# EASTERN OREGON TRADE AND EVENT CENTER (EOTEC)

**EOTEC- 1705 E. Airport Road**

## December 03, 2026 at 5:30 PM

## AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ACTION ITEMS**
   - **A.** Review and possibly approve the minutes of the March 26th, 2026, June 18th, and October 7th regular meeting. No Meetings were held in April, May, July, August, September, and November.
3. **REPORTS**
   - **A.** 2026 Umatilla County Fair & Farm City Pro-Rodeo Report
   - **B.** Water Rights Update
   - **C.** HEROS Update
   - **D.** RV Park Update
   - **E.** Financial Update
   - **F.** Master/Strategic Draft Plan Review
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
5. **NEXT MEETING**
   - **A.** TBD @ 5:30pm at EOTEC.
6. **ADJOURN**

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Please contact Hermiston City Hall, 180 NE 2nd Street, Hermiston, OR 97838 (Phone No. 541-567-5521) at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time if you need an accommodation. TTY and TDD users please call Oregon Telecommunications Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900 or 711.

# EOTEC ADVISORY COMMITTEE 03/26/2026

Committee Members Present: Luke Swanson (via phone), Jennifer Roberts, David Bothum, Kyndra Stone, Cari Shafer and Steve Wallace. Hermiston High School Youth Advisory committee member present: Emily Stone. EOTEC General Manager Al Davis, City Manager Byron Smith, and City Staff Holly Lambert were also in attendance.

Member absent: Drex Bailey

City Manager Smith called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
Steve moved and Jennifer seconded to elect Luke Swanson as Chair. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Jennifer moved and Cari seconded to elect Kyndra Stone as Vice Chair. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**February 5th, 2026, Minutes**
Jennifer moved and Luke seconded to approve February 5th EOTEC Advisory Committee regular meeting minutes as presented. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Financial Update**
Byron reviewed the City's EOTEC Financial Report as of 2.28.26. Byron reminded the committee the fund is projected on a straight-line 1/12th revenue or expense per month. Current revenues are $2,197,538.00 and current expenses are $1,686,045.00. Monies are beginning to come in for RV Park, and the project is currently on track financially to be built prior to this summer's county fair.

**Operations Update**
Al noted the facility is transitioning from spring to summer use. Non-profit dinner fundraising events have wrapped up for the season, the first barrel race was held this week, lacrosse is in full swing, and the number of events scheduled are steadily increasing. Al said to stay tuned for an event announcement coming out next week.

**Water Rights Update**
Byron stated our engineers, IRZ Consulting, are looking at water rights available on EOTEC property. We will continue to lease water rights from the Stanfield Irrigation District this year and plan to have our own water rights in place for 2027.

Steve inquired how many water rights are currently leased.

Byron replied approximately 40 acres of water rights are leased providing just enough water to keep what you see green on the property currently, but not enough to do all that is needed or desired.

**HEROS Update**
Luke shared the lacrosse season has begun with practices held on the field multiple times a week. The Lacrosse group is planning a field clean up day, pulling weeds and other clean up. Five weekday games

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are currently scheduled, and work is being done to add a couple more. The planned lacrosse tournament was cancelled and the HEROS committee is looking to schedule a Jamboree in its place.

Luke stated on the construction side, monies continue to be raised to finish lighting the fields and design signage is in progress.

**RV Parks Update**
Byron shared construction has begun on the first RV Park, with the second RV Park design set to be released for bids in the next couple of weeks.

**Review Strategic Plan/Site Master Plan**
Byron reviewed the Site 20 Year Master Plan, noting the city now owns as additional twenty acres to work into the plan, and gave a high-level overview of the Strategic Plan, noting the items already completed or in progress.

David asked if there would be additional paved parking areas as the new twenty acres were built.

Byron answered with any new buildings or expansion, the lot to the west of the event center will be paved as originally designated in the Master Plan.

Byron shared the idea for usage of additional twenty acres is to us the northern two-thirds for fields and additional parking for events. The remaining third will be the second RV Park.

Luke asked if there are any planned updates to the flow of parking during the Fair and Rodeo, because last year was great.

Al stated a few small changes will be necessary, but not many.

The committee discussed concepts and possible future movements since the Strategic Plan was created in 2021 and expressed the desire to look at updating both the Master Plan and Strategic Plan.

Byron stated updating both plans may be a good item for this committee to work on but did share the cost and care that went into creating the plans and what that might look like in today's dollars.

Luke asked about possibly widening and paving the entrance road now that the city owns the adjacent acreage.

Steve noted that the area next to the paved road is currently crabgrass and used as an extra lane in an emergency for ambulance access during high volume times. He agreed that paving it would be helpful.

**Next Meeting- TBD**

City Manager Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:14pm.

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# EOTEC ADVISORY COMMITTEE 06/18/2026

Committee Members Present: Luke Swanson, David Bothum and Steve Wallace.

EOTEC General Manager Al Davis, EOTEC Operations Manager Brian Rust, City Manager Byron Smith, Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, City Councilor Jeff Kelso and City Staff Holly Lambert were also in attendance.

Members Excused: Jennifer Roberts and Kyndra Stone

Member absent: Drex Bailey and Cari Shafer

No action taken as quorum required to hold the meeting not met.

City Manager Byron shared progress began to update the Master/Strategic Plan process. A meeting is scheduled with the original architecture firm. The consulting firm used last has also re-engaged to gather background information over the summer to help the committee with discussions this fall.

Steve and David shared updates and programming changes for the upcoming county fair and rodeo.

Byron stated IRZ consulting is reviewing water rights options on the recently purchased property to the EOTEC grounds.

Luke shared the HEROS committee is continuing work on the wall design and like most years, water availability has been a struggle at EOTEC overall.

