

1909 Stadium Arena: Preserving the Past While Forging a New Future

In 1909, the Western Stock Show Association replaced the big-top circus tent with the Stadium Arena (then known as the “National Amphitheater”), the first permanent indoor venue at the National Western Stock Show. For over 100 years, this iconic arena has captured the hearts of many as the home of 4H, livestock and dog shows, various trade shows, and the showcase for the annual champion steer. It is an archetypal example of turn-of-the-century architecture in Denver, and the City of Denver has preserved its legacy in perpetuity by awarding it an Historic Landmark designation in 2016.

As the National Western Center (NWC) transforms, the Arena’s rich tradition and history will contribute authenticity and help tell the story of the past. With a stated priority to Celebrate Western Heritage, the NWC Master Plan envisions the Stadium Arena’s historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse as a key opportunity to pay tribute to the long-standing history of this part of Denver.



About the 2017-2018 Stadium Arena Study

To realize the vision for the historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the 1909 Stadium Arena, further study is needed. The Mayor’s Office of the National Western Center, in partnership with Denver Community Planning and Development’s Landmark Preservation and the Denver Office of Economic Development will begin the Historic Structure & Public Market Viability Assessment in early fall. To assist with the study and gather local intelligence on proposed uses for the facility, a Public Market Advisory Working Group will be created to serve as thought partners on local/regional conditions and as a sounding board for the project team.

National Western Center Master Plan, March 2015

“The Master Plan calls for this building to take on a new role, one that can be used and enjoyed by the public through a variety of possible new uses that may include an active public market, a commercial/ teaching kitchen that can be used by the community... a multi-use events space in the main arena... a possible center for entrepreneurial business and art ...and will include incubator business space, and retail uses for goods and services that showcase Western Heritage and food.”



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The Working Group will include local and regional business leaders from industries including food, tourism, hospitality, entertainment, commercial real estate, and event and facility management, as well as representatives from the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea community.

THE ASSESSMENT WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SCOPE COMPONENTS:

1. **Historic Structure Assessment** - Investigation and documentation of the physical condition of the 1909 Stadium Arena and assessment of the feasibility of adaptively reusing the structure for the intended program.
2. **Market Study and Commercial Feasibility Analysis** – Analysis of commercial use opportunities for the rehabilitated facility, including the potential for a year-round public market and a Colorado Welcome Center.
3. **Preferred Development Program** – Based on the market study results and the determined adaptability of the structure, the consultant team will identify an ideal mixture of uses that serves greater Denver and the communities of Globeville, Elyria and Swansea. The team will explore indoor and outdoor community programming and alternative revenue generating uses that secure the long term financial health of the facility.
4. **Business Plan** – Recommendations of a governance/organizational plan for the rehabilitation and operation of the facility, development of a capital cost estimate and rehabilitation budget, and financial model of the operating facility to demonstrate the viability of the Preferred Development Program.

Schedule



This project will launch in Fall 2017. To maintain momentum and move forward toward implementation, it is anticipated that this process will take no more than 7 months, with a business plan finalized in Spring 2018.



This project is partially funded through a competitive matching grant program from the State Historic Fund (SHF), which is administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) at History Colorado.

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