicated, proactive management, to include cultivation of rental clients as well as direct programming, will be required in order to activate the amphitheater and draw regional entertainment and patrons.

Mound side performances, support of area arts organizations and artists, and festival programming will not derive net revenue to support amphitheater operations. Only large scale concerts on the Festival Side have the opportunity to create net revenues which can be dedicated to amphitheater operations. Because of existing market conditions these concerts will have to be promoted by the facility operator, who will bear the risk / reward of their success.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Interviews

List of Interviewees⁷

The following list show who was interviewed and their affiliation. Care was taken to engage a wide range of stakeholders, representing a myriad of areas of expertise.

- Jayne Farber, Col. Redev. Project Consultant
- David Gregory, Blank Slate Productions
- Kurt Schwartz, 4th Street Bar
- Steve Leach, Garage Pub & Grill
- Margaret Powers, Exec Dir., Columbus Philharmonic
- Karen_Shrode, Executive Director, Columbus Area Arts Council
- Tami Sharp, Columbus Area Arts Council
- Laura Hurt, President, Hospice of South Central Indiana
- Sheryl Tracy, Mgr. Resource Development, Hospice of South Central Indiana
- Eric Marvin, Director of Sports Tourism
- John Foster, Station Manager, White River Broadcasting, Co.
- Angie Macy, Parks & Rec. Board member
- Heather Pope, Columbus Redev. Director
- Kathy McPeek, Parks & Recreation Program Mgr.
- Shanda Sasse, Manager, The Commons, Parks & Recreation
- April Williams, Parks & Recreation. / Parks Foundation
- Chip Orben, Parks Foundation
- Mark Jones, Parks & Recreation. Director
- Hanna Omar, Middle Eastern Association
- John Johnson, North H.S. Theater Director
- Russ Poling, Redevelopment Commission
- Ryan Brand, City Council
- Chuck Wells, The Republic
- David Bowden, Conductor, Columbus Philharmonic
- Chis Crawl, Columbus Arts Council
- Suzie Singer, Mgr. of Marketing, Hospice of South Central Indiana
- Hutch Schumaker, Col. Capital Foundation
- Buck Ritz, Milestone Contractors, LP
- Mayor Kristen Brown
- Rocio Rodriguez, CAMEO
- Lynn Lucus, Executive Director, Columbus Area Visitors Center
- Tom Mendenhall, Vice President, Operations Live Nation
- Frank Jerome, City Council

⁷ WLR and AMS