Byron made note that the North RV Park is set to be completed prior to the 2026 Umatilla County Fair, and the South RV Park is set to being construction in two weeks.

Mark Morgan presented the Placer AI program and how the information can be used to help in tracking and planning events at EOTEC.

**Next Meeting- September 3rd, 2026 @ 5:30pm (with special guests)**

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# Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center Committee Meeting Minutes

October 7th, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm. Present were Committee Members: David Bothum and Steve Wallace. Member Kyndra Stone was excused, and member Luke Swanson was absent.

City Representatives in attendance included: EOTEC General Manager Al Davis, EOTEC Operations Manager Brian Rust, City Manager Byron Smith, Councilor Jeff Kelso, Committee Assistants Holly Lambert & Araceli Jaimes. Councilor Roy Barron was absent.

Also present was Umatilla County Fair Coordinator Beth Wheeler, Pac/West Lobby Group Daniel Wattenburger, Architect West Keith Dixon, and Ashley Son from SSW Consulting.

No actions were taken as quorum required to hold the meeting was not met.

**Master/Strategic Plan Process**

The EOTEC (Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center) Advisory Committee convened to begin updating the organization's strategic plan for the next five to ten years. Led by Ashley Son of SSW Consulting, the session focused on evaluating progress from the initial 2019 plan, analyzing recent attendance data, and identifying new priorities to ensure long-term financial sustainability. Report attached.

**Key Outcomes:**

- **Top Priority:** The development of a year-round indoor multi-use facility remains the primary capital investment goal to overcome seasonal limitations and weather dependencies.
- **Marketing Gap:** Stakeholders identified a critical need for a dedicated marketing professional to manage the website, social media, and proactive event recruitment.
- **Attendance Growth:** The Umatilla County Fair and Farm City Pro Rodeo saw record attendance of over 70,000 in the most recent season, attributed to improved weather and unified marketing efforts.
- **Financial Stance:** The city remains committed to funding EOTEC without property tax dollars, necessitating a shift toward more regional, high-revenue events.

**Decisions and Next Steps:**

- **Mission/Vision Refinement:** SSW Consulting will draft updated mission and vision statements based on the evening's discussions for review in the next few months.
- **Goal Area Definition:** The committee will refine the "Big Rocks" or primary goal areas, specifically focusing on the indoor facility and marketing infrastructure.
- **Follow-up Workshop:** A second advisory committee workshop will be scheduled to review the draft plan before finalization in January.
- **Master Plan Integration:** Ensure the strategic plan aligns with the 2026 site master plan, particularly regarding security system upgrades and PA system expansion.

**Public Comment**

None given.

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# Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center Committee Meeting Minutes

October 7th, 2026

**Next Meeting**

December 3, 2026, at 5:30pm at EOTEC

**Adjourn**

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

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# 2026 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

**About the Engagement**

Between July-August 2026, the project team interviewed 20 stakeholders to gather their experience, ideas, concerns, and hopes for the future of EOTEC.

**Who We Heard From**

- City Council
- EOTEC Advisory Committee
- City Staff
- Umatilla County Staff
- Umatilla County Fair Board
- Farm-City Pro Rodeo Board
- Chamber of Commerce
- Hermiston School District
- Event Organizers
- Hoteliers
- Community Members/Neighbors



# 2019 EOTEC STRATEGIC PLAN

Between 2018-2019, the City engaged with EOTEC stakeholders and hundreds of community members to develop a 10-year strategic plan for EOTEC. The strategic plan included a mission statement and recommendations based on the highest priorities during the community outreach in the following areas:

- Facility Improvements
- Operations
- Marketing
- Events

# 2026 OUTREACH THEMES

1. Marketing & Communications
2. Operations + Management
3. Facilities Maintenance + Curb Appeal
4. Increased Use + Financial Sustainability



# 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

The strategic plan should be updated regularly to ensure the recommended actions continue to align with community priorities. In July 2026, the City began the process to update the strategic plan. The updates will be informed by engagement with EOTEC stakeholders and recommendations developed by the EOTEC Advisory Committee. Following plan adoption by City Council, City staff will implement the plan.



## 1 Marketing & Communications

**What We Heard**

Stakeholders see marketing as a gap that is directly affecting EOTEC's success. The website is outdated and hard to navigate, doesn't list current events or schedules, and its photos and information no longer reflect the facility. EOTEC has no dedicated marketing capacity, and many stakeholders recommended hiring professional staff or a consultant. A recent concert had very low attendance, which stakeholders attributed to poor marketing. There is interest in EOTEC pursuing events more proactively and concern that other venues will draw business away.

**Common Stakeholder Priorities**

- A current, easy-to-use website with up-to-date events, schedules, photos, and information
- Easier access to scheduling and fee information
- Dedicated marketing capacity through professional staff or a consultant
- Promotion beyond social media: website, signage, community calendars, mailers, and cross-promotion with partners
- Proactively seeking events and opportunities, including package deals

**Key Tensions Identified**

- Unclear whether event marketing is the responsibility of EOTEC or the performer
- Competing for business with the newly opened private event center in Hermiston and the Pendleton Convention Center and Roundup Grandstand

# 2026 OUTREACH THEMES, CONTINUED

## 2 Operations + Management

### What We Heard

Stakeholders consistently appreciated EOTEC's friendly, welcoming staff. They also described an operation that feels understaffed, where processes and policies aren't always consistent from one event to the next. Renters shared examples of spaces not being fully ready when they arrived, which meant setting up, cleaning, or locating equipment themselves. Without standard maintenance and event-preparation processes, issues tend to be addressed as they arise rather than ahead of time. Stakeholders noted this has affected EOTEC's ability to retain some past events and attract new ones. Additionally, some renters report doing significant annual maintenance and repair to the grounds and facility at no cost before their events.

