



## PHILOMATH FROLIC & RODEO ARENA EXPANSION CASE for SUPPORT

*For* seven decades, the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo has served as the highlight of the calendar year for its community of nearly 5,700 residents nestled in the heart of Oregon's Willamette Valley. Begun in 1953, this celebration features a rodeo but has grown to encompass a packed weekend of events including a logging show, parade, dance, and much more.

Less than two weeks before the 2022 event, however, disaster struck -- a fire ultimately destroyed one-third of the covered seating of the rodeo arena. Understandably shaken but unwilling to cancel the event, supporters banded together to clean up the damage and install portable bleachers. Donations of materials, time and manual labor from individuals, nonprofits and businesses were used to install portable bleachers so the Rodeo could go on.

The 2022 Rodeo set record-setting attendance despite the setback. With a successful event behind them, the Frolic's Board of Directors set about planning, designing, and preparing to replace the damaged bleachers. Put simply, without new grandstands to accommodate an ever-growing demand for seating at the arena, the Frolic and Rodeo and other events held there cannot continue to thrive.

## Up From the Ashes: The Need



The popularity of the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo has grown dramatically in recent years; the event has sold out on Saturday, its most popular day, for 15 years. It has now begun to sell out on Fridays as well, and in 2022, 900 standing-room-only tickets were sold to spectators who were unable to purchase a ticketed seat to the event. Further, the populations of Philomath and Benton County continue to grow, meaning additional, ongoing demand for the community’s most popular event. The Frolic and Rodeo also draws spectators from far beyond the community and even the state, with 13 percent of tickets sold to people outside Oregon. In addition to the Rodeo,

the Frolic ground hosts events nearly every weekend in the warm months.

However, the 2022 fire put the Frolic and Rodeo – and all other events that utilize the rodeo grandstands in extreme jeopardy. Built in 1985, the grandstands that remain are past their useful life and by all accounts, inadequate. The current grandstands are not ADA accessible, with only eight seats with wheelchair access and one wheelchair ramp. Without adequate grandstands, the most popular and impactful annual event in Philomath cannot continue to grow, and the community cannot showcase its culture and heritage for all those to enjoy and appreciate.

“We can’t invite any more people because we don’t have any room,” explains Frolic and Rodeo Board President Darrel Hinchberger, “and now we don’t even have room for folks that have been coming to the Frolic their whole lives. Now that’s sad.”

This lack of available seating will have a disastrous financial impact on the Frolic and Rodeo, stifling ticket sales and limiting the crowds of visitors that help boost Philomath’s revenue at restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and other businesses during the event.

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# About the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo

**T**he Philomath Frolic and Rodeo showcases its town's local heritage and celebrates the Western way of life. The event's mission is to be a family-oriented entertainment organization focused on the traditions on which the community was founded; namely, its Western heritage and the logging industry. Its volunteers plan, carry out, and support events that reflect the contemporary interests of the community while promoting volunteerism, public involvement, and a love for learning throughout the region.

Back in 1953, Clarence and Inez Marstall, Walter and Ida Pflughaupt, and Melvin and Esther Castle organized the first Philomath Western Frolic, then called the Philomath Buckaroo and Loggers' Frolic. Jani Ryker was selected Queen, and the parade was limited that first year.

Events over the years have included a trail ride, a logging show, a carnival, a truck rodeo, dances, a Lions breakfast, an old-time community picnic, a Sunday Union Church service, and various displays and exhibits.

In 1983, the Frolic Committee decided to bring back the idea of a rodeo. Twenty-one acres of land was leased from Skirvin Farms. In six weeks, the committee took a bare piece of land and, with volunteer labor and donations, built a rodeo arena.

Many improvements and repairs have been made to the rodeo grounds in the years since. The rodeo attracts over 5,000 spectators each year and has been distinguished as the Northwest Professional Rodeo Association "Rodeo of the Year" eight times.

In 2022, the grounds hosted 24 events including the Frolic and Rodeo, Northwest Youth Rodeo Association Finals, Oregon Barrel Racing Association performances, as well as horse training clinics, dog shows, weddings, the Lions Club Book Sale, and the Benton County Sheriff and Philomath Police Department Chili Cook-Off fundraiser. A large field area of the grounds previously used for parking has also been dedicated to create two new youth baseball diamonds, the first in Philomath in over 20 years.

The Frolic and Rodeo, and by extension, the City of Philomath, face a daunting challenge in replacing the grandstands and other amenities at Skirvin Park, but time and again, its supporters have proven themselves capable of rising to such challenges and again preparing the event and its facilities for a bright, prosperous future.