### Common Stakeholder Priorities

- Spaces set up and ready before scheduled events
- Standard processes for maintenance and event preparation
- Clear, consistent policies and procedures
- Retaining current renters and securing new business

### Key Tensions Identified

- Shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach to maintenance and event preparation
- Building operational capacity to support EOTEC's growth goals



## 3 Facilities Maintenance + Curb Appeal

### What We Heard

Stakeholders see EOTEC's grounds and buildings as a key part of the facility's first impression. Many noted that the facility is showing its age: worn paint, aging tables and chairs, equipment in need of repair, and grounds that need more regular care, including weed control and earlier seasonal irrigation. Renters have invested their own time and resources in improvements for their events, including landscaping, painting, fence repair, electrical work, and arena footing. Stakeholders see improving the facility's appearance, on site and from the street, as an opportunity to attract repeat and new business.

### Common Stakeholder Priorities

- A regular maintenance plan for grounds and buildings
- Refreshed paint, tables, and chairs, and repaired equipment
- Supplies and equipment to support events: kitchen supplies, a permanent stage, and equine equipment
- Improved equine ground footing
- Improved technology, including WiFi and projection capability
- More shade and pest (fly) control
- Parking that keeps pace with larger events
- Site security and controlled entry

### Key Tensions Identified

- Keeping up with maintenance needs across aging buildings and grounds
- Clarifying maintenance responsibilities between EOTEC and user groups
- Strengthening curb appeal to support EOTEC's growth goals
- The Amazon RV park partnership seen as a success by many, while others worry the City is ceding too many benefits to Amazon
- Recent parking decisions limiting rodeo parking versus the rodeo's need for available parking

## 4 Increased Use + Financial Sustainability

### What We Heard

Stakeholders in leadership roles strongly want EOTEC to become financially self-sufficient. The ideas mentioned most for getting there were better maintenance, operations, and marketing to bring in more events. An indoor multi-use facility was the largest capital-investment request among stakeholders interviewed. They see it as a strategic investment that would allow events regardless of winter weather, high winds, or wildfire smoke. Some stakeholders proposed specific strategies, such as a premier equine facility or a premier regional sports facility. Others emphasized expanding year-round community programming.

### Common Stakeholder Priorities

- Financial self-sufficiency, with better reporting and access to financial information
- An indoor multi-use facility with a portable floor to support equine, sports, concert, and agriculture events
- Completing the rodeo area, which currently limits the number of events
- Increased use of the HEROS sportsplex
- Year-round community programming, including youth sports, recreation, camps, family activities, 4-H/equine use, and community events
- A broader event mix: equine events, sports tournaments, concerts and performing arts, tradeshows and RV/car shows, conferences, and affordable private rentals

### Key Tensions Identified

- Growing EOTEC's regional draw while keeping facilities affordable and accessible for Hermiston residents, youth organizations, local vendors, community groups, and private events

## LOOKING AHEAD

As we move from engagement to plan development we are shifting from:

**WHAT WE HEARD**
Issues and concerns

*To*

**WHAT WE WANT TO CREATE**
A shared plan for EOTEC's future

*And*

**HOW WE GET THERE**
Priorities, partnerships, and actions

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# EOTEC STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

## DATA ANALYSIS SUMMARY

### PURPOSE

The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center (EOTEC) is updating their strategic plan to guide decisions and investments over the next five years. To inform the updates, the project team gathered and analyzed available data to better understand rental usage, attendance, attendee satisfaction, and desire for future events.

While the data available does provide some insight into trends, the data is limited and so therefore is the analysis and findings. To better track and understand usage information in the future, it is recommended for EOTEC to:

- Develop defined categories for event type
- Develop defined categories for renter type
- Track event-level data, including:
    - Attendance at event
    - Revenue generated by event (rental rate)
    - EOTEC Staff/Resources required to support event

### WHAT DATA DID WE ANALYZE?

- Attendance Data, 2021 – May 2026 (source: PlacerAI)
- Event Tracking Sheet, 2024-August 2026 (source: EOTEC staff)
- Declined Booking Tracking Sheet (source: EOTEC staff)
- 2025 EOTEC Usage Survey (source: Zencity)

### WHAT DID WE LEARN: PLACERAI DATA

**Considerations:**

- This data includes total attendance by month for all events at EOTEC.
- Does not include event-level data, such as number of events and event type.
- August averages ~63,000 attendees, while every other month averages ~5,500. This spike in attendance is the annual Umatilla County Fair/Farm-City Pro Rodeo event. The August data points are major outliers and any analysis with them included results in a skewed understanding of trends. To better understand the growth and trends of the Fair/Rodeo and regular monthly attendance, we split the data into two sets: 1) August-only (Fair/Rodeo), and 2) All months minus August Fair/Rodeo).

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**Findings**:

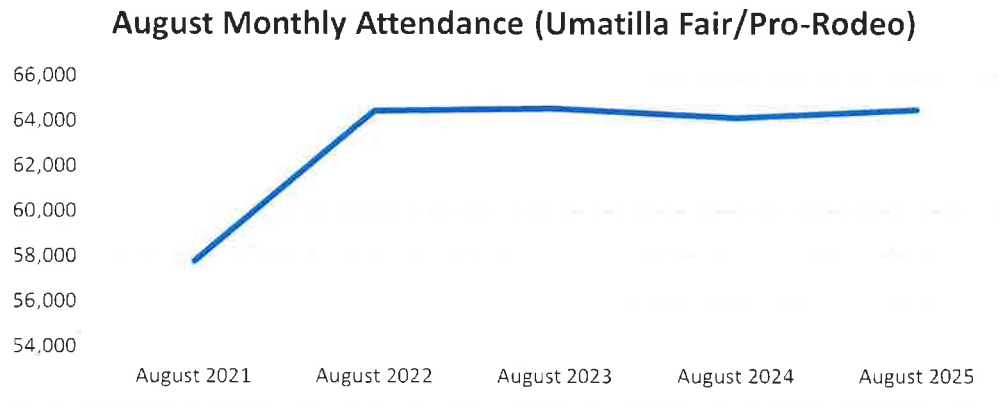
- Earlier growth between 2021-2022 was most likely recovery from artificially low numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The data suggest the Fair/Rodeo is mature and not growing, essentially the same attendance level for the last four years.
- This plateauing could be due to capacity constraints at the facility, a market-size ceiling, or something else. More research into the reasons is needed to inform priorities for the strategic plan (facility expansion/improvements, marketing, etc.)

**Charts and Graphs:**

**Attendance Over Time**

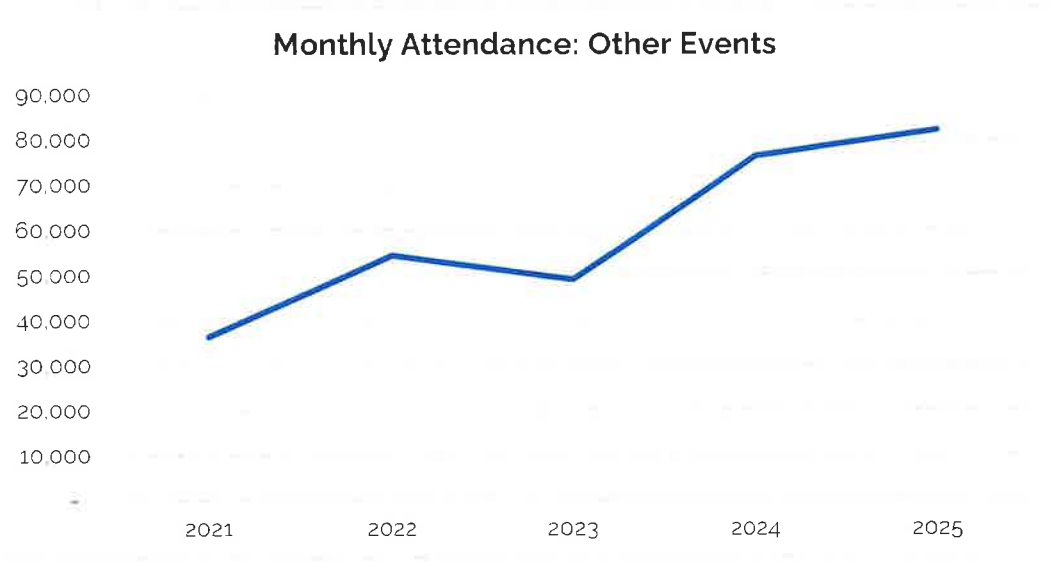
| Year | Total Attendance | Attendance without August | August Only Attendance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 93,985 | 36,232 | 57,753 |
| 2022 | 118,744 | 54,319 | 64,425 |
| 2023 | 113,412 | 48,880 | 64,532 |
| 2024 | 140,352 | 76,221 | 64,131 |
| 2025 | 146,400 | 81,910 | 64,490 |
| 2026 | 37,352 | 37,352 | |

**2021-2025 August-Only Monthly Attendance (Umatilla Fair/Pro-Rodeo)**



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**2021-2025 Monthly Attendance (August Removed (Umatilla Fair/Pro-Rodeo)**




- Aside from 2022-2023, monthly attendance has grown steadily.
- From the data, we do not know how this relates to number of events or revenue generated. For example, monthly attendance growth could be a result of increased number of smaller events or fewer total events (but events have larger attendance numbers).

**WHAT DID WE LEARN: EVENT-LEVEL DATA TRACKED BY STAFF**

**Considerations:**

- This data set includes events that completed inquiry forms and receive contracts to book their event.
- Does not include the annual Umatilla Fair/Pro-Rodeo August event.
- Attendance numbers are approximate for planning purposes and do not reflect actual attendance.
- The data includes full years for 2024 and 2025.
- For 2026, data updated as of Aug. 28 and includes bookings through Nov. 2026.

**Findings**:

- Number of events is growing from 2024-2026.

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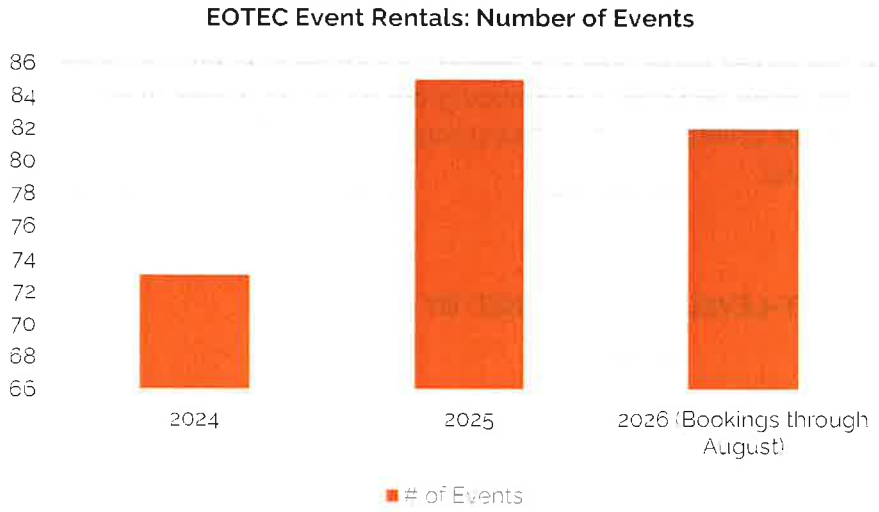
- Equestrian/Rodeo/Livestock events generate the highest number of rentals, followed by Health/Fitness Classes (exclusively Good Shepard Hospital) and Banquet/Fundraiser/Large Company Meeetings.