# The Project: Revitalize the Arena, Build Capacity

*In order to safely and comfortably accommodate the crowds that will propel its growth, Philomath Frolic and Rodeo is dedicated to a multi-million dollar campaign to:*

- **Construct new metal bleachers, doubling its seating capacity from 2,250 to 4,528**

New bleachers will improve the comfort and enhance the viewing experience for all who attend the Frolic and Rodeo. Improved capacity will allow the facility to host larger events, and it will allow organizers to plan for the event's growth for many years to come.

- **Quadruple the number of ADA seats in the arena to 32**

Organizers and supporters of the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo believe that EVERYONE should be able to safely, comfortably enjoy the event. Increasing the number of seats that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act will ensure access for those who require additional assistance due to disabilities.

- **Add box seating and premium seating options**

Box seating and premium seating options will add an extra dimension to the Frolic and Rodeo experience, allowing those who purchase these seating options an unparalleled way to enjoy the event. Offering these enhanced options will also bring in additional revenue for the event.

- **Install energy-efficient LED arena lighting**

Aging light fixtures will be replaced with new, state-of-the-art LED lighting, which will improve visibility for spectators AND participants. Increased energy efficiency will also help cut costs and is better and safer for the environment.

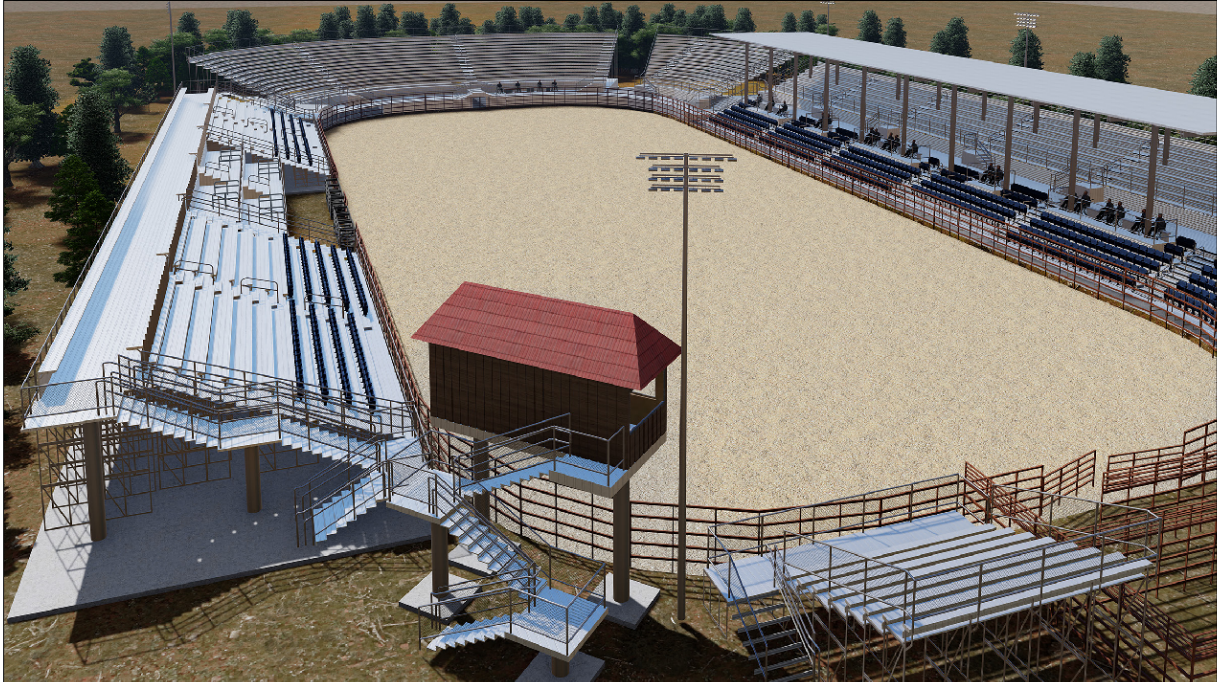
- **Install new rodeo chutes, gates, and fence panels**

Much of the infrastructure that makes the Rodeo successful is in need of replacement, which will improve the safety of the event for participants.

- **Improve vehicle, pedestrian and bike access to Skirvin Park**

Street access needs to be widened and paved to reduce congestion, lower maintenance costs, and improve usability of the grounds throughout a greater part of the year. A new bike/pedestrian path will encourage locals to walk or bike to events rather than drive.