**Charts and Graphs:**

**2024-2026 Events and Attendance (Does not include Umatilla County Fair/Pro-Rodeo)**

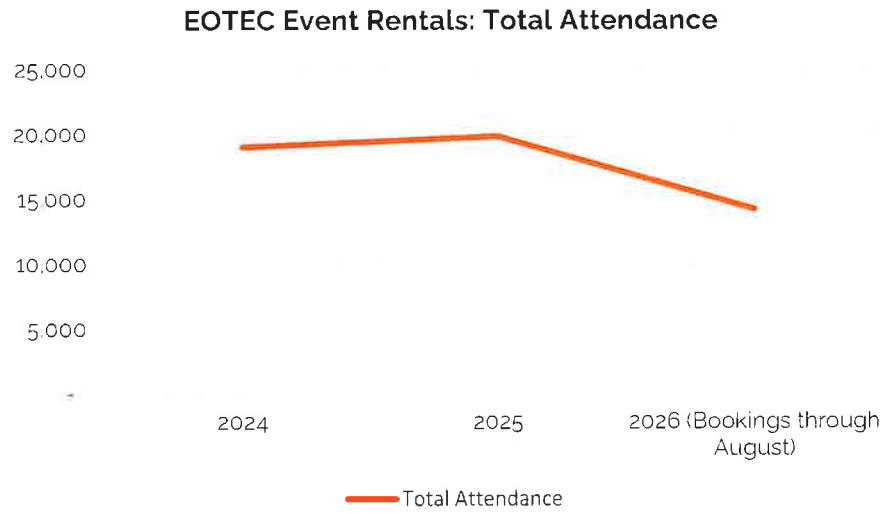
| Year | # of Events | Total Event Attendance | Average Event Attendance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2024 | 73 | 19,006 | 275 |
| 2025 | 85 | 19,800 | 251 |
| 2026 | 82 | 14,170 | 191 |

**2024-2026 Events (Does not include Umatilla County Fair/Pro-Rodeo)**




**2024-2026 Event Total Attendance (Does not include Umatilla County Fair/Pro-Rodeo)**

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## 2026 Events By Type and Average Attendance

Pickleball

| Event Type | # of Events | Average Attendance |
|---|---|---|
| Equestrian/Rodeo/Livestock | 24 | 182 |
| Health/Fitness Class, Health Screening (Exclusively Good Shepard Hospital) | 15 | 23 |
| Banquet/Fundraiser/Large Company Meeting | 15 | 342 |
| Community Event | 10 | 381 |
| Private Celebration Event (wedding, shower, birthday, quinceañera, funeral) | 10 | 147 |
| Business Meeting | 8 | 78 |
| **Grand Total** | **82** | |

## WHAT DID WE LEARN: DECLINED BOOKINGS

**Considerations:**

- This data is a tracking sheet with qualitative information.
- Dates included run from June 2024-February 2026.
- Data includes type, room, and some notes on conversation with client.

**Findings**:

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- Since June 2024, staff recorded 83 declined bookings.
- Majority of declined bookings are for the Private Celebration Event (wedding, shower, birthday, quinceañera, funeral) event type. This group accounts for 57 events (69% of declined bookings).
- Other events included business meetings, company holiday parties, conferences, trainings, and concerts.
- It is not always possible to understand why a potential client did not complete the booking. EOTEC staff shared that from their experience, most declined bookings are due to high price and ability to find another venue.

## WHAT DID WE LEARN: 2025 EOTEC USAGE SURVEY

**Considerations:**

- The survey was open Nov. 14 – Dec. 12, 2025.
- The survey targeted event attendees.
- The survey received 96 responses.
- The survey asked what events respondent had attended, their experience, and the type of events they would like to see in the future.

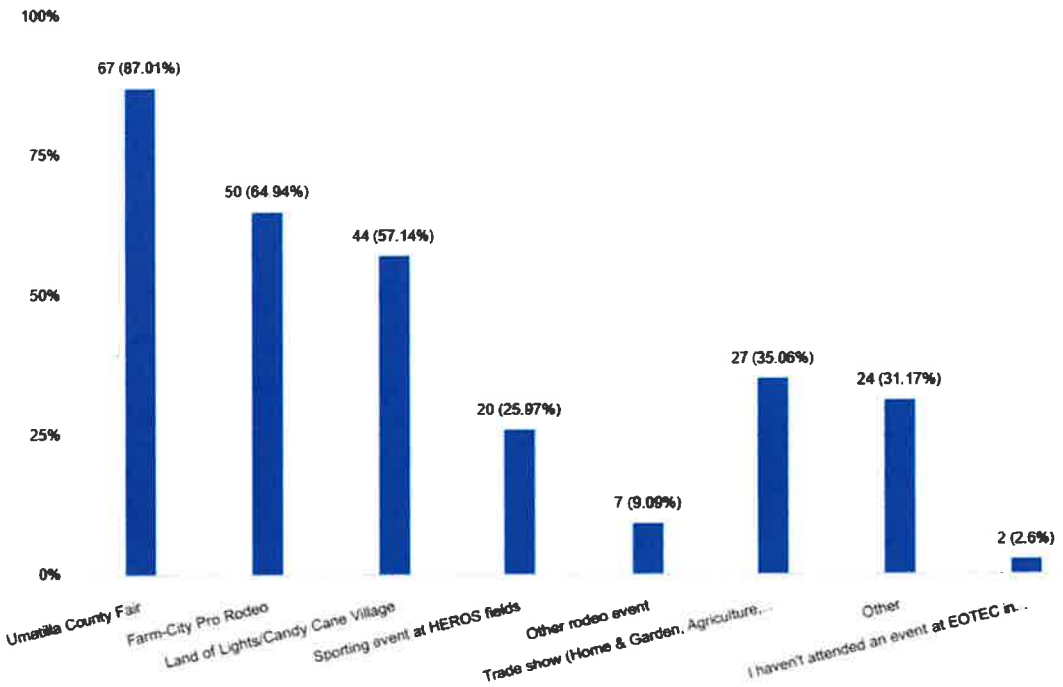
**Findings**:

- When asked what events they attended in the last year, top events attended were the Umatilla County Fair (87%), Farm-City Pro-Rodeo (65%), Land of Lights/Candy Cane Village (57%), and Trade Shows (35%).
- 75% of respondents have had a positive experience attending events (27% rated their experience as Very Positive. 48% rated their experience as Positive. This accounts for 58 respondents)
- Only 4% of respondents had a negative experience attending events (0% rated their experience as Very Negative. 4% rated their experience as Negative. This accounts for 3 respondents.)
- When asked what kind of event they would most like to attend at EOTEC, the top requests were Concerts (65%), Cuisine (farmers' market, food truck, etc.) (39%), Cultural or Holiday Festivals (34%), and Craft Fair/Artisan Market (34%).

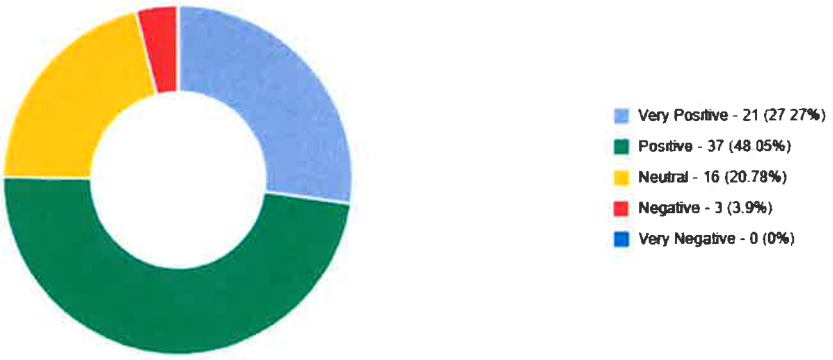
**Charts and Graphs:**

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**Which events have you attended at the Eastern Oregon Trade & Event Center in the past year? (Select all that apply)**

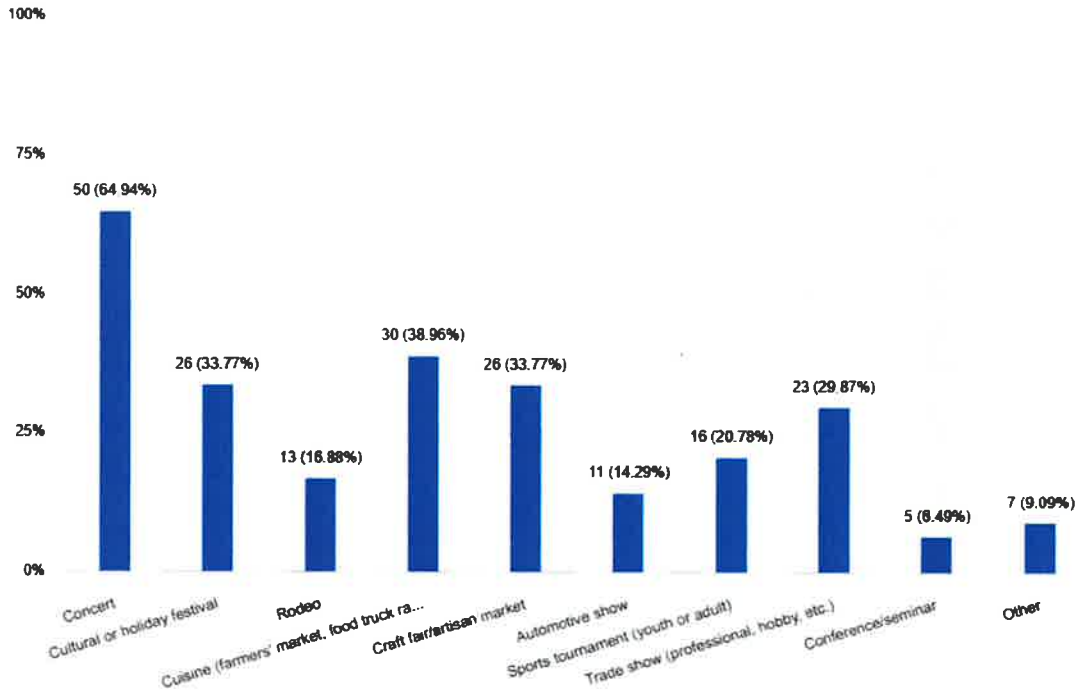



**Overall, how has your experience been while attending events at EOTEC?**



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**What kind of event would you most like to attend at EOTEC? (Choose up to three)**



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# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Byron Smith, City Manager
**FROM:** Sara Wilson, SSW Consulting
**DATE:** September 9, 2026
**SUBJECT:** Summary of Stakeholder Outreach for the EOTEC Strategic Plan Update

## INTRODUCTION

As part of the EOTEC Strategic Plan update, SSW Consulting conducted one-on-one interviews with 17 stakeholders representing City Council, EOTEC Advisory Committee, City staff, Umatilla County Fair Board, Farm-City Pro Rodeo Board, Chamber of Commerce, event lessees, hoteliers, and community members/neighbors.