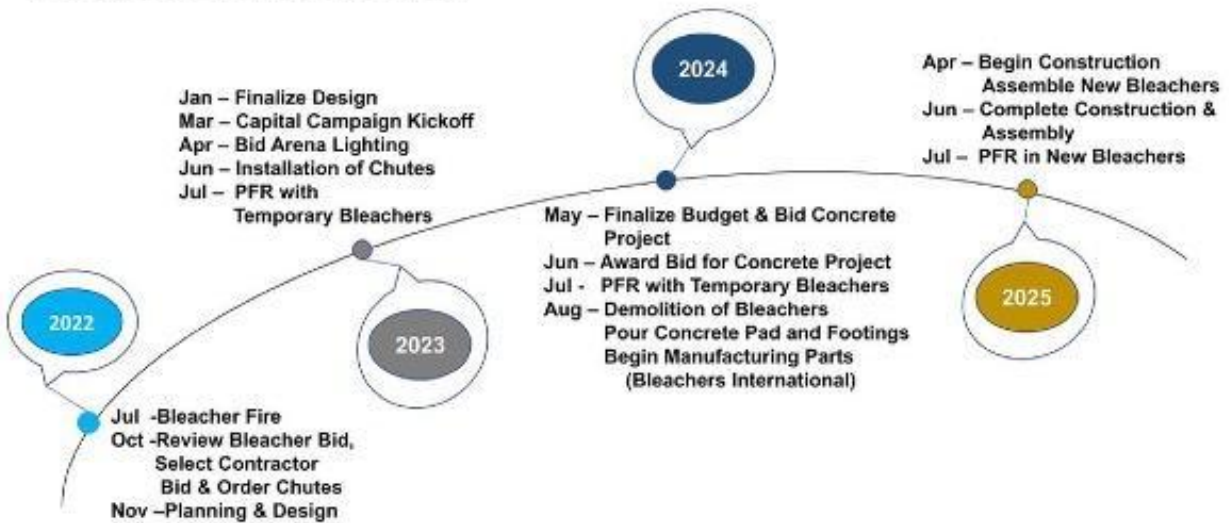




**An artist rendering shows the newly constructed grandstands.**

**The Frolic & Rodeo has contracted with Bleachers International to develop and design the grandstands and provide renderings. A Capital Campaign Committee has formed to oversee fundraising efforts, including the current 60-day effort to raise \$1 million to match a funding request to the State legislature. Lund Development Solutions has been contracted to assist the Board and Campaign Committee with fundraising and grant writing. The timeline above provides key dates and milestones toward construction.**

# Philomath Rodeo Arena Expansion Project Milestones



## Project Budget

Materials -- \$1,227,228

Stadium Chairs -- \$86,940

Freight and Delivery -- \$69,600

Planning/Engineering and Coordination -- \$60,000

Construction- labor, equipment, supervision-- \$418,226

Foundation (concrete slab and piers) -- \$344,000

Other Rodeo Grounds Improvements (Corral, electricity, speakers, fencing, grounds compaction, drainage system, etc.) -- \$450,000

Permitting (City of Philomath) -- \$560

2% contingency -- \$53,120

**GRAND TOTAL = \$2,709,674**

# Support the Frolic & Rodeo's Growth and Success

Dedicated support from people like you, those who understand the significant role that the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo plays in the lives of community members and visitors, is essential to ensure the event's ability to welcome appreciative crowds in the coming years.



At the conclusion of the 2023 session, the Oregon State Legislature, with project support led by Representative David Gomberg, passed the “Christmas Tree Bill” which allocated \$1.9 million to the City of Philomath for construction of the new arena and replacement lighting. In order to receive this funding, the City and the Frolic & Rodeo Board committed to a minimum \$500,000 match from the community.

We have developed a multi-million dollar campaign that will turn our blueprint for the event we all treasure into a reality. A capital campaign committee of respected, dedicated volunteers is overseeing fundraising, including the current 60-day effort to raise another \$500,000 in an effort to provide the needed match for our request to the Oregon State Legislature for funding. Lund Development Solutions, led by Christina Lund, will assist the Board and campaign committee in reaching our financial goals. Christina has helped more than 100 non-profit organizations build fundraising success and coordinated seven successful capital campaigns over the past 15 years.

We look forward to celebrating the opening of our revitalized arena with you.

Thank you!

## ***FOR MORE INFORMATION:***

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