This memo summarizes the themes that emerged in order of how strongly and consistently they surfaced across the interview pool, followed by notable individual comments that don't rise to a broad theme ("Other Priorities Mentioned"), but are worth noting for the team's awareness. The final section summarizes concerns about EOTEC staff related to performance, management practices, and organizational accountability.

## OUTREACH THEMES

### Marketing and Communications

- Outdated website: Doesn't list current events or schedule, photos and information no longer reflect facility, difficult to find the information needed.
- No dedicated marketing capacity: Many recommendations to hire professional staff or consultant.
- Impacting success of events: Recent concert had very low attendance due to poor marketing. Unclear if event marketing was responsibility of EOTEC or performer.
- Multi-channel approach: There is interest to extend past social media to update website, signage, community calendars, mailers, and cross-promotion with partners.
- Proactive approach: Desire for EOTEC to more proactively seek out events and opportunities and develop package deals.
- Concern over competition: Concern that the new private event center recently opened in Hermiston and the Pendleton Convention Center and Roundup Grandstand will take away business.
- Expand to regional while keeping local availability: Important to keep EOTEC affordable for the people of Hermiston to use while expanding to attract larger regional events.

### Operations and Management

- Event readiness: Spaces not set up in advance of scheduled events, including renters having to clean up from an event the night before and locate their own chairs, signage, and AV equipment.

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- Reactive instead of proactive: Issues addressed only after becoming visible or urgent, no standard maintenance or event-preparation process.
- Friendly and easy-going but not professional: Appreciation for the kind staff, but experience feels as though office is understaffed (e.g., chaotic, inconsistent processes/policies).
- Losing opportunities: Several examples of either previous renters/events moving from EOTEC or inability to secure new business due to maintenance, cleanliness, lack of supplies/equipment (e.g., NRA banquet, Festival of Trees event, Equine obstacle course, college rodeo).
- EOTEC Advisory Committee: Concerns around lack of structure of meetings (e.g., often cancelled/rescheduled) and that voices are not being heard and so they no longer engage.
- Use of City property for personal use: Reports of personal livestock and RV storage use on property by employees.

**Facilities Maintenance and Curb Appeal**

- Grounds and buildings not maintained: Poor appearance, dirty floors, weeds, irrigation not turned on until summer, broken equipment, old paint, old tables and chairs, building showing wear.
- Maintenance and repair by lessees: Significant maintenance required by volunteer groups using the space to improve safety, functionality, and appearance required for their events (e.g., landscaping, painting, fence repair, electrician work, repair to outdoor arena for horse footing, etc.).
- Negative impact on return and future business: Results in a negative impression of EOTEC, which could deter future business, either from visiting facility or view from street entrance.

**Indoor Multi-Use Facility**

- Broad consensus: Largest capital-investment request by stakeholders interviewed.
- Strategic investment: Supports the goal of increased events and financial self-sufficiency.
- Outdoor-only space limits use and rentals: Allows for events to occur regardless of winter weather, high winds, wildfire smoke, etc.
- Multi-purpose: Use of portable floor would support many types of indoor events (e.g., equine, sports, concerts, agriculture).

**Financial Sustainability**

- Self-sufficiency: Strong desire from stakeholders in leadership roles to see EOTEC be self-sustainable.
- Transparency: Requests for better reporting and accessibility to financial information.
- Path forward: Better maintenance, operations, and marketing/advertisement to bring more events were the ideas most mentioned.

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**Desire for Increased Use**

- Premier facility as a strategic focus: Some stakeholders presented specific strategies, such as a premier equine facility and premier regional sports facility.
- Community access + benefit: As EOTEC expands its regional draw, stakeholders want the facilities to remain affordable and accessible for Hermiston residents, youth organizations, local vendors, community groups, and private events.
- Expand community programming: Interest in more youth sports, recreation, camps, family activities, 4H/equine use, community events, and other year-round programming.
- Other ideas mentioned:
    - Equine events
    - Sporting events and tournaments (lacrosse, soccer, baseball)
    - Concerts and performing arts
    - Tradeshows, RV/car shows
    - Conferences and business meetings
    - Private event rentals: parties, showers, receptions, quinceañeras (noting importance of keeping these affordable for residents)

**EOTEC + Fair/Rodeo Partnership Dynamics**

- Tension: Both the rodeo and fair stakeholders interviewed feel they are treated as a renter instead of a true planning partner, especially given their involvement in fundraising for the facility, significant yearly maintenance and repair completed at no cost prior to their events, purchase of additional lot for parking, and that they host the largest event of the year.

**Parking + RV Park**

- RV park partnership with Amazon: Cited by many as a success, while others raised concerns that City is ceding too many benefits to Amazon.
- More parking needed: If EOTEC grows and provides bigger events, more parking will be needed.
- Security: Concerns that construction crew took down gate, people coming in without payment.
- Concerns around recent parking changes: Rodeo expressed concern about recent decisions limiting parking for their event and wants to ensure parking remains available.

**Other Priorities Mentioned**

- Additional supplies/equipment needed to support events: kitchen supplies, permanent stage, equine equipment.
- Continued water rights acquisition.
- Increase usage of HEROS sportsplex.
- Better technology (e.g., limited WiFi in building, limited opportunity for projection).
- Better equine equipment, particularly ground footing for horses.
- More shade.
- Pest control (flies).

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- Smoother process to learn about scheduling and fees (e.g., currently have to come on-site to see calendar).
- Complete the rodeo area as it is limiting the number of events.

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# EOTEC STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP

**DATE:** October 7, 2026
**TIME:** 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM
**LOCATION:** EOTEC | 1705 E. Airport Rd., Hermiston, OR 97838

## WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

- Reorient to the EOTEC strategic plan and the strategic planning process
- Review and celebrate the strategic plan progress and accomplishments
- Develop a shared understanding of the background and current context to inform the updates to the strategic plan
- Engage the EOTEC Committee and staff in the refinement of the strategic plan, including aligning around a shared vision and actionable goals

## AGENDA

**5:00 PM** **Dinner (30 min)**

**5:30 PM** **Welcome + Agenda Overview (15 min)**
- Welcome, City Manager and EOTEC General Manager
- Agenda Overview + Develop Guidelines for Success
- Warm-up Exercise

**5:45 PM** **Strategic Plan Reorientation (10 min)**
- Strategic Plan Framework
- Strategic Plan Process

**5:55 PM** **Environmental Scan (60 min)**
- Strategic Plan Accomplishments and Progress Updates
- Context Mapping Exercise

**6:55 PM** **Aligning Around a Vision (1 hour, 20 min)**
- Visioning Exercise
- Idea Mapping

**8:15 PM** **Wrap-up + Next Steps (15 min)**
- Discuss Implementation Structure
- Strategic Plan Next Steps
- Reflection Activity

**8:30 PM** **Adjourn**

## EOTEC 2019 Strategic Plan Accomplishments + Progress Updates

### Goal 1: Facility Improvements

| | Action | Accomplishments/Updates |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Secure water rights for the EOTEC site. | • Getting close to finalizing permanent water rights.<br>• We have acquired property – we are close to transferring rights to the EOTEC property<br>• Timeline: Temporary transfer next irrigation season (2027) from there, 2028 permanent transfer per the advice of our water rights team dealing with the State. |
| 2 | Improve the landscaping and overall beautification of the site. | • Made progress—we have added irrigated fields for the sports complex. Additional trees.<br>o This is ongoing |
| 3 | Update the overall site plan. | • Part of this continued SP update process.<br>• Scheduled to be completed in 2026 with this Master Plan in the updated SP document. |
| 4 | Improve security cameras and PA system for safety and emergency use. | • We have added security cameras and made improvements.<br>o This is an ongoing effort<br>o Needed: a plan for this process/additional cameras (do we find compatible or replace all since originals are 10 years old?)<br>• PA system can communicate with all grounds, but will need to expand to accommodate the new space<br>• PA and security needs to linked into one system (includes gates) |
| 5 | Provide dedicated office and storage space to Umatilla County Fair. | • We have office space in the event center for the Umatilla Fair. And we have dedicated mostly outdoor space for the fair. The County bought a building close to EOTEC and the fair has moved into that.<br>• Is any additional space needed? |

## EOTEC 2019 Strategic Plan Accomplishments + Progress Updates

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Improve RV/camping area. | • On track to be completed by 2026 Fair. |
| 7 | Add a multi-sports facility. | • 75-80% complete. The fields are there, half the lighting, we need to make more improvements to the irrigation system.<br>• Grass fields.<br>• Most funding led by the local Lacross club |
| 8 | Improve access to the site. | • There have been improvements on managing traffic flow.<br>• The County paved the one gravel road (chip sealed) this reduced a lot of dust complaints<br>• We have addressed many of these, and a few we will address to make improvements.<br>• Figured out Public Safety vehicle access for Fair and Rodeo |
| 9 | Improve parking on site. | • This has been improved.<br>• We added additional land, used secondary parking areas on airport land<br>• It's not perfect, but improved |
| 10 | Build an indoor arena/pavilion. | • Not completed<br>• Funding is needed |

## EOTEC 2019 Strategic Plan Accomplishments + Progress Updates

### Goal 2: Operations

| | Action | Accomplishments/Updates |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Improve customer service at EOTEC | • Opportunities for growth |
| 2 | Review event policies | • Some major improvements with standardizing processes and forms. |
| 3 | Establish vendor contracts | • Established a preferred caterers list<br>• We have alcohol vendors we tend to work with more, but not an official list as renters tend to have stronger preferences |
| 4 | Provide opportunities for community/non-profit meeting space at ALL public facilities | • All facilities give discounts to non-profits<br>• More public are able to use the Harkenrider<br>• Improved relationships with partners |
| 5 | Clarify leadership and staffing roles | • The City has taken on active management of the site. |

## EOTEC 2019 Strategic Plan Accomplishments + Progress Updates

### Goal 3: Marketing

| | Action | Accomplishments/Updates |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Develop a marketing plan | |
| | a. Improve the website | • Still needs some work<br>• City is trying to do a full-city marketing effort – this would be a way to improve the website and overall marking for EOTEC |
| | b. Partner with local and regional tourism efforts | • Partnership with Chamber<br>• Additional discussion needed |
| | c. Develop a consistent EOTEC brand | • EOTEC brand and logo under the City's branding |
| | d. Develop and share positive stories | |
| 2 | Hire a marketing and sales position | • Do not have funding for a marketing person, may be able to share position with City's marketing |

## EOTEC 2019 Strategic Plan Accomplishments + Progress Updates

### Goal 4: Events

| Events requested from 2019 engagement | Notes |
|---|---|
| • Concerts | |
| • Food Festivals | |
| • Farmers Markets | |
| • Beer and Wine Festivals | |
| • Athletic Events | |
| • Festival of Lights | |
| • Youth/Teen Events | |
| • Equestrian Events | |
| • Cultural Festivals | |
| • Arts and Craft Festivals | |

| Events requested from 2026 engagement | Notes |
|---|---|
| • Concerts | |
| • Performing arts | |
| • Tradeshows | |
| • RV/Car shows | |
| • Sporting events and tournaments (lacrosse, soccer, baseball) | |
| • Conferences and business meetings | |
| • Private event rentals (parties, showers, receptions, quinceañeras (noting importance of keeping these affordable for residents) | |
| • Equestrian Events | |
| | |